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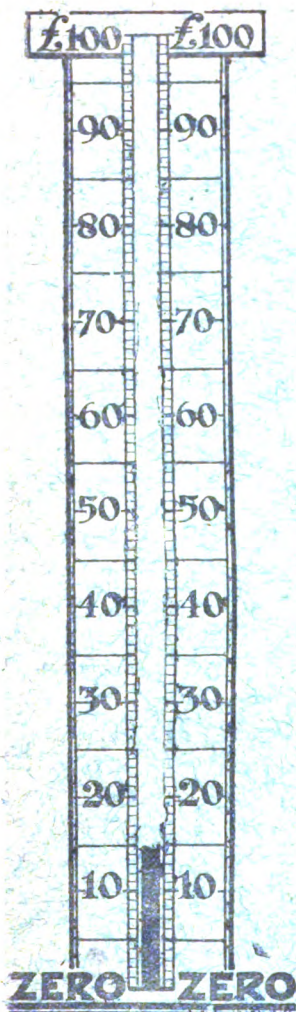
September, 1916

The
PLEBS
MAGAZINE



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MONTHLY TWOPENCE



We have to
get this
down
to



Zero

The Last Lap
YOURS to hand?

THE PLEBS MAGAZINE

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

Vol. VIII

September, 1916

No. 8

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Feet of Clay

I HAVE read that most remarkable effort of reasoning in Mr. Clay's book*, headed "Marginal Utility," and was immediately seized with a great compassion. I felt a desire to go at once, see Mr. Clay, and force him to confess the quantity and name of the drug he was under the influence of, when he committed so great an atrocity against the divine spark of human reason. Being unable to carry out this plan, I retired to bed in anguish,—and lo! after the approved manner of the true prophet, I dreamed a dream.

In my dream the spirit of Mr. Clay appeared unto me—he himself having, it seemed, "shuffled off this mortal coil" promptly upon the publication of his great work. How should I address him—it? I would not wound the feelings of this idealistic substance with the gross earthy name of Clay. But my reflections were interrupted by the spirit, who in agonized yet querulous tones began—"Why have you drawn me hither? Be brief, I must soon return." "Very well," I said, without wasting a word, "tell me what is your theory of Marginal Utility?" The ghost shrank back, and looked around as though to appeal against such an awful ordeal. Apparently finding no support, the spirit continued—"On pages 288 and 289 of my ——— book (I failed to catch the adjective) you will find the theory stated. It is as follows:—

A pound of tea a week gives us a great satisfaction, we would willingly pay 7/- for it rather than go without it; a second pound of tea does not give us the same satisfaction, we would not give more than 4/-

**Economics: An Introduction for the General Reader.* By H. Clay. (Macmillan 3/6 net.)

for it; a third pound gives less satisfaction still, we would give 2/- for it; but no more. But the pounds of tea are all alike; one in itself is as good as another; the difference in the amount of satisfaction they give is due to us. Further, there cannot be two prices for the same article in a competitive market; all the pounds of tea of a given quality will have the same market value. Consequently the seller of the tea will not be able to charge us 7/- for the first pound, 4/- for the second, and 2/- for the third; if he wishes to sell us two pounds he can charge only 4/- a pound, while if he wishes to sell us three pounds he will have to reduce his price to 2/- a pound. It is the utility of the pound of tea that we are just induced to purchase that settles the value of tea for us; . . . it is the utility of the little more or little less that we just find it worth while, or not worth while, to purchase, that settles its value.

The spirit here made as if to depart, so I instantly called out:—"Wait, I have a few words to address to you." Reluctantly "it" came back to the same spot. "Now," I said, "I heard your words distinctly but I can't make sense of them. Let me understand. I take it you mean that a certain man wants, or uses, three pounds of tea in a certain period?" The spirit made a motion of assent. "And the price," I went on, "is 2/- a pound." Another motion of assent. "Very well then, what is all this palaver about 7/- and 4/-?" "Oh," said the spirit, "that expresses the marginal desire. After the words I have just quoted, I went on to say, in italics too, that 'Market values coincide with marginal utility.'" "Yes," I remarked, "that *would* be something in the nature of a coincidence. But what is the use of all that when you simply wind up and say that the market settles the value of tea, which in this case is 2/- per pound?"

"But," replied the spirit, "I had admitted earlier on, on p. 285, that there were two difficulties to overcome before we could accept the theory." I brightened up. "So you admit there are difficulties; what are they?" "The first," the spirit went on with a gesture of irritation, "is that the utility of a thing is different at different times and to different persons, while its value may remain the same." "Yes," I agreed, "that seems fatal; how do you explain it away?" "The explanation? Oh, that there cannot be any great variations of price for the same article in the same market." The spirit stopped, so I said, "Yes, go on, explain the difficulty." "That is the explanation," said the enraged spirit; "that solves the question; but the other difficulty is greater." "Dear me," said I, "so that's what you call an explanation. Are you going to explain the other difficulty in the same way?" "Oh, no," solemnly replied the spirit; "I have used quite different words. The second difficulty seems insurmountable. It is that value and utility seem to vary inversely, i.e., the greater the utility the less the value."

"Well," I said, "that fact, which you seem to admit, is surely the most convincing proof of the utter futility of Marginal Utility

as a theory to explain anything but the stupidity of its exponents." "But really," protested the spirit, "you have not heard the explanation yet. The explanation of that seeming difficulty is that the total utility of a thing is a different thing from the utility of a given quantity, and it is with the second utility that marginal utility is concerned." "But my dear spirit," I retorted, "how does this second or any other fantastic utility determine price when as you say there is only one price on the same market?"

"Well, I have already said that marginal utility coincides with market values."

"I know you have said it. But saying a thing, in these days of Labour Colleges, cannot be taken to be the same thing as proving it. The question is—What determines value? To that question you reply that marginal utility coincides with market value. When you are asked the wherefore and the why of this strange coincidence you string a lot of words together to the effect that if a man is very fond of a thing and cannot get enough of it, he would pay a bigger price for a less quantity. But as he happens to get a much as he wants (more if he liked) he merely pays the market price. Why don't you settle down and try to find out the cause of this market price, instead of putting forward assumed coincidences, and making ridiculous pretensions to know what a man would do if things were not as they are?"

"I know," said the spirit in a distinctly spiritual tone, "that it looks a bit awkward, but these things are determined unconsciously by the consumer, who is not aware of his marginal desire, which is all the time coinciding with the market price."

"Ah well," I concluded, "a short time ago I wrote that when you were on earth you were inclined a little to trickery and unscrupulousness. Now I see that your disease was of a different order. But this talk has lasted long enough—go back to your home, and tell them to put, not a marginal lump, but all the total utility of the coals in your furnace, so that your spiritual comfort may coincide with the total utility of your heat."

I had no sooner mentioned the word "heat" than the room was filled with a dense smoke, and the most fearful din that mortal ear ever heard sounded in my ears. I was aware of a violent commotion, my body being violently agitated in the region of my ribs and then—"Are you going to work to-day? That alarm has been making hideous noises for the last ten minutes!" It was the voice of my beloved spouse. I awoke with a distinct smell of brimstone disturbing my olfactory organs.

NOAH ABLETT.

The *New York Weekly People* did us the honour of reprinting the article entitled "Breaking the Spell of Marxism," from our July issue.

German Socialism and Socialist Education

GERMANY has always a claim on the gratitude of the Socialist movement in other countries, if for no other reason than that no country has contributed more materially to the theoretical enlightenment or even the practical organization of the workers than she. Certainly, even to day, the German Social Democrats can be proud of the part they have played in the political education of the workers. With their daily press, their scientific review—*Die Neue Zeit*—and above all their Party School and their system of *Wanderredner* (i.e. lecturers who tour round Germany giving courses of lectures in all the principal centres) they have done at the least good pioneer work and a work that, anyway in its entirety, has not been equalled in any other country.

It is true that they were not in a position to prevent a wave of nationalist feeling at the out-break of the war—nay, more, that the majority of the leaders themselves were carried away by this wave and, what is worse, have not even yet found their way back. But we must consider the extraordinary position in which Germany found herself at the beginning of the war. She found herself at war on both her land frontiers, East and West—Russia with her huge populations pressing on the East ; and on the West, France with an army which, even if considerably weaker than hers, so far as European troops were concerned, had large native reserves to draw on ; and England, with her enormous fleet and her Imperial resources. Since then, with Italy drawn in, it has become a war of Germany and Austria-Hungary against a world in arms. Apart from the rights or wrongs of the case, and even granting that the leading Statesmen of the Entente were the innocent lambs we are told they were (and are), it can hardly surprise us if a feeling was aroused in Germany which temporarily at least submerged for most their Socialist principles. Great Britain has been confronted virtually by but one antagonist—and yet we have seen the Labour Party flinging all their principles overboard, joining the Ministry, supporting Conscription, (to say nothing of Protection) and allowing all civil liberty, trade union rights, &c., to be swept away, almost without a murmur. What should we have done had we had to fight with France as well as Germany, instead of having her for an ally ? It is certainly true that more was to be expected from the German Party in view of their better organization and their influence as teachers of Socialist theory ; but on the other

hand no people found itself in such a dangerous position except Austria-Hungary (that quite apart from the sins of their Government for which they were certainly no more responsible than the peoples of France, England or Russia.)

Nor can it be said that the German leaders misled the other nations as to the intentions of the German Government or their power to control it. If comrades in other countries entertained any illusions it was certainly not the fault of German Socialists. Hyndman in fact makes it a point of indictment against those English Socialists who opposed him in the past that they ignored the warnings of Bebel, Singer and others. Be that as it may it exonerates our German friends from the charge of deceiving the world in the interests of their own Government. Personally I think our friends erred in quite the contrary direction. I think they underestimated their own power to prevent war—they underestimated in fact their own power generally, and they shewed a great lack of initiative. So far, no doubt, a certain responsibility rested on the German Party, but no doubt the main factor in the breakdown of the International was the weakness of their own position. They tried to ride two horses at one time, Nationalism and Internationalism. Practice has shewn that it is not much good protesting against aggressive Imperialism while insisting on the necessity of supporting a policy of national defence.

How far will the International be able to solve this question when it comes together?—for come together it must, but in what form and when? What means can it adopt to make its decisions effective? How persuade the masses in each country that it is their interests which are being dealt with, and induce them to exercise an effective control in the election of representatives and on the decisions arrived at? All these are questions for the future when discussion is at least free between the countries. Personally I think in all countries we shall have to aim at making democratic control of the party organizations much more complete—demanding for instance the submission of important controversial questions to the direct vote of members, and demanding from the State and the Commune the right to initiate measures by popular vote, measures which have been accepted by Parliament to be submitted on demand to a referendum. Up to now the democracy has been content to play the part of an audience in the theatre, without power to say what should be played or when the curtain should rise or fall.

Of enormous importance under these circumstances does the question of the education of the masses become, and in this respect the German daily Party Press has played a part not easy to overvalue. We want a daily Socialist Press badly in England, but it must be genuinely Socialist and not a bad copy of the Yellow Press.

It would be even better were it possible to establish a Socialist international news-service, and to disestablish the capitalist and semi-official manufacturers of international fiction and propagators of hate. What the German Socialist Press has achieved with its excellent service of foreign correspondents in dispelling international misunderstandings has been enormous, and would have been still greater had anything like it been done in England, Russia and America. *Humanité* and *Avanti* both in their respective countries did wonders in the same direction, and of course the *Arbeiter Zeitung* in Vienna; while our *Daily Citizen* apparently kept a special correspondent in Berlin to send "news" which one would otherwise have expected to find in *Answers*, *Comic Cuts* or a woman's fashion paper, and then only to fill up an odd corner. Besides the daily Press the weekly German review of Marxism, *Die Neue Zeit*, has long enjoyed a unique position in the Socialist world. And in books there has been an enormous out-put of Socialist literature in the last few years. Marx's works have all practically been republished, with the exception of his and Engels' work on Philosophy, which the Censor would not allow to be published in the forties and which the mice devoured in the years that it lay in the attic. The authors looked back with great contempt on this juvenile performance, but what would we not have given to possess it? Engels intended later to write a book on a similar subject, but had to give it up in order to edit the second and third volume of *Das Kapital* which Marx had left unfinished. Marx's letters to Lassalle unfortunately fell into the hands of men who were hostile to his ideas and it is quite possible that they have been destroyed. The so-called Revisionist controversy aroused a great interest in Marx's work and led to a deeper study of it, and the interest was further stimulated by a book published by Rosa Luxemburg in which she pointed out what she felt to be a weakness in Marx's chapter on the Accumulation of Capital in the second volume. Certainly the present writer avows that he never read that volume with such zest before. Dietzgen's works have also played an invaluable part, being written in such a homely simple style that when a comrade was asked to write an introduction to one, he told me he had refused because he said he felt it would be an impertinence—he could not make the book half as clear as the "old tanner" had done.

Unquestionably, however, the heavier literature had only reached the fringe of the workers—the élite of the organized workers and even by many of these was more bought than read. There is nothing more difficult for the worker than to get leisure for reading—hard at work all day, and the evening too often taken up with Trade Union or Party work. Then there is the daily paper to read, and to settle down afterwards to Marx's *Capital* requires more than ordinary energy, patience and intelligence. For this reason the

German party has established the above mentioned system of travelling lecturers, who give lecture-courses in economics, history, sociology. Besides that there are special classes in Berlin and other big centres, as well as the Party School (open to the Trade Unions) where about fifty pupils are kept for a six months course in economics, labour law, history, sociology, &c. &c. The Trade Unions have a school with a much shorter course, with a curriculum on W.E.A. lines; for example, George Bernhard, chief editor of the *Vossische Zeitung*, a Berlin Liberal organ, who was some years ago expelled from the Party, is one of the teachers.

I may say in this connexion that the leaders of the Trade Unions had for years kept up a sort of Fronde against the Party and especially against the Marxist wing. It was the more absurd because, proclaiming as they did the neutrality of the Trade Unions and their independence of the party, they urged on Trade Unionists the duty of backing up the opportunist wing in the Party, and at the International they gave a compact vote in favour of the opportunists inside the German Section. That secured to the opportunist wing a permanent majority in the German Section at the International, the Trade Unions having an equal vote with the Party. The Trade Union leaders have been able to do that by the fact that in the Trade Unions the vote of the workers in the big centres is largely swamped by those in the smaller towns; and also by the great indifference so often displayed even by the former to vital questions. This no doubt explains very much in the attitude of the German Party at International Congresses which has annoyed their friends. In such circumstances, it is farcical to talk of democratic representation. It certainly points to the need for a more direct representation of workers *qua* workers at the Congresses. But even in the Party, when the proposal was made that only those delegates who had been elected for the purpose should have a vote on questions, and not *ex officio* members such as members of the Reichstag, the latter complained that they would thereby be degraded to the status of comrades of a lower order, forgetting that they would still be on an equal footing with all other members of the Party.

One sees we must begin by teaching our leaders what democracy means. Then we may get an International worthy of the name.

J. B. ASKEW.

During the war we have witnessed the rise of Protectionist propaganda side by side with a return to the worst stage of Manchester Liberalism in all matters affecting the employment of women and children. In economics it is the foundation of the political combination expressed in the coalition of parties, and is a portent of the sinister power the workers must face when peace returns.—E. C. FAIRCHILD, in the *Call*, July 20, 1916.

What is Ahead ?

The true prophet is not an ignorant soothsayer who foretells some Armageddon, but rather he who perceives the inevitable drift and tendency of things :—WILLIAM CLARKE in *Fabian Essays*.

IN trying to estimate the undoubted reaction in favour of peace, one has to be careful lest one's wishes colour one's thoughts. The average working-man still believes in all sincerity that, for the good of the world at large, Germany has to be beaten. Patriotism—like a certain brand of whisky—is still going strong. But “ he who perceives the inevitable drift and tendency of things ” sees already the conditions in operation which will alter prevalent ideas. The following factors, among others, are helping forward new ideas in regard to this war :—

(1). *The Increased Cost of Living* :—While many men and women completely fail to understand the financial position of the nation as revealed in official financial statements, they cannot escape in their own family budget increased expenses in food-buying. Under the present state of affairs it is hard to find out whether the scarcity of necessaries, and the resulting high prices, is real or artificial, i.e. due to profiteers anxious “ to make their bit.” Even a great war cannot change the recognised axiom of Capitalism that it is good “to buy cheap and sell dear.” By Government figures, the purchasing power of a sovereign is now twelve shillings and the worker stands to lose in a time of rising food prices because his wages follow but slowly the quickly advancing cost of living.

(2). *The Taxation of Earned Wages* :—The introduction of this principle, though welcomed by the official labour leaders as providing the working-class with an opportunity to pay its part of the cost of the war, has caused much irritation. The worker needs his high (sounding) wages to meet the first mentioned factor, and rightly grudges to the Government that which he has earned by the sweat of his brow while unearned incomes are still unconscrip-
ted.

(3). *The Danger of Industrial Conscription* :—As long as an employer can, by simply discharging a man, place him within the power of the military authorities he (the employer) can easily rid himself of any militant spirit in his workshop. Instances of this kind are sure to multiply. Knowing the employer has this whip-hand over them the employees will keep silent where otherwise they would speak ; but sooner or later the conditions will compel them to come out in a mass, —e.g. the demand for a ten shillings rise by the N.U.R. and the demand for holidays by other unions. Until conscription for the battlefield is rendered there will remain the danger of conscription in and for the workshop.

It is not my intention here to deal with the disturbed businesses resulting from the operation of the Military Service Act. Many

people, who viewed the war as they would a Cup-tie football match, think differently when it comes to leaving their businesses and homes to the tender mercies of larger concerns, or see cheap labour introduced to displace them. Such developments set them thinking seriously of what the words "my country" really mean.

I have dealt with the above factors at length, before dealing with my main subject, in order to prove that we are justified in looking toward the time when peace will break out, in attempting to analyse present conditions and their tendency, in thinking of the possible outcome of these conditions, and in preparing so that we may act in accordance with their tendency. Again and again history reveals the vast influence of small bodies of thinkers over the mass who do not think consciously. May history repeat herself and the leaven of the Plebs permeate the lump of their fellows!

What is coming after the War? that is the question. Shall we starve or flourish? Is our (?) Empire, with our Allies, going to be knit into "a bright and shining reality" by means of tariffs and a trade war upon the defeated foe, or shall we soon be trading again with Germany when our wrath has sobered down? The Paris Conference showed that something more than sentiment is needed to knit nation to nation. We may admire the splendid Australians and Canadians who have rallied to the help of the Motherland, but neither this admiration nor this loyalty operates in business. In the words of Jay Gould "There's no damn sentiment about business." The proposed Trade War may exist for a while, but economic relations are constantly changing and they overcome in time all sentiments such as revenge and hate. Did not Marx say somewhere that "cheap commodities can penetrate Chinese walls?" Would the feelings of loyalty to the Empire compel, for long, the Canadian, New Zealand, Australian or English business men to trade with each other if there were elsewhere better markets? Supposing that the Central Powers were boycotted in the markets of the world for a while, would not that be an incentive to them to discover new markets and unexploited lands and also speed up their already well developed productive powers in order to overcome tariff barriers?

The first chapter of Hyndman's *Commercial Crises* deals with the crisis which followed the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, and contains some very suggestive parallels to what might happen after the present War. A boom was expected and a slump came. England, the victor, suffered more severely in the crisis than France, the vanquished. England won through her commercial supremacy, which was established by the Industrial Revolution. She was able to develop the markets which she had won in the early part of the long war of twenty-two years. Discharged soldiers and sailors came back to find their places taken by machinery, and went about in machine-breaking gangs. The position in the 20th

century is, however, different from what it was in the 19th. A century of Trade Unionism has made a very different working-class. The higher scales of pay and pensions prove that soldiers are of a different stamp to what they were one hundred years ago. Not that these are at all too high, for though in many cases "Patriotism and Profits have kissed each other," Patriotism seems to be looking the other way when adequate pensions for soldiers begs her attention.

Other different conditions are :—

(1). *The Greater Scale of Operations* :— This means more men and money ; a greater disruption of industry ; larger financial liabilities and a consequent tightness of money ; and the release of a larger number of men from the army, navy and munition works to be re-absorbed into industry.

(2). *The Position of America* :— In the Napoleonic Wars England was comparatively undisturbed ; in this war she has had to depend upon outside help. America has furnished money and supplies to the combatants and has made, and is making hay while the sun shines. She has speeded up her productive powers ; she will fight to keep the trade she has gained ; and thus when all combatants resume industrial operations, the competition will be very keen.

(3). *The Entry of Women into Industry* :— The need for men and munitions has brought an unprecedented number of women into industry. The war has undoubtedly had the effect of developing the application of chemistry, machinery, cheap labour, and speeding-up methods. One wonders if these developments will have the same deplorable results as the development of machinery had in 1815, and this leads us on to the next new condition on which we base our hopes.

(4). *The Higher Intelligence and Status of the Working Class* :— If this fails to save Labour in the complex times ahead, then is our hoping vain. Its attitude towards women in industry and other developments will be very different from the attitude of the poor, hungry, rioting machine-breakers above mentioned. A period of State Capitalism may be the half-way house to the Industrial Commonwealth. In the better organised industries, the Labour Unions should insist upon having a voice in all proposed re-arrangements. And if a slump and hard times should come, then it is to be hoped that the giant Labour will not be like a blind Samson feeling for the pillars of society to wreck it in hopeless desperation, but that the scales of ignorance will fall from his eyes, and he will set about the building of a new structure based on association of free producers, and with wage-slavery relegated to the rubbish-heap outside.

MARK STARR.

The Plebs Annual Meet

THE EIGHTH ANNUAL MEET of the *Plebs* League was held at the College, by kind permission of the new Governors, on Sunday, August 6th. Mr. B. S. MacKay presided over a small but very enthusiastic gathering.

In opening the meeting, Mr. MacKay said he was glad to have the opportunity of welcoming all present to the Annual Meet once again. He supposed that the somewhat smaller attendance than usual was due to the Army having claimed several of their members. The Army had tried to get himself, but had so far not succeeded. As he had no intention of inflicting anything in the nature of a speech upon them he would proceed with the business of the afternoon by calling upon the Secretary to give his Report.

Secretary's Report.

In submitting his Report, Mr. J. Reynolds explained that many members of the League had notified him of their inability to attend owing to their working in "controlled establishments," and in consequence of the postponement of the usual August holidays they were unable to be present without risk of being fined for absence from work.

Mr. Reynolds referred with regret to the fact that their former Secretary and Editor, Mr. Geo. Sims, was unable to be with them.

Mr. Sims had written as follows:—

Dear—, Many thanks for *Plebs*, which I've just received and read. The Meet ought not to be too depressed, considering all the circs. It's very creditable to everybody concerned to have kept the Mag. going, and—if Fate decrees that we shall see the end of this war by then!—it's more than possible that next year's Meet will see such a gathering of the clans as will rival the historic initial gathering at the Home of Lost Causes in 1909. The future of the College will be helped and its work get a move on quicker by the continued existence of our little rag, and more for this than for mere sentimental reasons I hope we shall be able to congratulate one another, at the close of the war, on its unbroken record.

Best wishes to all our friends.

G. S.

(Somewhere in France, July 28, 1916.)

No one recognised more clearly than himself the inestimable services Mr. Sims had rendered their cause in the past, and in view of what had recently taken place—namely, the taking over of the financial responsibility and management of the College by the N.U.R. and

S.W.M.F.—he more than ever regretted Mr. Sims' absence, but he earnestly hoped that in the near future they would again have the benefit of his invaluable assistance.

It was with a certain amount of pride and satisfaction that they could look back to the inauguration of the League eight years ago, and say :—" Something attempted, something done," though not to " earn repose," but to spur them on to still greater efforts in the future. They had discarded the swaddling bands of infancy and were now enjoying the robustness of youth.

The past year had been in all ways the most successful and gratifying one of their brief existence. In accordance with instructions from the last Annual Meet the Executive Committee had issued a Special Appeal for financial assistance towards wiping off the debt on the Magazine. He was pleased to be able to announce that, thanks to the hearty manner in which the members of the League and readers of the Magazine had responded to the Appeal, the handsome total of £71. 17s. 2d. had been received up to date.

Considering the prevailing conditions, due to the war, the educational work of the League had been fairly well maintained, and had even been increased and extended by the formation of new Branches at Birmingham, Southampton, and in the Monmouthshire and Rhymney Valleys of South Wales.

The circulation of the Magazine, thanks to the enthusiastic co-operation of a large number of their supporters, had increased by over fifty per cent during the past year, and it was still gradually increasing each month. The future prospects of the Magazine were brighter than ever. He confidently looked forward to the *Plebs* becoming THE Magazine of the Labour and Socialist Movement in Great Britain. There was a growing need for such a Magazine as the *Plebs* for developing and unifying the thought of the working-class, for without unity of thought on general principles they could not hope to have unity of action throughout the Movement. The *Plebs*, therefore, in conjunction with the provincial classes conducted under the auspices of the College was, in his opinion, one of the best means of achieving this necessary unity of thought and action on social questions among the working-class. In conclusion, he desired to thank the London members of the League for the willing assistance they had rendered him in performing the Secretarial duties during the past year, and it was with reluctance that he was compelled, through pressure of other work, to ask the League to relieve him of the position of Secretary-Treasurer. Although he was resigning all " official " connexion with the League, his interest in the League and Magazine would be as keen as ever, and he hoped to be able to render even greater assistance in the future than he had done in the past.

The adoption of the Secretary's Report was moved and seconded and carried unanimously.

Financial Statement, August 1st, 1915 to August 5th, 1916.

Receipts.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To Cash in hand Aug. 1st. 1915		11	0			
Magazine Subscriptions ...	125	12	0			
Membership Fees ...	4	7	0			
Special Appeal ...	71	17	2			
Loan to C.L.C. repaid ...	16	0	0			
				£218	7	2

Expenditure.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
By Printing—balance due						
August 1st, 1915 ...	90	2	5			
Printing ...	100	12	4			
				190	14	9
Postages on Magazines and Receipts ...				23	18	3
Parcels (Railway Charges)				2	14	1
Office Material ...				0	10	9
Advert of Magazine ...				0	5	0
Cash in hand Aug. 5th 1916				0	4	4
				£218	7	2

Balance Sheet, August 5th, 1916.

Liabilities.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To Messrs. Cox, Jones & Co.	21	12	4			
Late Treasurer (Loans 1913-1914 ...)	49	9	1			
				£71	1	5

Assets.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
By Outstanding A/c's (estimated)	10	0	0			
Cash in hand ...	4	4				
				£10	4	4
Liabilities ...				£71	1	5
Assets ...				10	4	4

Deficit

£60 17 1

Audited and found correct,
August 5th, 1916.

W. H. MAINWARING,
E. J. WILLIAMS.

On the motion of Mr. C. T. Pendrey, seconded by Mr. J. Williams, the Financial Statement was unanimously accepted. It was also agreed to continue the Special Appeal until the debt on the Magazine was wiped off.

Policy of League and Magazine

It was moved by Mr. W. H. Mainwaring, seconded by Mr. C. T. Pendrey, and supported by Mr. Geo. Melhuish and others:—

“That we endorse and confirm the policy of the League and Magazine, as we all agree that with the progress made last year we are on the right lines.” (Carried unanimously.)

A very interesting discussion took place on the best way still further to improve the Magazine. Satisfaction was expressed by all with the excellent manner in which Mr. J. F. Horrabin had carried out his editorial duties, but opinions differed as to the advisability of (a) increasing the size, or (b) reducing the price, of the Magazine and it was finally agreed to leave the question in the hands of the Executive Committee for them to ascertain the views of the members and readers. A sufficient increase in the circulation would enable both the price to be reduced and the size of the Magazine enlarged.

Election of Officers

Mr. J. F. Horrabin, was unanimously re-elected Editor; Mrs. W. Horrabin, Secretary; and Mr. Geo. Melhuish, Treasurer. The Executive Committee, with the substitution of Mr. Geo. Melhuish in place of Mr. Reynolds, were re-elected, with power to co-opt if necessary.

Hearty votes of thanks were passed to the Editor, Secretary, Printers, and also the new Governors of the College for kindly granting the use of the room. One of the pleasantest Meets concluded by adjourning to tea provided by the London members of the League.

PLEASE NOTE: That in future ALL COMMUNICATIONS AND ORDERS for PLEBS should be addressed TO THE NEW SECRETARY:—MRS. W. HORRABIN, 127, Hamlet Gardens, Ravenscourt Park, London, W.

Also all Monies for PLEBS to the NEW Treasurer:—Mr. G. Melhuish, c/o Mr. J. F. Horrabin, at the same address.

Books and Pamphlets will continue to be supplied from the College as hitherto.

J. REYNOLDS.

Correspondence

IN DEFENCE OF ZOLA.

Sir,—With regret one arrives at the conclusion that J. F. H. has taken Miss Rebecca West too seriously. After quoting from her book on Henry James, with only too apparent enthusiasm, he says, "That is sound criticism. . . . Here, too, is a bit of sound literary criticism: . . ." and he proceeds to give us further passages from this new-found gospel. Evidently J. F. H. means to apply Miss West's methods to other books he may read. Heaven save the *Plebs* Bookshelf! May I appeal to him? It is not quite wise to take a wit seriously, especially one who expresses herself in uncorrelated phrases, bolstered up by extravagant and sometimes slangy metaphors.

That Miss West does not necessarily mean what she writes is obvious to any regular reader of her newspaper articles, which are characterised by not infrequent contradictions. The various writers thrown haphazard into her mausoleum may live in the hope of a fair resurrection—when she reads the books they have written. In another mood, she will in all probability raise them from the dead and elevate them to a pedestal.

J. F. H., abandoning his usual discretion, admires what he calls her "refreshing irreverence." The spectacle of a boy with his tongue protruded too far out of his mouth, or with his thumb to his nose and outstretched fingers, may please some people; it's all a matter of taste—or of "sound criticism." Personally, rudeness and flippancy in literature do not enrapture me. It may be that my priggishness stands in the way; though I should prefer to call it my sense of decency.

Of Henry James as a critic Miss West writes somewhat scornfully. Yet (it may interest J. F. H. to know) though she has apparently read little more of the works of the De Goncourts, Maupassant, or Zola than J. F. H. himself, she gleans her remarks on these writers from criticisms made by Henry James. The sentence about "poor, fat little Zola, who thought that though one could not build Rome in a day one could describe it in less, plodding and sweating up the wrong road to art," is fairly obviously adapted from Henry James' remark that the novel *Rome* was compiled from a study of Baedeker. The truth was, however, different. Zola wrote his novels with such care and painstaking effort, on the least of them expending more time than has been wasted on this book of journalistic phrases, that his critics, weary of searching for a single incorrect detail, or even overstatement of the conditions which he described, gave up the attempt of trying to disprove him and took to the easier course of abusing the author. Along this track Miss West has amiably followed, accompanied by her innocent disciple. Consider the ineptness of J. F. H.'s remark—"One thinks of Synge, in contrast, say to Zola; and one agrees whole-heartedly." *One thinks*; but I am afraid J. F. H. didn't. Illumination does not come from making contradictory illustrations, and only a mad dialectician standing on his head would hope to reach a sane conclusion by comparing opposites.

Finally, while the essential use of Zola to the working-class movement is common knowledge to all who are not too lazy to read him, I should like to know what use Miss West is to the Plebeian?

Yours, etc. J. S. C.

Wimbledon, S.W.

(J. F. H. writes :—I hope to reply to J. S. C.'s onslaught, and to any other readers who care to "join in," next month.)

Cuttings

The Trade Unions fail to set their faces against restriction of output, and in favour of all measures for the greater efficiency of production, because they distrust the employers . . . "The employers, on the other hand, become convinced that Labour is unreasonable, and harden their hearts. . . . It may seem a lame conclusion (!) to those who have faith in panaceas, but there is no doubt that the greatest step in advance, and indeed the prerequisite of any reform, would be a genuine attempt on the part of each side to understand the difficulties and ideas of the other. There is no simple panacea for all industrial ills.—*The Round Table*.

"So there is to be just a little tiny seed of love in industry, and all may be well," comments CHAS. BROOKFARMER in the *New Age*.

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. . . The very able and influential group of young men whose organ is the *Round Table*, who are the real heirs to Positivism (which proposed to moralise the capitalist).—G. BERNARD SHAW, in the *New Statesman*, June 24th, 1916.

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Most of us by now have grave doubts whether this is "a war that will end war;" but we may perhaps be permitted to hope that it is "a war that will end Wells."—P. V. C., in the *New Age*, June 22, 1916.

ON BASE METALS.

(AFTER GLASGOW.)

If we were asked to make a choice
 'Twixt two inflictions, both unpleasant—
 The ruinous sword, the raucous voice—
 We almost feel as if, at present,
 We should prefer the Iron Hand
 Of Prussian, Saxon, or Bavarian,
 Rather than any longer stand
 The Brazen Tongue of this vulgarian.

J. C. SQUIRE, *The Survival of the Fittest*, (Allen & Unwin, 1/- net.)

THE "PICTURES"—AND JUVENILE CRIME.

We do not wish to cast any slur upon the Home Secretary's childhood, but we think it just possible that, if he had been deadlly poor and the cinema had existed in those days, he might even have stolen money in order to obtain admission to such light as never was on land or sea. Only, of course, if he had been deadlly poor and stolen money he would never have been Home Secretary.

But why make all this fuss about cinematograph films and imaginary crimes when the terraqueous globe is mad with blood? War takes the father across the sea. War sends the mother to the ammunition works. War cuts down the teaching staff of schools, and cripples the clubs for working boys. War reduces the age of learning, and sends the child out into fields or streets or factories to toil before his time. War gives him wages to spend at his pleasure. War accustoms him to blood and death. War shows him pictures of genuine slaughter at every corner of the street and calls it heroism. War fills his mind in every paper with true accounts of rape, destruction, arson, and pillage. War is forced upon him by a decree of the State, which can kill him if he does not accept it. War is proclaimed to him from the pulpits of God as a necessity of righteous existence, a patriotic virtue in the eyes of his Creator. Of course, it is all right. When we admit war to be inevitable, we admit all the rest, for things are what they are, and their consequences will be what they will be. But why make all this fuss about films and their influence upon the increase of juvenile crime? Are films more deadlly than war because they are fakes, and war is not a fake at all?

Nation, May 20th, 1916.

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WHERE THE W. E. A. COMES IN.

We freely acknowledge that attention devoted to the healthy economic housing of the working classes, and to their recreational and pleasurable environment, yields ample returns in increased physical and mental efficiency.

Times Literary Supplement, Dec. 23rd, 1915.

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IDEALISM.

They are disillusioned of the great "Teddy," those Progressives. Perhaps they will never again rest their hopes entirely in a person. But are they yet disillusioned of Social Virtue as a political policy? Have they learned that politics is a play of interest and not of ideals? Can they see that if they want to change the Government they must align themselves with some class whose vital instincts of life demand the change, rather than merely gather round them a bunch of idealistic good scouts who would like to see it happen? When we emotional idealists learn to use the powers, instead of just preaching the ideas of progress, the whole thing will start moving.—

MAX EASTMAN, in the *Masses*, August, 1916

THE NEW SOCIALISM.

There is no doubt that the Socialist Party in France is undergoing the same sort of crisis which has led to a split among British Socialists. Only the crisis is more grave in France, because here Socialism is politically stronger and has older traditions. The phenomenon called Socialism was already before the war divided between two schools of thought. One may be called the national one. It drew its principles straight from the Socialists of '48, such as Proudhon and Louis Blanc, and through them from the great Revolution. Its motto was "national organization." The other school was international and more or less of German origin. Karl Marx was its Messiah, and it advocated international class war.

Now poor old Jaurès, who had a great heart if not a very practical mind, did his best to reconcile these two trends of thought. Although he was himself a disciple of the older French Socialists, he submitted to the imperative decisions of the Internationale, which, of course, was under German influence, and managed to unify his own party in 1904 by adopting the famous class-war doctrine. Owing to that surrender everything went fairly well for many years with the unity of the party. The French Socialists of the old school did not find it very hard, after all, to keep an irresponsible attitude in national affairs and to believe in the faithfulness of their German brethren.

This unsteady balance has been entirely upset by the war. The first shock was to find that German Social Democracy was nothing but humbug. Then, when France was subjected to shameful aggression, the old patriotic blood of 1793 began to boil in the veins of the strongest anti-militarists. These facts are not likely to be soon forgotten. "Our Socialism," says Gustave Hervé, "must henceforth be national." He is not the only one who speaks with scorn of St. Karl Marx. Socialists of high intellectual standing, such as Charles Andler, are already busy reshaping the doctrine. They reject the class-war principle. They place national welfare before the brotherhood of nations. A tremendous movement is already on foot which tends to purge French Socialism of any possible German influence and to reorganize it on a new basis which is nothing else than patriotism.

Such is the real meaning of what has taken place this week, as well as in December last, within the councils of the party. The minority represent what is left of pre-war Socialism in France. The new Socialism, which is at the same time true to the older traditions, is represented by the majority. It is, of course, difficult to foresee whether there will be a split or not later on. One thing, however, is probable: the only chance French Socialism has of still preserving its unity is that the pre-war Socialists shall submit in the future to the new ideal. Unity was achieved in 1904 at the expense of national Socialism. It will only be maintained after this war if Jean Longuet is good enough to forget that Karl Marx was his grandfather.—

Observer, August 13th, 1916.

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Billy Hughes in a bell-topper was a sight for the gods in the old country. There was an amused grin on the countenance of every Australian soldier as Mr. Hughes passed down the lines on his visit of "inspection."—*Maori-land Worker*.

Although you know me as a democrat who cares nothing for authority, you shall also learn to know me as a graduate in dialectics who, though he may empty the bath, still retains his hold on the child and does not permit it to float off with the water. Children, and one may say nations in their childhood, cannot do without authority, and a teacher, whether he instructs children or nations, cannot dispense with a certain confidence-inspiring air. The pupil must believe in the wisdom of his teacher, in order that he may approach the master with the necessary attention and willingness to learn. Later on the understanding of the subject makes all authority superfluous.—DIETZGEN'S *Letters on Logic*.

* * * * *

AND THE MEN WHO DO THE WORK MUST PROVIDE
THE POLICY.

In economic home policy the old State Socialism of the Fabian Society is somewhat discredited. There were Socialists who rejoiced, in the early days of the war, that now Socialism had come. The Government controlled banks, railways, prices, everything. Now they have carried Socialism to the point of punishing all who will not take part in war. If this be Socialism, the less we have of it the better. What is desirable is not increased power of the State, as an end in itself, but greater justice in distribution, and, still more, better opportunities for initiative and self-direction on the part of those who do not happen to be Capitalists. We need economic democracy as well as political democracy; we need the complete abolition of the system of working for wages. *Something of the youthful revolutionary ardour of syndicalism is needed if Labour is to have a free life. The men who do the work ought also to control the policy of their industry.*—MR. BERTRAND RUSSELL, in the *Ploughshare*, August, 1916.

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"DOMINUS ILLUMINATIO MEA."

The association of the word "Illuminatio" with the University of Oxford has always seemed to me no less odd than the association of the name of the Lord with the London Stock Exchange; and I can hardly divest myself of a suspicion that in both cases the choice of a motto must have been entrusted to a practical humorist.—KOSMOPOLITES, in the *New Age*, Aug. 17th, 1916.

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THE CASE FOR THE C. L. C.

When the fools
Learn the rules
They will soon
Own the tools!—*Maoriland Worker*.

* * * * *

The real danger of working for the enfranchisement of women was that after a short experience of controversy one came to the conclusion that a much more urgent and necessary step was the disenfranchisement of men.—

REBECCA WEST in the *Star*, August 15, 1916.

The Plebs' Bookshelf

GREEN'S *Short History*—O. HENRY—THE NEW "LABOUR" JOURNAL—CHESTERTON & WELLS—TWO STORIES—THE *Clarion* AND THE *Plebs*, &c.

There is no need to recommend Green's *Short History of the English People* to Plebeians. Until such time as a book is written covering the same field from a definitely proletarian standpoint, it must remain absolutely indispensable—and even then most of us will probably keep it on our bookshelves if only for the sheer sweep and vigour of its style. (The proletarian author, in fact will have his work cut out to surpass John Richard Green in that respect). Two new editions of the *Short History* have recently been published—one by Messrs. Macmillan, revised and enlarged, with an Epilogue by Mrs. J. R. Green (5/- net); the other in the Everyman series, in two vols., with introduction and notes by L. Cecil Jane, and a survey of the period 1815-1914 by R. P. Farley. It is the purpose of this paragraph to recommend *Plebs* readers—very strongly—to spend the extra shilling or two, and go for the former edition. They will not regret it.

The *Short History* was first published in 1874. The copyright in that first edition has therefore just expired, which makes its publication in the Everyman series possible. But in 1888 it was re-issued with extensive revisions by Mrs. Green, herself a historian of little, if any, less repute than her husband; and these revisions are of course not included in the Everyman edition. Above all, the new Macmillan edition contains an "Epilogue" by Mrs. Green, bringing the history down to the year 1914; and one cannot praise the continuation more highly than by saying that henceforth Green's *Short History* will assuredly be described as by two authors, husband and wife, and will cover English history from A.D. 607 to A.D. 1914. The *Times Literary Supplement's* remarks are worth quoting:—

In no other book that we know have the inherent difficulties of "continuation" been so successfully surmounted, though possibly science provides a parallel in Mme. Curie's continuation of her husband's labours. To an original affinity of mind there was added daily co-operation in the same field of historical investigation; and for thirty years since her husband's death Mrs. Green has been carrying on his work. The result is so extraordinary a degree of unity that the keenest-eyed literary critic would find it difficult to determine from internal evidence when J. R. Green laid down the pen and Mrs. Green has taken it up.

Mrs. Green's Epilogue is in two sections—The Social Revolution, 1815-1914, and Foreign and Colonial Policy. It runs to 170 pages—making a volume of over 1,000 pages in all. As the reviewer quoted above remarks—

The Epilogue by itself is well worth the five shillings for which the completed *Short History* can now be bought. War economy itself surrenders with honour to such an offer of terms.

Mrs. Green's Social Revolution section is—within its limits—magnificently done; the story of the workers' struggle, first for bread, and then for political liberty, is inspiring reading. I need not quote more than a simple passage to whet the appetite of Plebeians:—

Any real education the poor created for themselves in working-men's clubs, mechanics' institutes, debating societies, industrial

classes, Sunday schools, or little libraries where the student paid a shilling a month for books and conferences. They learned to read, and had political tracts and newspapers. "Get knowledge," was the cry of the working-classes for the next fifty years, "for in getting knowledge you get power." They discussed political economy, and the new social order which was to put an end to the calamities and humiliations inflicted by the current system. . . . Through the dark underworld of toilers, oppressed, miserably poor, feared and despised, there ran a ferment of thought, a passionate idealism, dreams of a new society, a richer education, a larger humanitarianism, and the hopes of a national fellowship of all who laboured.

The very names in the Index arouse one's interest—Thompson of Cork, Francis Place, Robert Owen, Feargus O'Connor and the Chartists, Marx, Hodgskin, Spence, Cobbett. And there is, one would guess, far too clear a perception of "class" struggles—of Tory landowners, Radical manufacturers and "small masters," and their respective bidding for the support of the workers, ever growing more class-conscious—to make the Epilogue a fit text-book for the W.E.A.

Once again, therefore—wait until you can afford five shillings, and go for the Macmillan edition.

* * * * *

The Rt. Hon. G. W. E. Russell paid a handsome compliment to G. B. S. in an article in the *Daily News* the other day :—

As a rule, (he wrote) I am wholly free from the dramatic illusion. To me a play is a performance, good or bad as the case may be, but bearing little or no relation to reality. An exception to this rule was supplied by *John Bull's Other Island*. When the Liberal Carpet-bagger proclaimed to the Irish peasants the immortal truth that "What Ireland wants is a strong Liberal Government," my own voice came back to me, echoed from the platform of the 'eighties.

That deserves to go alongside the compliment paid to Meredith by R. L. S., when, acutely conscious of certain little (or big) foibles and weaknesses of his own, he nervously asked Meredith if he had taken him as the model for Sir Willoughby Patterne, in *The Egoist*.

* * * * *

It isn't often that an author whose works are boomed in bright and shining wrappers on the bookstalls is really "worth while." Nevertheless, this is really and truly the case with O. Henry, shilling editions of whose volumes of short stories may have lately caught your eye. O. Henry (I take these brief biographical notes from the *Nation*) was born in N. Carolina in 1867. His real name was William Sydney Porter. As a boy he worked on a Texas ranch, and afterwards on a banana farm in Central America. Eventually after a particularly wandering life, he became a newspaper reporter and a contributor to various American magazines. He wrote some 250 short stories; and he died in New York in 1910. Why his stories, in these days of international boomstering, should have been allowed to remain, until quite recently, practically unknown in this country, I can't imagine. Up to now, I have only struck one of his volumes—*Sixes and Sevens*—but that is most certainly going up on the short-story shelf alongside Wells' *Country of the Blind*, Leonard Merrick's *Call from the Past*,* Neil Lyon's *Arthur's*,

*Both published in Nelson's 7d. series.

and such volumes of Kipling as the pressure of the wage-system permits me to afford. There are a curious kind of folk who allege that they cannot read volumes of short stories; these are to be pitied. There are others, superior persons, who, like R. H. C. of the *New Age*, would admit that O. Henry was "a highly original, very entertaining and exceedingly clever popular short-story writer," who "compares with literature as the cinema compares with drama—that is to say, he is not in literature at all." And there is the "damned compact majority" of us who enjoy the cinema as well as the drama, and who, I venture to think, will enjoy O. Henry, not caring a 2d. expletive whether he is "in literature" or not. Take the gentle irony of "The Cop and the Anthem." One Soapy, a tramp, desires to be arrested so that he may spend the winter in a nice, warm goal. He commits one petty crime after another, but his luck is out—no "cop" will oblige him. Night falls, and in the moonlight Soapy leans against the railings of a church, listening to the organ. He repents; he recalls his innocent youth. He will reform; he will do some honest work—and then and there a "cop" arrests him for loitering, and he goes to prison. (This summary is taken from a review in the *Times* Literary Supplement—don't look for the story in *Sixes and Sevens*.) If the Government won't allow you a holiday, you can at least treat yourself to some holiday reading; and you'll certainly put O. Henry up on the bookshelf when you've read him—to be dipped into later, at judicious intervals.

* * * * *

All Plebeians will of course rally to the support of the new "Labour" paper which is to be published under the auspices of the British Workers' National League and under the editorial control of that forceful publicist, Mr. Victor Fisher. "The League," as the advance notice very truly remarks, "is one of the most interesting and purposeful developments of contemporary Labour politics." Most interesting, as Arthur Sinclair used to remark in *Patriots*. The "brilliant group" of contributors is to include such honoured names as Hodge, Lord Buresford, Chiozza Money, Cecil Chesterton, Leo Masxe, and Stanton. There are to be other writers, too, "of almost equal repute." Lord Devonport, perhaps; or maybe, even, that supreme champion of the rights of Labour, the Rt. Hon. David himself? We await the appearance of this latest addition to the comic press with subdued excitement.

* * * * *

G. K. Chesterton had some delightful comments on H. G. Wells in a letter to the *Daily News* (August 2nd.) "Mr Wells," he observed, "is a man of genius in a permanent flux of reaction against himself." He went on to point out a certain inconsistency in recent utterances of Wells'. "The only explanation I can think of is that Mr. Wells has never held an opinion for the requisite number of hours needed to apply it to a series of different problems."

* * * * *

He is a queer party is G. K. C. Why *does* a man who can write good sense on so many subjects turn out tosh like the following (from *Land and Water* August 10th, 1916)?

Prof. Ernest Haeckel is profoundly convinced of the importance of being earnest ; and not a little of the importance of being Haeckel. . . There is a satiric symbol in the fact that his philosophy is called Monism. His very universe has a single eye—like Polyphemus. His world is one idea'd and therefore one-sided. It is a philosophy for a man on a desert island ; when it is not one for a man in a padded cell.

There is much more to the same effect— all about the " soul of Christendom " being perpetually in peril from some demon or other ; now from one that " came out of Eastern deserts— the Mohammedanism of Omar or Othman," and now from another " out of the Northern wilderness—the Monism of men like Haeckel." Why do not Mr. Chesterton and Mr. Belloc ride forth (if horses are bred capable of supporting them—if not they could apply to the " Eastern deserts " for elephants) and do battle, as the Two Champions of Christendom, with a specially selected band of Prussian heathen ; instead of merely slinging ink about in a most unromantic, un-mediaeval, yet (doubtless) financially profitable way ?

* * * * *

I like the story (this does not mean, please, that I am a " pro-German ") of the German in Belgium who, to a Belgian's question, " Then you are not afraid of the judgment of history ? " replied, " History ? It is we who shall write it ! " I like to picture to myself the organs of Patriotism-cum-Profits indignantly putting a similar question to those wicked workers who ask, say, for decent wages in war-time ; and the workers also replying, " History ? *It is we who shall write it.*"

* * * * *

Which reminds me of a *True* story—though I admit it is almost too good to be true. Once upon a time (in August, 1916, to be precise) a non-Socialist was conversing with a Socialist (I was the Socialist). " Then you really think," said the non-Socialist, " that Socialism is making headway in this country ? " The answer was in the affirmative. " Of course," he went on, evidently trying to look on the bright side, " the sort of Socialism you hear about now is very different from what they used to talk about when I was a lad. Socialism then meant just doing away with marriage—Free Love—live with anybody you liked and change partners when you liked. . . . Let me see, what was it they used to call it ? . . . I remember—the *Marxian theory.*" Yes, fellow Marxians, that is the actual transcript of an actual conversation. I've kissed the book as I write these words.

* * * * *

Quite a lot of people—Mr. J. A. Hobson and Mr. Clutton Brock among them, have been waxing indignant over the blow to Liberty of Thought delivered by Cambridge University (or the authorities of a particular college) in depriving Mr. Bertrand Russell of his lectureship. Apparently these simple souls imagined that Liberty of Thought meant Liberty to Think Things Detrimental to the Economic Interests of one's Governors. They will know better in future—perhaps. I don't remember, by the way, that Mr. J. A. Hobson had anything to say about Liberty of Thought when another English University, very quietly but very effectively, made it impossible for a Labour

College to find house-room within its boundaries. But these Libertarians usually have a habit of thinking that there is a Limit to Liberty.

I am asked to state, for the benefit of those hundreds of Plebeians who have ordered copies of W. W. Craik's *History of the Modern Working Class Movement*, that the book is now in the hands of the printers, and will be published shortly. All orders will be executed promptly—as soon as that is possible.

I hope to be able to make some comments next month on a series of lectures on "Trade Unions and Friendly Societies in the Roman Empire," delivered to the members of the Workers' Educational Association at University College, Bangor, by Prof. E. V. Arnold, now being published in the *New Age*. At the time of writing, only the first lecture—"a general sketch of the history of the Roman world"—has appeared; if the later ones are up to the level of this sample, we shall be able to gain considerable edification from this object lesson in W.E.A. "education."

In the *Clarion* of August 18th Miss Hilda Thompson had an article headed "On Roses." In the course of the article the following occurs:—

In the *Plebs Magazine* Mr. J. F. Horrabin, a sometime contributor to these columns, now exalted to the sublimer heights of Pacifism, writes "On Roses" thus:—"What more appropriate subject to write about at midsummer?—even though, in summers gone by, Mr. Blatchford did his best to bore us all to tears with it." Friends of the Fellowship who remember "Bread and Roses" may pause here to yawn and weep again at the remembrance. Then let us all kneel down and pray to be delivered from the mean, biassed, and petty spites and prejudices of patriotism, into the infinite and sunny charity of Pacifism.

There follow some remarks about hollyhocks, and a tortoise belonging to one or other branch of the *Clarion* Royal Family (if you read the *Clarion* you have to be interested in the Family's pets) and then comes this:—

Under the circumstances, I can't find anything to write about except weeds and thorns, and these I prefer to leave to the gentle apostles of red-seeing kindness and furious universal love of the Pacifist Press.

So there! You see what you get if you take the name of Blatchford in vain! I'm not quite sure what it's all about, or why I am branded with the awful name of Pacifist. If Miss Thompson doesn't mind, I should prefer to be described as an International Socialist. Still, one hardly expects anyone on the staff of the *Clarion* to be able to distinguish between the two. And anyhow, if the only alternative to Pacifism is *Sunday Chronicle—Weekly Dispatch—Clarion* jingoism, call me a Pacifist. J. F. H.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Truth and the War. By E. D. Morel. (National Labour Press, 2/- net.)
The Religion of Humanity. By Frederick J. Gould, (price 2d. Watts & Co.)

The "Plebs" League

Object

To further the interests of Independent working-class education as a partizan effort to improve the position of Labour in the present, and ultimately to assist in the abolition of wage-slavery.

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The holding of an Annual Meet: the issuing of a monthly Magazine, mainly devoted to the discussion of the various questions of Labour, theoretical and practical: the formation of local branches and classes for the study of social science, in connexion with the Central Labour College, and in every way to assist in the development of the latter Institution, and its maintenance of a definite educational policy.

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An Executive of five members elected annually, and the Editor of Magazine, who shall be responsible as to publication and meets, &c.

The Magazine shall be 2d. per copy, 2½d. post free.

Subscriptions payable in advance: Quarterly 7½d., Half Yearly 1/3, Yearly 2/6.

☞ The NINTH Annual Meet will be held in London, August 5th, 1917.

P.O.'s TO BE FORWARDED TO

GEO. MELHUISE, Treasurer,

127 Hamlet Gardens,

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