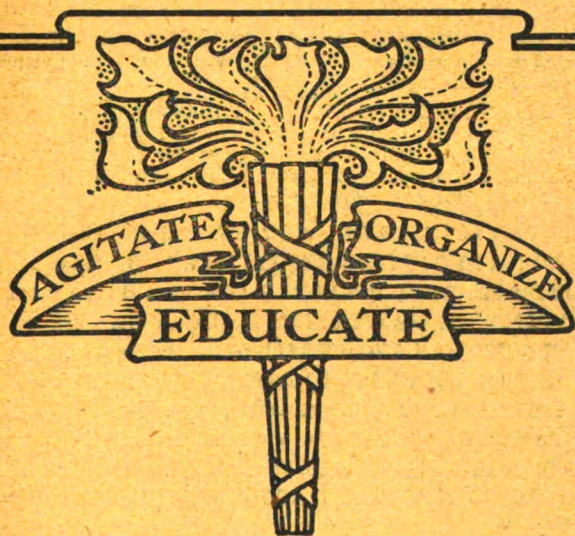


Vol. X., No. 6.

July, 1918.

The
PLEBS
MAGAZINE



*Printed by Fox, Jones & Co., at Kemp
Hall, High St., Oxford, & published
by the Plebs League
at the same address.*

MONTHLY

TWOPENCE

Book Bargains.

LEADERS OF THE PEOPLE. By JOSEPH CLAYTON

Studies in Democratic History in which such well-known figures as Thomas a Becket, Sir Thomas More, Wat Tyle, Jack Cade, Winstanley and Ernest Jones are given prominent notice, making a volume of historical interest to all lovers of democracy. Published at 12/6, for 4/6. Postage 6d.

MODERN SOCIALISM IN ITS HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT. By DR. M. TUGAN BARANOWSKY. Published at 6/-, for 1/9. Postage 4d.

THE LAST EPISODE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION. By E. BELFORD BAX. Published at 6/-, for 3/-. Postage 6d.

PROBLEMS OF MEN, MIND, AND MORALS. By E. BELFORD BAX. Published at 6/-, for 3/-. Postage 5d.

AT THE DAWN OF A NEW REIGN. By Stepniak. Published at 6/-, for 1/6. Postage 4d. Story of Russia, telling all about Siberian horrors.

LEO TOLSTOY: HIS LIFE AND WORK. By PAUL BIRUKOFF. The story of his family origin, childhood, boyhood and youth; his travels, literary and social activities, beautifully told. Published at 6/-, now 3/-. Postage 6d.

"REMINISCENCES OF H. M. HYNDMAN." 2 Vols. Published at 30/-. Our Price 10/-. Postage 6d.

"THE ORIGIN OF THOUGHT AND SPEECH." By M. MONTCALM. Translated from the French by G. S. WHITMARSH. Published at 9/-. Our Price 2/6. Postage 5d.

"HISTORY OF A SLAVE." By SIR H. H. JOHNSON. This book is a work of fiction based upon everyday occurrences in Africa, and is calculated to bring home to the reader the social condition of heathen and Mohammedan Africa and the horrors of the slave trade. Published at 6/-, for 2/-. Postage 5d.

SOCIAL SCIENCE SERIES. (Limp Cloth).

"REVOLUTION AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION." By KARL MARX. 1/6.

"THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION." By CHARLES BEARD. 1/6.

"THE EVOLUTION OF PROPERTY." By LAFARGUE. 1/6.

"SOCIALISM; UTOPIAN AND SCIENTIFIC." By ENGELS. 1/6.

"MONEY AND ITS RELATIONS TO PRICE." By L. L. PRICE. 1/6.

"THE STUDENTS' MARK." By AVELING. 1/6.

"ENGLAND'S IDEAL." By EDWARD CARPENTER. 1/6.

"THEORY OF VALUE." By KARL MARX. 1/6. Postage 4d. each.

"THE ECONOMIC SYNTHESIS: A STUDY OF THE LAW OF INCOME." By LORIA. Published at 10/6, Our Price 4/6. Postage 5d.

"THE ECONOMIC FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIETY." By LORIA. 2/6. Postage 5d.

"COMPOSITION AND STYLE." By R. D. BLACKMAN. 5/-, for 1/8. Postage 4d.

"THE LETTER-WRITER'S VADE-MECUM AND DICTIONARY." 2/6 for 1/3. Postage 4d.

"HISTORY OF EUROPEAN MORALS." By LECKY. 3/-. Postage 5d.

AMERICAN BOOKS ALWAYS KEPT IN STOCK.

WRITE—

Reformers' Bookstall, Ltd., 126, Bothwell St., Glasgow.

A Red x here means that if we don't hear from you (with enclosure) we shall cut off your supply.



THE PLEBS MAGAZINE

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

Vol. X.

July, 1918.

No. 6

CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE CLASS-STRUGGLE IN S. WALES. J. T. W. NEWBOLD	- 145
RECONSTRUCTION OR PATCHWORK? MARK STARR	- 150
THE MEET	- 155
PLEBS PUBLICATION	- 156
CORRESPONDENCE—E. & C.P., NESS EDWARDS	- 156
NEWS OF THE MOVEMENT	- 159
REVIEWS. M.S., J.H., W.H.	- 161
BOOKSHELF	- 165

The Class-Struggle in South Wales

II.

WE have already described succinctly the evolution of industry in Glamorgan and Monmouthshire as it proceeded up to the close of the first quarter of the 19th century and even later, and have, at some length, delineated the social characteristics and economic interests of the capitalist class in that region. We have shown these springing up, both system and class, on a soil unencumbered by any earlier industrial formations and types in what was, virtually, a great wilderness of hills and dales. "What," said Crawshay Bailey, the iron-master of Nantyglo, at an Anti-Chartist meeting in Coalbrookvale in May, 1839, "was the state of this valley 50 years ago? Nothing could be heard from Brynmawr to Aberbeg, but the solitary sound of a blacksmith's hammer, with some two hundred inhabitants, but now may be heard the sound of machinery, employed in converting

the minerals that then lay buried under these mountains into finished iron, and containing a population of 10,000 souls."— (*Merthyr Guardian*.) Crawshay Bailey and his fellow-capitalists held the view, natural enough, when we understand capitalist psychology, which he expressed thus:—" I owe all that I have to my own industry." And we may take it that they were at one with him in adding, " and I would sacrifice my life rather than lose my property."

Those two inter-related statements admirably sum up the attitude adopted by the coal and iron masters towards their possessions, and afford an excellent introduction to a study of those social conditions under which they were content that their wage-workers should labour. We will now leave the employers for a while and go to meet the proletariat as it makes its way into the desolate valleys of West Monmouth and North-East Glamorgan.

We shall find that this stream of immigrants came in from all over South Wales, from the agricultural area of Monmouth east of Pontypool, from Gloucester, Somerset, Devon, Wiltshire and, sometimes, even from Cornwall and that it consisted in great measure of the dispossessed and disinherited, whom the enclosures of the 18th century had driven from the soil, that it was swollen by others whom the high cost of living impelled towards the furnaces and coal mines and by certain adventurous spirits who craved the relative freedom and excitement of industrial life as an escape from the dumb-drudge of the homestead and the village. In so far as it was Welsh and hailed from Cardigan, Pembroke, Caermarthen, Brecon and Radnorshire, it was a simple folk, which, if it had been forced to abandon the old tribal economy for generations or even centuries, still clung to the habits and thoughts of old Wales. It was a people, alien in race, speech, religion and ideas to its new employers and to the English or " Seisson " workers with whom it gradually came in contact. It was bad enough for the English labourer to be dragged into the mine and the factory from the life of his village, but it was far worse for the Welshman and the Irishman, who belonged still to a much more primitive social order. There is something pitiful about the helpless, dazed, exploited and ruthlessly browbeaten Celts who came to make millions for the capitalist invader, who leased from the robber lords the filched land of their fathers. May it be our task to make plain to the Seisson workers of England the wrongs which have made the Welshmen somewhat difficult for them to understand and to build a bridge of sympathy and comprehension across which we can pass to them and they to us, knitting firmer our alliance against the common and hereditary enemy !

The Welshman was a subdued and expropriated occupier of the soil, compelled to bow beneath the yoke of an invading lord who had held him down by force and continued to rule him by means of the

devices of a higher civilisation and superior technique of warfare. Where the lord of the manor or ward was a native Welshman he had conformed to the standards and stared the outlook of the Seisnon usurpers. To the conflict of class was added the conflict of race. Moreover, whilst the Roman Catholic religion had been established in Wales it came as the faith of an invader and the Welsh continued in some degree their allegiance to the earlier Christianity of the Celtic peoples and to the Druidical worship of their tribal past. Hence they had less inclination towards the religious counterpart of feudalism which remained as the doctrinal basis of Anglican Christianity. They rejected the English Church as the state-ordained worship of the land thieves of the Reformation, a pseudo-spiritual police system for holding down the lower orders and consecrating private property in the means of life. Thus the Revival of the early 18th century had taken hold upon the Welsh peasantry, and they had favourably received both Baptism and Methodism, more particularly where these inclined towards the Calvinism so sympathetic to the mentality of a hill-dwelling people. The Welshman, like the Lowland Scot, lived in the 17th and 18th centuries on an infertile soil, where subsistence could be won in the sweat of his brow, but no more than bare livelihood gained with such tools as he commanded. He felt himself in sympathy with the hill-tribesmen of Judea, recognised their life as akin to his own and adopted their place names for his chapels and their personal names for his children.

But his Dissent expressed itself in congregational and institutional forms of his own, reflecting the traditions of his past. These forms he transplanted from his agricultural to his industrial surroundings and placed his tabernacles in Dowlais and Tredegar, so that in his economic and political agitations we find him a Non-conformist, and in his utterances and actions very often a clansman harking back, as Jesus of Nazareth himself and his stormy comrades, Boanerges, appear to have done, to primitive communism and the tribal brotherhood.

Without adequate recognition of the influence which their religious life had upon the people in all their activities, it would be well nigh useless to attempt to examine the early labour movement in South Wales, or, for that matter, to comprehend its peculiarities at the present time.

The people down in Caermarthenshire and the South West generally, who came trekking up to Merthyr, lived under the most miserable circumstances, in little better than mud-huts, or what the Scotch would call "clachans," the floors were of mud, the rooms were small, the beds were shut off in cupboards as in Scotland, and the ventilation was execrable. Drainage simply did not engage attention, and the amenities of a healthy existence were utterly ignored. Hence when they came up to Hirwain, to Merthyr

or to Blaenavon they may not have found their lodgment so bad except that it tended to be very congested and housing construction did not keep pace with the demand for labour. We learn that, at the last-named place at the close of the 18th century, Cox, in his tour of Monmouthshire, found the workers housed beneath the arches of a tramway bridge near the furnaces. The Commissioners enquiring into the Physical and Moral Condition of the Children and Young Persons employed in Mines in 1843 reported that "perhaps the most miserable hovels inhabited by the working people are to be found in the neighbourhood of the Hirwain Works, and they derive a more comfortless appearance from the barren surface of the plain in which they are situated. Many of these are nothing more than mud cabins, in many instances a deserted cowshed converted into a human habitation; a rude thatch forms the roof, and apparently to avoid the storms that sweep along that plain, they are built in every hollow that can be found where of course they receive the drainage of the surrounding elevations. . . . A more cheerless place could scarcely be found in South Wales." (Para. 122, p. 490.) Jellinger Symons, a Commissioner, writing in 1855, said:—"The annals of human filth and grime . . . nowhere present anything worse than Merthyr . . . not only is it devoid of drainage, or any possible means of removing filth from the immediate vicinity of the dwellings, but no supply of water is provided, and nearly all that comes into the place is brought on the heads of women in pitchers."—(*Industrial Capacities of South Wales*, p. 18). In 1843, there were not ten privies in the village of Blackwood. Such were the homes and such the location of the homes whereto the proletariat came, into a land that soon teemed "with grime, and all the slatternly accompaniments of animal power and moral disorder, with scarcely a ray of mental or spiritual intelligence."—(*Report of the Enquiry into the State of Education in Wales* (Monmouthshire). Vol. XXVII., Part II., p. 291.)

The immigrants came, "rude and primitive agriculturists, living poorly and thinly scattered," to be "smelters and miners, wantoning (sic!) in plenty and congregated in the densest accumulations." R. W. Wheeler Lingen tells us how "An incessant tide of immigration sets in from the former extreme to the latter, and by perpetuating a common character in each, admits of their being contemplated under a single point of view. Externally, indeed, it would be impossible to exhibit a greater contrast in the aspect of two regions and the circumstances of their inhabitants, than by comparing the country between the rivers Towy and Teifi, with Merthyr, Dowlais, Aberdare, Maesteg, Cwm Afon, and the vales of Neath and Swansea. Yet the families, which are daily passing from the one scene to the other, do not thereby change their relative position in society. A new field is open to them, but not a wider. They are never masters, and if the rural portion of them does not

grow in numbers, nor manifest any fresh activity, while the other is daily augmented and put upon fresh or more extended enterprizes, the difference is to be sought in the classes to which they are severally subjected and not in themselves. It is still the same people. Whether in the country or among the furnaces, the Welsh element is never found at the top of the social scale, nor in its own body does it exhibit much variety of gradation. In the country, the farmers are very small holders, in intelligence and capital nowise distinguished from labourers."—(*Reports of the Commissioners of Enquiry into the State of Education in Wales, 1847.* (Carmarthen, Glamorgan, and Pembroke, pp. 2 and 3.)

Here we have the picture of the Welsh, an agricultural folk, a subject people, serving "the Scisson" either as agrarian or as industrial capitalist, as bourgeois or as feudalist, a community of equals in economic and social status, amongst whom private property, however tenaciously grasped and eagerly sought, is but in its infancy. We are told that the tongue of the Welshman "is a language of old-fashioned agriculture, of theology, and of simple rustic life, while all the world about him (in his new environment) is English." "Cut off from . . . the practical world, his mental faculties . . . have hitherto been exerted almost exclusively upon theological ideas. In this direction too . . . his worship, like his life, has grown different from that of the classes over him" (*Ibid.*). This sympathetic and kindly observer tells us, moreover, of the Sunday Schools, in which, he said, the Welsh had had conspicuous success, that "the constitution throughout is purely democratic, presenting an office and some sort of title to almost every man who is able and willing to take an active part in its administration, without much reference to his social position during the other six days of the week . . . these schools . . . the topics in them are those of the most general interest; and are treated in a manner partly didactic, partly polemical, partly rhetorical, the most universally appreciated. Finally, every man, woman and child feels at home in them. . . . It is all among neighbours and equals. . . . Common habits of thought pervade all. . . . They are intelligible or excusable to one another. . . . They are real fields of mental activity. The Welsh working man rouses himself for them. Sunday is to him more than a day of bodily recreation and rest. It is his best chance, all the week through, of showing himself in his own character."—(*Ibid.*, p. 3.) When we are informed, also, what was true at that time, "this mining and manufacturing community . . . contains no middle class, such as those who commonly constitute a vestry," we understand what all this most illuminating study signifies. The reader of Engels and Lafargue will see in these Dissenting Sunday Schools, latter day expressions of the folk life and popular customs of an earlier period. He will see his grandparents, if he is a Welshman, congregating together in Cal-

vary, Bethel, Hermon or Sion, on the one day when they were not needed to create surplus-value, shutting the door upon the outside world of Egyptian bondage, of Babylonian captivity, drawn apart as a peculiar and chosen people to worship and to glorify their conception of the Godhead, a god who dwelt in the hearts of an agricultural people, after a manner hallowed by custom and wondrous solacing. Let him remember that there was none, or next to, no middle class, that Lord Rhondda's grandfather was emerging from wage-slavery at Cyfarthfa, and that David Davis had just opened a little shop of all sorts in Aberdare or Herwain, whilst David Davies, of the Ocean Collieries, was a sawyer in Cardigan, and Thos. Powell had not sunk pits in the Aberdare Valley. The whole generation of native capitalists was yet incipient, and the master-class was overwhelmingly English in composition. If he will observe these facts he will, maybe, understand better some of the problems even of his own generation. He will have more sympathy with the old school of trade unionists and comprehend how natural it is that the Welshman should be loth to recognise, find it hard to discern the cleavages which modern capitalism has so recently driven in the ranks of his people, dividing them into capitalists, lower middle-class and proletarians with conflicting interests and irreconcilable points of view.

J. T. WALTON-NEWBOLD.

(To be continued.)

Reconstruction or Patchwork ?

I have just read a series of Essays, *Labour and Capital after the War* (Murray 8/-). Even before perusal the word "after" set me thinking. What grounds have we for believing that the War will make all things new and in the "after" period we shall witness the removal of all former antagonisms and a speedy reconstruction of a right and proper sort? So-called peace had her atrocities no less renowned than war. The breaking up of homes through unemployment; the slaughter of the industrial combatants, and also of the women and children non-combatants by the thousands; the sweeping away of the small business by the competition of the larger; the effective Press censorship, or biassed misrepresentation of all matters concerning the working-class; the general insecurity of life with its never-ending anxiety—these things have not been introduced, but only enlarged by the War, which has packed "the changes of an age into a few years," and which often threatens to destroy our true perspective. It is well to cultivate long memories and, when those people who supported the above and strenuously opposed reconstruction of the social order, begin to admit the necessity of change, to scrutinise their motives. "Beware of the Greeks when they bring gifts."

Perhaps these thoughts put me outside of "all the thoughtful and patriotic men and women" to whom the Rt. Hon. H. J. Whitley, M.P., commends this book. To him what is at stake is "our" place of industrial supremacy

in the world. It was good to find that some of the essayists did not share his opinion, and saw greater issues than the national one.

Unfortunately the Bishop of Birmingham is not one of these. For him class union and patriotism must continue, because "From what one may call the merely commercial point of view (even Bishops have to notice things like that) the fullest energy will be required from all if we are to hold our own in the markets of the world. The German is not dead, and, as a poorer man, a partially overthrown man, he will have to buckle to in order once more to get "a place in the sun." Those educators who have insisted that capital is dead accumulated wealth, existing only in its command over the unpaid living labour of the wage-worker, and who have ridiculed out of court "the directive ability" and "risk" explanations of profits will find confirmation from the Bishop. Listen :

The unsatisfactory part of much of our present-day business is that there is no direct contact between those who profit and those who labour. . . . How many of those who profit by our great Industrial Companies trouble their heads about the housing of the workers, the training of the children of their employees, the possibilities of recreation for those who labour, or, indeed, about any part of their life story."

He is less happy when he is advocating "as a necessary qualification for England's future, the sense of discipline of which the majority of the men and an increasing number of women have learnt to appreciate" (!) during the last three years. The impossibility of absolute freedom we know; but we ask by whom and for what is this discipline to be wielded? According to our essayist, "England had got somewhat out of hand before the war. She is now, on the whole, living in accordance with the requirements of a wholesome life. . . ." Comment is superfluous!

Mr. J. R. Clynes comes nearer to reality in the next essay: "The gain of Labour must be substantial, and must be in the clear terms of money benefit." How sordid! The contradiction of harmony arising from the fact that gain of Labour means loss of profit he evades by speaking of the immense advantage which would accrue to the nation as a whole. The larger part of his essay is an analysis of why workmen strike, and why they are going to rightly and continually demand more out of life. Here again is a tendency which will inevitably annihilate "the right kind of atmosphere and mutual interest" in those representative committees in the works for which Mr. Clynes wishes.

Lord Leverhulme, with a vision of a new heaven and earth is the next. He even goes so far as to say: "The tool-user must become *joint* owner of the tools he wields." Think of that, you wage-slaves. With Capital and Management you are to have an equal share of the profits of trade and commerce. Welfare work, shorter hours, increased leisure, better houses and education all make for increased productivity to this far-sighted captain of industry. The six-hour day will not be the cause of loafing. Oh, no! Along with continued education:

The men will receive military training and drill and gain in physical development, and the unmarried women will learn sick-nursing and household management and other useful occupations.

Germany's methods of furthering trade must be imitated; and to end a glorious picture of the future Leverhulme says: "We can all make money (apparently the *summum bonum* for which all must live) by each doing his or her share of the work. . . ." Every student is aware that the rub between capital and labour is not in *doing* the work but in *dividing* the product.

Miss A. M. Anderson gives a terse account of women's war-time entry into the workshop, the dilution of labour, and of the problems arising therefrom. "The part they have played during the war itself bids women rise generally from the passive subordinate position hitherto mainly held in industry and consciously take their share in control, as fellow-producers with men, with their other point of view, now of supreme importance to the life of the nation." Mr. R. H. Tawney then contributes the best essay in the book. He has viewed the war not from the safety of an editor's chair, a War Aims or recruiting platform, or a politician's bench, but from actual contact.

The publicists and politicians who think that the situation can be met by speeding up the economic machine, and by giving all classes a share in the increased output, while leaving their relative position and status unaltered, are building castles on land already cut off by the sea.

Mr. Tawney has a truer perspective than many of his fellow-essayists, for he writes:—

We have to revise the work, not of four years, but of one hundred and fifty. The quarrel is not merely with the catastrophic changes of 1914 to 1919, but with the economic order of the age which began with the spinning jenny and ended with the great war of 1760 to 1914. *Social Reconstruction either means Social Revolution, or it means nothing.*

A good description of the incidents and details of our wage-slavery; then follows a recognition that the proposed Industrial Councils can only be regarded as "a transitional arrangement"; an outline of the future management of administration closely akin to the Bolshevik one, by the organized workers, by which they will secure corporate power to control the conditions upon which their livelihood depends; and a suggestion that, while nationalisation of industry, however complete, does not emancipate the wage-earner. We recommend Mr. Tawney to get out of the mixed company of this book and issue his essay in a form more fit for wider distribution, even though its effect would be disturbing in some W.E.A. circles that we know.

Next to "the meat" of Mr. Tawney comes the war-bread of F. Dudley Docker, C.B. He rejoices that in the trenches has been healed the old class division which, prior to the war, assumed such dangerous dimensions. Sound and amicable relations must be established between Capital and Labour as an indispensable condition to the increased productivity of labour, this again being absolutely necessary so that the Empire can regain commercial supremacy. The short-sightedness of the employer who cuts down the rates when men earn too much is deplored:—

The difficulty is to induce the workman to do as much as he can. Here is an instance known when the workmen "knocked off" work at 3 o'clock in the afternoon to avoid earning enough to make them liable for income tax.

What wickedness ! They should, of course, have secured the services of a paid agitator, a trust lawyer, who would have shown them how to disguise their income and baffle taxation in other ways.

Mr. F. S. Button (A.S.E.) sketches the functions of (1) Workshop Committees ; (2) Central Works Councils ; (3) Local District Boards, and (4) National or Industrial Councils, as they would apply, especially in his own industry. But throughout he hesitates over whether on either side there is the will to peace. He hints at the deadlock which is likely to arise over the distribution of the increased wealth produced ; is somewhat muddled in his thinking to regard the State as representing communal interests and capable of stepping in and ordering the warring parties to meet ; and he reconciles these proposed new bodies with the existing craft unions. Mr. Button does not seem to have heard about the Shop-Stewards movement !

A coal and ironmaster, Sir Hugh Bell, in a frank mood, next, like Dudley Docker, he had noticed "the dangerous symptoms" of the commercial situation and the alarming attitude of Labour in the pre-war period. Sir Hugh is old-fashioned enough to deprecate Governmental interference in trade, and especially when it "sins against the light" by recognising a minimum wage and an eight-hour day. He finely attacks "the predatory theory of trade" and retains much more of the Manchester outlook than Leverhulme and Docker. Then, for the enlightenment of the world in general, he enlarges upon "the risk" borne by the employer who often has to find (not earn or save, mark you) and expend a huge sum of money in wages before he can draw his 10 per cent. More and more machinery is needed, heavier and heavier are the taxes, and, the 10 per cent. being sacrosanct, in the search for economy, "The obvious item for attack is the Labour Bill."

He says it is impossible to come to any agreement as to what is "a living wage." And though previously pointing out that increased wages means lessened profit, now endeavours to prove that the only result of the former will be higher prices. For if profits are limited then capital—patriotism forgot—will go elsewhere, and Sir Hugh—anti-State as he is—thinks disaster would follow attempts at interference. His query, "If capital is to be laid under a writ of *ne exeat*, shall labour come under a like ban?" finds its answer in the recent restriction of the emigration, not of capital, but of labour.

Strangely enough A. Susan Laurence wants more of what Sir Hugh Bell wants less, *i.e.*, State interference with wages and hours, especially with those of the women in industry. She able proves by eloquent tables that, prior to the war, women's wages did not meet their actual needs, and narrates the good work performed by the National Federation of Women Workers and other unions in getting the lowest rate of women on munition work fixed at about 6d. per hour. Other points made are the bad effect on production of long hours and the need for further extension and speeding up of the Trade Boards Act. That working-class improvement cannot be a national affair she shows by stating that "the transference of the fur-pulling trade from London to the Continent is due to the enforcement of exceedingly moderate sanitary conditions." The forces that made for national will also make for

international working-class organisations. Members one of another and strong as the weakest link.

Mr. B. Seebohm Rowntree, in his essay, utters the now familiar refrain :—
 “ . . . We must as a nation learn to *make* wealth more rapidly.” He, like some of the others eager for reconstruction, does not wish to discuss “ whether modern industry rests upon the best possible basis.” Personal and class bias must be put aside to secure “ *national* prosperity and abiding *national* greatness.” Efficient management and labour-saving machinery must make good Labour’s demands to improve its position. The master and servant relation must go, and Mr. Rowntree gives a rough outline of Councils of employers and employees which, with all their failings, are an improvement upon those proposed in the Admiralty Dockyards, with their five years employment qualification before an employee can be allowed a share even in the shadowy nominal control mooted. But in Mr. Rowntree’s scheme all real power is still in the employer’s hand. The rest of the essay details the obstacles to, and reiterates the need for, “ a better mutual understanding between Capital and Labour,” leaving, of course, the basis intact.

The editor of this 280-page book, Prof. S. J. Chapman, C.B.E., has little to add in his concluding essay. He dwells upon the various incentives that must be given to the worker, upon the beneficial psychic effect of being taken into the boss’s confidence and of being given security of life and freedom from arbitrary dismissal. And be sure “ this question is not one of sentiment merely, but of good business. . . .” Self-determination—for which the Allies are fighting (!)—is to be applied to the workshop and we have to learn “ to be less class-conscious.” The first Whitley Report—still left to lie on the table so far as organized labour is concerned—is included.

Reconstruction warranted not to be dangerous to the existing system is of no use to the working-class, it being only the latest attempt of capitalism to avoid the militancy of its own offspring. After, as before the war, labour, by its own organized strength, will have to seek for negative and positive control of industry. Increased productivity, yes. But only with the purpose of securing, not commercial supremacy, but a fuller, freer life for all. M.S.

SECOND EDITION NOW READY.

THE BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION :
ITS RISE AND MEANING
By MAXIM LITVINOFF

(Plenipotentiary of the Russian People’s Government to
 Great Britain.)

With Foreword by E. C. FAIRCHILD.

1/3 net. Post Free, 1/4½. (Branch Rates 13/6 per dozen,
 Post Free.)

ORDER AT ONCE TO SAVE DISAPPOINTMENT.

B.S.P., 21a Maiden Lane, Strand, London, W.C. 2,

THE MEET.

—:O:—

THE TENTH ANNUAL MEET of the Plebs League will be held, by kind permission of the Governors, at the Labour College, 13 Penywern Road, Earls Court, S.W., on **Monday, August 5th, at 1.30 p.m.**

Resolutions for the Agenda should be sent to the Secretary, 176 Springvale Road, Sheffield, not later than July 18th.

The London Plebs Committee have kindly offered to arrange a social and dance for the evening. This will commence at 6.30 p.m. Owing to war conditions, comrades are asked to take special notice of the following:—

The early hour of starting due to the fact that we shall have to finish at 10.30 p.m. We must begin at 1.30 p.m. prompt.

Tea can only be provided for those comrades who send in their names to Mrs. Ida Chaytor, 13 North Road, Clapham Park, London, S.W., *before July 27th.*

Comrades are requested to make their own arrangements about lodgings. The Secretary is unable to undertake this.

Although only Members of the League can vote on the resolutions we take this opportunity of extending a hearty invitation to all friends interested in the aims and work of the League, whether Members or not.

MONDAY, AUGUST 5th, at 1.30 p.m. prompt.

SECOND EDITION READY SHORTLY.

THE SOCIALISM OF KARL MARX

By A. E. COOK.

Price 3d. Trade 2/3 for 13.

Tremendous value for the money. 32 pages with illustration. Contains an interesting sketch of the life of Marx, together with a simple and concise statement of the fundamentals of Marxian Socialism.

**Orders to A. J. Solomons, 12, Binnie Place, Monteith Row,
Glasgow**

Plebs Publications

The reference to "Editor's Knee" in last month's Magazine brought us a good sized donation, and also a good-sized list of single-copy subscribers from an energetic enthusiast. We are faced with a doubled paper bill for July (more of this later!), so that appeals look very much as if they would become "chronic" in the near future. We regret this, but until the war stops we have no choice but to ask everyone to help us to their utmost.

The secretary of the Cwmpark Economics Class sends us the following, which we recommend to all class secretaries. In reference to "Helps to the study of *Capital*":—

The above was under discussion at our Economics & History Class on Friday last, and it was agreed among the students that, in the event of same being published in a pamphlet form, our Class was prepared to take over a good number and to see that they would be well advertised in these parts. We feel as many others do, that this is a long-felt want to beginners in the study of *Capital*. We hope other classes will take up a similar attitude, and that help will not be wanting in the publication of this helpful pamphlet, which will not only assist, but encourage, the study of *Capital*.

Further announcement in due course. Write and tell us what you think about it, and what you are prepared to do.

We want to call the attention of all class secretaries and comrades who aspire to start a class for the winter, to the fact that we can supply propaganda in the form of leaflets, "How to Start a Social Science Class" and "Short Study Outlines"—2/6 per hundred. Also a judicious planting of "That" pamphlet may result in a good reaping afterwards—1/3 per dozen; 9/- per 100. Prepare the ground now.

You are specially requested to send part, or all of your account, including July, to the secretary, EARLY in the month. We want a good balance sheet this year, and donations towards this will not be refused.

Correspondence

TERMINOLOGY.

DEAR COMRADE,—We can attempt no more than a brief answer to friendly critics of our centenary article on Marx, for we are in an out-of-the-way place, without even a copy of the May *Plebs* to refer to. In the matter of terminology, J.R.'s pragmatic test is our own. When we write, "we prefer to speak of 'the economic interpretation of history,' rather than of 'the materialist conception'"; it is because we consider that in actual practice the former expression serves better to convey to the average mind part of the essential core of Marxist ideas. The core is Marx, but the phrasing is far more Engels than Marx. Doubtless Marx and Engels developed their ideas upon materialism in *The Holy Family*, published at Frankfort in 1845; but in the standard statement of the doctrine found in the preface to Marx's *Critique of Political Economy* (1857), we do not find the actual terms "historical materialism" and "materialist conception of history"; finally, as Bernstein writes in his article on Marx in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*: "The theory is in *Das Capital* only laid down by implication." The characteristics of the theory

are not in dispute. It is, as Engels writes in his *Historical Materialism* (S.L.P. Edition, p. 9), "That view of the course of history which seeks the ultimate cause and the great moving power of all important historic events in the economic development of society, in the changes in the modes of production and exchange, in the consequent division of society into distinct classes, and in the struggles of these classes against each other." Now the question we raised was whether "the materialist conception of history" is the best name to give to this theory.

But our critic goes a great deal further, for he tells us that the question is whether the "economic interpretation" or the "materialist conception . . . will the most thoroughly and correctly explain *all* the facts of the universe." This bold phrase seems to us to show that J.R., though he tells us that "materialism . . . gives the death-blow to metaphysics," is himself talking metaphysics rather than Marxism—for metaphysics is the general name given to the vast number of premature attempts to explain *all* the facts of the universe, to give an answer to the question, "What really exists?" As F. A. Lange, the historian of materialism (and a socialist to boot), maintains, "Neither materialism nor any other metaphysical system has a valid claim to ultimate truth." Engels, in the pamphlet already quoted, makes much of materialism as a counterblast to religion, but surely it is possible nowadays to discard the forms of metaphysics incorporated in religion without adopting that other form of metaphysics known as materialism!

This question of the revision of terminology is as difficult as it is important. Words have no permanently fixed signification. Abstract terms, above all such terms as "rationalist," "realist," and "materialist," often come in the course of centuries to acquire a new meaning which is the precise opposite of the earlier one. When such a transition is taking place, much confusion is apt to arise, and it behoves those who are advocating the use of a term in a new sense to walk warily. For example, we personally happen to think that the new use forced by Marx on the term "bourgeois," which has been unhesitatingly adopted into the every-day speech of France and Italy, and perhaps less unhesitatingly into the every-day speech of Germany, is destined to prevail in the English language also. Like other English neo-Marxists, we therefore use "bourgeois" in the Marxist sense, in defiance of the protests of many of our fellow-members of the I.L.P. On the other hand, we have ourselves protested against the tendency of ultra-Marxists in this country to restrict the use of the term "capital" so as to make it a mere synonym of the term "exploiting capital" (Marx sometimes uses "capital" in the more general sense in which the word is used by bourgeois economists, and sometimes in the narrower sense above mentioned). As to the phrase "materialist conception," the Marx-English use may prove victorious, but if so it will be at the cost of a needless risk of confusion. The sting lies in the tail of the word, in the "ist" or the "ism." If we were to speak merely of the preponderant significance of "material" causation in social and political life, the danger of misinterpretation would be slight. Still, for the reasons suggested, we prefer (if J.R. will pardon the phrase) to speak of the "economic foundations of society." We will look up Engels' criticism of Loria as soon

as opportunity offers, but we may say that though we do not accept Loria (or Marx) as an exclusive "intellectual guide," our interest in the Italian economist is based upon a first-hand study of his writings.

The passages M.S. quotes from Kautsky's *Ethics* throw a valuable light upon what we wrote concerning the parent conflict between Russia's economic development and her ideas. As to Engels, what we said about that writer was an impression rather than a charge. But we will endeavour to provide chapter and verse in a later letter, when we once more have access to our books.

Yours fraternally, E. & C.P.

"FREETHOUGHT" AND THE LABOUR MOVEMENT.

SIR,—Comrades Paul, in answering my letter say that Plebeians do not utilize (or shall I say waste) their time in freethought propoganda, but rather devote all their time and energy to advocating socialism. Evidently Plebeians must think that socialist propoganda is the best method of making class-conscious rebels and that "Freethought" is secondary. I think that Comrades Paul's case can be summed up in two sentences, ". . . a worker whose mind is still filled with the fogs of mediaevalism will not hearken to the voice of the Marxist, charm he never so wiesly. Freethought propoganda may not be an end in itself, but it clears the ground." I should like to ask Comrades Paul how do they account for the existence of a large Marxian movement in South Wales, which place is noted for its "little bethels" and mystical ideas? I suggest that it is the result of the charming of the Marxists coupled with the conditions. It is not the result of an early freethought propoganda. The workers, after all, generally speaking, do not give a toss for religion. They are more concerned about horse-racing, football, etc. Industrial areas are not famed for their puritanical atmosphere, and the clergy say that the large towns and cities are the homes of vice. It is rather peculiar that one school bewails the licentiousness of the workers, whilst the other school prate about the religious tendencies of the workers. Undoubtedly there is a section of the workers who are religious, but by freethought propoganda they are almost always alienated. To clear the ground by freethought propoganda is generally unnecessary, and I suggest that it entails far more time and opposition among the religious section than does class-conscious socialism. Then again there is the question of the principles of the freethought philosophy and the best method of dealing with them is by quoting Lefargue. In his *Religion of Capital* he makes Prof. Felix Adler say the following :—

"It is undeniable that character, in the masses, is affected by their material conditions, not their material condition by their character. Now then, by our preaching the opposite doctrine, by our exhorting the people to try and change their character first—matters not how freethinking or atheistic we may be—we take the wind out of the sails of Socialism. . . . You have no idea how many people may be fooled in that way . . . we seem to agree with the final aim of Socialism—yet in our practice we act contrariwise, by retarding the prac-

tical methods to that end . . . we seem to wish to move away from present conditions, which we affect to condemn, and on the condemnation of which we bestow our prettiest phrases—yet we induce the people to busy and wear themselves out with profitless, petty and hopeless methods of reform . . . ; we admit the possibility of happiness on earth, thereby getting the people on our side, and then we render that possibility an impossibility by striving for it falsely.”

The quotation of Loria's in Comrades Paul's letter, I suggest, applies quite as well to the freethought school. Freethought can be used for the same purpose in a more scientific community as religion is used, in a less enlightened community. The latter portion of the letter is used in explaining the function of religion. I contend that the freethought school is never engaged in explaining the function of religion, that is generally left for the Marxists, is it not rather employed in the negation of religion. I humbly suggest it is far better to tell the workers of their position in society, to talk of conditions, trade-unionism, and of those things which directly concern them. Tell how they are exploited and immediately you have their attention. This is the best way to enlighten the workers as to their true position in society. In this way the workers get to know of the *function of all institutions in society* and become rebels who know their real enemy. I think Plebeians will agree that freethought propaganda can be left to the middle-class intellectuals, and that the workers must concentrate on independent working-class education as the best method of enlightening our class.

Yours fraternally,

NESS EDWARDS (TILLERY),

We are reluctantly compelled to hold over the letters of W. E. Walker, E. R. Robinson, L. Benson, Alex Evans, and Fred Casey, also the short articles of Will Lawther and “H.A.” We therefore crave the indulgence of our comrades.

News of the Movement

Most of the classes are suspended for the summer months, but from all over come promises of a big offensive for the winter and hints that classes are to be formed in unheard of places. Quite a number of classes are keeping their students together by means of rambles, and we know of a number of rural spots far from the madding crowd, the sanctity of which has been desecrated by heated arguments about the Materialist Conception of History—or is it the Economic Interpretation?

* * * * *

The LONDON Marx Centenary Committee send us the following:—

COMRADES,—We are anxious to get on with the proposed monument to celebrate the Centenary of the birth of Marx. The international significance of a monument subscribed for *during the war* will be greater than that of a score erected at our leisure any other time. To this end we appeal to you to collect and forward subscriptions as speedily as possible. Later on the idea of a Marx memorial may develop into something far greater—an international effort—but we, with the grave in our midst, have our

opportunity now. The cemetery authorities have kept the piece of ground next to Marx's grave vacant, feeling sure that sooner or later it would be wanted for a purpose such as ours.

We propose to purchase the ground and there erect the monument. Comrades, we confidently appeal to you to see the matter through.

Signed **IDA CHAYTOR** (Plebs League); **P. DARBY** (London May Day Committee); **A. SINCLAIR** (Com. Club); **G. TANNER** (B.S.P.); **J. WALMSLEY** (S.L.P.).

Subscriptions to Sec. Marx Cent. Com., 21A Maiden Lane, W.C. 2.

* * * * *

While wishing our friends success in their efforts we cannot help feeling that a monument is rather a waste of money just at the present time.

This paragraph from the *Daily Express*, 17th June, 1918, may produce a pained smile:—

" ALL FOR THAT ? "

LENIN SENDS £100,000 FOR A MONUMENT TO MARX.

M. Lenin has issued a decree directing M. Litvinoff, the Bolshevik Envoy in London, to give 1,000,000 roubles (nominally £100,000) to the family of Karl Marx for the erection of a monument on the latter's grave.—**REUTER.**

* * * * *

One comrade suggests that the Russian Revolution itself is a monument to Marx, and another that £100,000 should be enough—if the monument were marble, to prevent a Marxian resurrection! He goes on to say: "The best way to perpetuate the memory of Marx would be to establish a Fund for the purpose of translating and publishing the remaining writings of Marx (only about one-third of his writings are available in the English language) into English. Also the writings of Engels and other prominent Marxian scholars. By this method it would be possible for all the writings of Marx to be placed within reach of the working class in this country, thereby enabling us to build up a movement that will be a permanent living and lasting monument worthy of Marx and one which we can show to all inquirers. Let us be able to say—**BEHOLD, LOOK AT HIS WORK!**"

* * * * *

Just to reassure our friends we state that we have not seen any of the roubles—and also that if even a tenth part of them come our way we promise a "monument" that will paralyze the *Daily Express*! Meanwhile, we will slowly keep on building our own contribution to the memory of Marx.

From **LIVERPOOL**, J. Hamilton writes: To co-ordinate the work and help to organize Social Science Classes for next winter in this district, a meeting will be held of those interested on Saturday, July 6th, at 8 p.m., at the B.W.I.U. Social Club, 10 Mill Lane, Islington, Liverpool. We should like a bumper meeting from which a strong Committee could be elected to carry on the propaganda for independent education to counteract the work of the W.E.A.

Liverpool Plebeians, please note.

* * * * *

The **DONCASTER** Trades & Labour Council Tutorial Class are keeping students together by country rambles which, if the first held on May 26th is a sample, will be very successful and enjoyable. The sec., T. M. Williams, Adwick-le-Street, Doncaster, will be glad to supply particulars to Plebeians in the district.

* * * * *

Sheffield is maintaining its reputation by boldly launching on a Labour College scheme. A course of thirteen lectures are to be given by comrades on Sundays, 3 p.m., at the Nat. Fed. Offices, 63 Blonk Street, beginning with **Fred Shaw** on "Evolution," on June 23rd, and ending September 15th with

J. T. Murphy on "The Modern Working-class Movement." Space does not permit a reproduction of the whole series, which we hope will be very enthusiastically attended. The handbills announcing the lectures give a very good little list of books for study.

* * * * *

V.L.T. reports: The Labour candidate who came within a few hundreds of being M.P. for Winsbeck, was no other than "Ebby" Edwards. And he proved that the C.L.C. can produce the goods, by his smart handling of his shipowner opponent. So the general election will find us with an M.P. We're moving, lads! We have received during the month the affiliation to our district of the Blaydon Co-op. Society, with a membership of 15,000. Other districts, please note, as this is a field that needs cultivation, to-day's problems are making Co-operators look for a new lead. Verb. Sap. Arising out of this affiliation a debate is to take place between Will Lawther and J. McKay, ex-organizer for Ruskin College. Venue, possibly Crawcrook. Will all readers in Durham and Northumberland who desire agenda of the Annual Meeting of the North of England Branch of C.L.C. write T. Ethell, 70 James Street, Newcastle.

* * * * *

Will Lawther, who has been elected delegate for the Durham Miners to attend the T.U. Congress at Derby in September, asks: "Can't we have a meeting there? I never like to miss any opportunity of pushing our point of view, and there is sure to be a good number of our chaps there. Ablett, and others from Wales and elsewhere." Now it is up to Plebeian delegates to Congress to help Lawther organize a good meeting in Derby.

* * * * *

Two or three comrades have written calling our attention to Ebby Edwards' election success, and asking for special mention in the Magazine. Congratulations to our comrade, who has been with us and of us from the first. We refuse, however, to express surprise that he has done so well. We know our men can do things, and the strength and wealth of our movement is in the hundred and one Ebby's who work with us. The election will be a spur to greater effort.

Reviews

Savage Survivals. By J. Howard Moore (2s. 6d., cloth; paper, 1. 6d. Watts & Co.). That this book is in the list of Kerr & Co. (incidentally at a higher price) is an indication of its usefulness to social science students. Many Plebeians are also familiar with that fascinating popularisation of human evolution, *The Law of Biogenesis*, from the same pen and publishing house. The book now made more easily available, runs to nearly 160 pp., and has over twenty small illustrations. Mr. Adam Gowans Whyte, in the introduction, welcomes it as an efficient explanation of the problem of evil: "*The instinct of self-preservation, so necessary in days when man was a hunted animal, manifests itself in various forms of selfishness and cowardice. The sex-instinct, which has to be imperative to enable a species to maintain itself, has become, in our more sheltered and controlled existence, the source of manifold sins and crimes. Stealing, cheating, lying, vanity, the love of fighting, the instinct of revenge, race hatred: these and a hundred other deplorable habits and qualities had their sanction long ago. What we now call evil is the surge*

of these ancient forces through the crust of civilisation." He, too, emphasises the encouragement, inspiration, hope for the future and charity for misdoers begotten by looking at "humanity struggling upward through the ages, bearing the burden of ancient habits and savage impulses, yet slowly straightening itself to the mastery of them."

The book has five parts, two being concerned with the origin of domesticated animals and their wild survivals, and the last three with the origin of higher peoples and the savage survivals in them. The sections into which the parts are divided make it very easy for reference and the language used makes for the easy reading of the interesting facts so well presented. To the parent or teacher desiring to impart the evolutionary outlook upon animals and men, the book will be invaluable; the slightly pedagogic tone and idealistic flavour of these published school lectures are possibly an advantage in this respect. A hundred and one little things that the majority of us have noticed, but never understood, in our animals and in ourselves, are explained by the author, as he traces the wonderful results of natural and artificial selection, and interprets the meaning of the vestiges of the past in our mental as well as our physical nature. Moore estimates life as being 50 or 100 million years old, and man to be half a million years old. The place of man's origin is "somewhere in southern Asia." It is encouraging to notice Morgan's *Ancient Society* classification of the ages of mankind praised and used in a book issued by the R.P.A. as being "a more helpful subdivision" than the usual archaeological one.

The growth of the understanding of the savage occupies one section. Only slowly does he learn to abstract the general from the particular. Numbers cannot be thought of apart from concrete figures for a while. As we should expect, the earliest human virtues were those necessary to the preservation of the tribe and morality was a tribal affair. "There was no brotherhood recognized by our savage forefathers," says Sir Henry Maine, in speaking of the ancestors of the white peoples, "except actual relationship by blood. If a man was not of kin to another, there was nothing between them. He was an enemy to be hated, slain or despoiled as much as the wild beasts upon which the tribe made war, as belonging indeed to the craftiest and cruelest of wild animals. It would be scarcely too strong to assert that the dogs which followed the camp had more in common with it than the tribesmen of a foreign and unrelated tribe."

Most proper are Mr. Moore's remarks regarding human nature, *flowing* like everything else in the world, and those regarding instinct and habit. The roots of primitive age-long fear and hate are exposed. As one learns of the strength of the instinct of indolence one recognises how successfully capitalism has overcome it in the minds of the workers by forced work-habits. An eloquent plea for co-operation in the present haphazard and primitive distribution as well as in production and for the general advancement of mankind brings the book to a close. Unlike many popularisers of science—see Laing in *Modern Zoroastrian*, p. 87 and p. 125 for a case in point—Mr. Moore does not go out of his own domain and prove how bad a sociologist a good biologist can be. Perhaps if his remarks had been addressed to another

older audience, he might have shown that not only is the past good the present evil, but that what is good to one class is evil to the other in modern life. Each class has its own ethics. Take the appropriation of surplus-value; this is now moral, but will some day be immoral. Blacklegging is a virtue in the sight of the employer, but a vice in that of the employee. Ideals must have a real content. There is no such a thing as "pure reason"; reason is relative. Humanitarianism is vague and less definite than class-consciousness for humanity is not yet a unity. Plebeians would be well advised, however, to add this book to their collection. M.S.

"MASTERS AND MEN."

Masters and Men: A New Co-Partnership. By THOS. FOSTER, F.I.B.D. Treasurer of the Nat. Association of Master House Painters of England and Wales. 3d. Published by Headley Bros., Kingsway, W.C.

From many publications and speeches it is plain that the thinking section of the employing class are recognizing that the workers are no longer content with the old Trade Union ideal of higher wages and decent working conditions, but are desirous of effective control of their lives. Such is the explanation of the growth of the Workers' Committee and Shop Stewards' Movement. W. McLaine, in a recent issue of the *Plebs*, has pertinently pointed out that the ruling class, if it cannot check by force any revolutionary movement, will bring forward proposals which appear to have some resemblance to the demands that are being pressed forward, but if accepted will result in the side-tracking of the revolutionary forces into channels of futile reformism. A recent pamphlet gives proof of this desire of the employing class, and is of particular interest to the building industry, where craft unionism and futile sectionalism so largely prevail. The author admits that "There are signs, however, that the operative class have begun to do some constructive thinking, and are not merely confining themselves to dissatisfied criticism. . . . Now, they are formulating demands for much more than wages.

They are asking for a larger relative share of the wealth they help to create, while some even suggest relations in the nature of a partnership between capital and labour." (Italics ours.) Again:

In spite of advancing wages workmen have found themselves actually poorer. Their real wages, as distinguished from money wages, have decreased. Apart from this important economic fact, they are realising more clearly that their relationship to the employing class is a cash relationship only. They have a growing consciousness that labour is only a commodity, bought and sold like any other commodity, and that the wage is its price in the market. Like other commodities, their labour, when sold, passes entirely out of their control.

Continuing his condemnation of the precarious nature of the operative's position owing to unemployment, he, however, has no love for the policy of ca' canny.

The policy of restriction of output, like many other lines of social conduct, reacts very detrimentally upon society. One economic

result is a lessened supply of many of the things that operatives themselves are in need of, and to that extent the purchasing power of their own wages is reduced.

Our author, however, does not inform us that the glut of the world's markets brought about by the fierce competitive system brings along the inevitable crisis. Then we have the paradox of poverty, being caused by plenty, and bootmaker's children going without boots owing to their parents having produced too many. We come now to Mr. Foster's remedies, and for these he has delved deeply into the ideas of the Guild Socialists and Whitley recommendations, and made a hash of the whole to suit the employing standpoint, *i.e.*, the perpetuation of the capitalist system. He points out that in the decorating trade an organisation, "The National Painters' and Decorators' Joint Council," on the Whitley model actually came into existence in Feb., 1917. He admits:—

the scheme gives the operatives an increased share in the conduct of the business. But it gives them no increased share in control, and it gives them no increased share in profits.

To meet this he suggests a change of function for these Committees. In the first place, all employers and operatives must belong to their respective Unions by legal enactment. You will note by this, if ever adopted, that the full force of the law will be against the formation of the "Industrial Union." All agreements arrived at "shall have the force of law." "The remuneration of capital sunk in the industry would be a rigidly fixed percentage." "The operative section of the trade would receive pay upon such a scale as would allow a decent living to every individual concerned." "The employers or organisers would also be paid upon such a basis as would be found necessary to retain the services of thoroughly competent men." "Over and above these fragments it is presumed that a margin would be left which would correspond to part of what is now regarded as profit." Part of this would go to the employers' association, and the larger portion of the surplus to the operatives' unions, who would undertake the work now done by Labour Exchanges and State Insurance, "both of which are regarded with strong disfavour by the operative class." Then we come to this gem, that by the foregoing "We must remember that the commodity idea of labour would have gone by the board." Shades of Marx! To sum up, we see that these proposals advocate the formation of Committees, with *employers and employees in equal numbers upon each Committee*. The State will supervise and compel the workers to acquiesce in the decisions of the Committee. And though there will be the possibility of higher wages and more decent conditions of employments, the employing class will obtain greater security in the competitive market, and wage slavery will still exist. We hope that the building trade operatives will, instead of adopting Mr. Foster's specious proposals, realise the necessity of scrapping their futile craft unions and organize on the basis of industry, with the ultimate aim of expropriating the capitalist class, root and branch, and controlling their industry in the interests of the whole community.

J.H. (B.W.I.U.)

The Socialism of Karl Marx. By A. E. Cook. Glasgow Plebs League. 2d. From A. J. Solomons, 12 Binnie Place, Montietth Row, Glasgow.

Karl Marx: His Life and Teaching. By Z. Kahan-Coates. 2d. B.S.P. 21a Maiden Lane, Strand, W.C. 2.

Marx and Modern Capitalism. B.S.P. 2d. By J. T. Walton Newbold.

Solidarity amongst the Shipowners. By J.T.W.N. Foreword by Tom Mann. 2d. Reformers' Bookstall, 126 Bothwell Street, Glasgow.

"Good wine needs no bush," and these four pamphlets are good indeed. Each is worth a page of *Plebs*, but those pages are already overcrowded, so we must be brief and try to be bright and leave it at that, except to urge everyone to buy them at once.

Number 1.—"Our" Glasgow pamphlet. A sketch of Marx's life—a summary of Marxian socialism, divided under the headings—Materialist Conception, Surplus-Value, and the Class Struggle. If you are a Marxist and have not this pamphlet, then you are no Marxist—and, moreover, no Plebeian! Number 2 is a sympathetic and comprehensive study of Marx, his life and his message. If any Socialist ever spends 7s. 6d. (is it?) on Spargo's "Life" after this, then he is either mad or a millionaire. It is an excellent twopennyworth.

As for Numbers 3 and 4, if you *intend* to go "over the top" to the revolution you will need them. "This is the stuff to give 'em." We have seen many books issued at a guinea that had less "meat" between their covers than is contained in one page of any of these four pamphlets. If your wages don't run to eightpence for the lot, then put in, at once, for an advance.

W.H.

The Plebs Bookshelf

I had wondered whether the *Times Literary Supplement*, which is fond of centenaries, anniversaries, and so forth would publish a Marxian Centenary article. It did. In the issue of May 9th there appeared what the Rev. Stewart D. Headlam, of the Fabian Society, writing a week or two later, described as "your admirable article on Marx." It was an interesting article—whether "admirable" or not depends, of course, on one's point of view. If we had the space, we might do a good deal worse than reprint it, and offer a prize for the best critical essay on it. For one thing one was grateful, and that was that it appeared to have been written by someone who really had read Marx, and not by some leader-writer who had merely heard of him. It contained some true things, well said, a good deal of complacent, patronising criticism, and some very foolish things. I can only give a sample or two of each. Of the former, this seems to me a good instance:—

There were two men in Marx, curiously mingled, the philosopher or reflecting man, and the prophet or agitating man. The one appealed to intellect, the other to emotion; and his influence rests on this double basis. . . . Sometimes the one and sometimes the other was uppermost in him, but, on the whole, the reflective element predominated.

This, too, is surely true, and significant, coming from such a source:—

During the latter half of the century that has elapsed since his birth only one man can be named whose work has aroused more intellectual interest, stimulated more thought, and generally made more stir, and that man was Darwin.

Of the criticism, take the following as illustrations :—

He was no pioneer ; there is not a single idea in his entire system which can be said to be wholly his own or truly original.

Quite true, of course, but the same thing happens to be true, also, of every other great thinker. . . . Nevertheless, our critic admits—

The Marxian system has some substance all through. The Hegelian conception of history as a logical, consecutive process is an illuminating idea, and Marx's insistence on the economic factor was valid up to a point, and valuable. Further, his historical researches into the past development of commerce and industry were a real contribution to the subject. Finally, the labour theory of value and the theory of surplus-value both have a recognised place in economics, though Marx did much more to confuse than to elucidate them. . . . There is therefore much solid material in the Marxian system, and he put it together with great industry and conspicuous ability.

Quite a pat on the back for Marx, isn't it ? . . . Now for one or two of the foolish things—taking our last quotation as merely patronising. The biscuit must be awarded to a reference to the author of " Locksley Hall " (Alfred, Lord Tennyson) as " a greater seer than Marx "—this because, five years before the *Communist Manifesto* was issued, he dipped into the future, and foresaw " aerial navies battling in the blue," and finally " the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world." Aeroplanes and the League of Nations—there's an Old Moore for you ! Whereas Marx's prediction of a class-war of ever-increasing intensity have been completely falsified by events. " We see the classes within nations united as never before, and the nations themselves sundered as never before." " We see " Well, we can only wait—and see. . . . Another silly sentence reads—" Science begins with observation, and Marx never attempted it ; he studied documents, not life at first hand." This of the man whose " historical researches into the past development of commerce and industry " have just previously been highly commended ; and whose " minute study " of the origin and development of capitalism has also been referred to. Since when has it been a criticism of a historian to say that he studied documents ? And if the writer of *The 18th Brumaire* and *Revolution and Counter-Revolution* did not study life, or contemporary history, at " first hand "—or as near first-hand as circumstances would permit—then indeed no such thing as historical observation exists. But one suspects this " life at first hand " criticism to emanate from that wondrous new school of economics which sees in individual psychology the mainsprings of all social movement ; and which vivisects " the mind of the worker "—at first hand—with a " scientific " precision unattainable by the mere student of documents.

* * * * *

Twenty Poems, by Rudyard Kipling (Matthews, 1/- net) is worth possessing for the sake of " The Sons of Martha," " The Long Trail," " If —," " The Dawn Wind," and " Mother o' Mine." The amazing thing is that the author

of these poems can sink to the level of some of the other verses in this little collection—e.g., "The Holy War," with its text from Bunyan, its references to "stall-fed Stockholmites" and "swithering neutrals," and these truly appalling lines describing the Bedford tinker who told us all about it in Sixteen Eighty-two :—

A pedlar from a hovel,
The lowest of the low,
The father of the Novel,
Salvation's first Defoe. . . .

The man who could write, or, at any rate, publish, that, must surely be the least self-critical of poets ! One can't say fairer than that !

J.F.H.

* * * * *

The Plebs League was only formed in 1909, so that the following in *The Social Problem*, written by J. A. Hobson, in 1901 is an early anticipation of the need of such a body. He is speaking (p. 24) of the heartlessness of the political economists :—

" I am far from suggesting that such men as Ricardo, Senior, James Mill, were actuated by any conscious intellectual dishonesty. But it is impossible to study any department of philosophy, theology, history or sociology, without detecting everywhere the moulding force of dominant class-prejudices, interests, passions, selecting and rejecting among the ideas. Men of powerful original force sometimes hold out. but generally the steady and persistent secret pressure of class bias, working through the ' spirit of the age,' is successful in getting what it wants."

* * * * *

Now that the Home University Library books are increased in price, in order to get one of the worthy books in this series, Plebeians—who, by odd chance even in these disturbing times, have the chance to think about thought—may be glad to know that *History of Philosophy*, by C. C. J. Webb, is worthy of their attention for critical purposes. To read, either before or after *The Positive Outcome*, would be a help. The author's mention of Hegelianism is more satisfactory than that in Lewes' *Biographical History of Philosophy*. Unfortunately, as in many other such books, the reader will have to make good Webb's ignorance of the Left Wing of that school of thought and its beneficial results. Many of the philosophers were also economists and their theories of knowledge (which in the last instance were shaped by the material conditions of their time as is clearly, if unconsciously, shown even in this book) were applied by them to the problems of their day. In this connection see Marx's mention of Bishop Berkley—"the representative of a mystical idealism in English philosophy"—bringing his idealism to solve the question What is money ? on p. 95 of *The Critique*.

* * * * *

How much more interesting a knowledge of the economic interpretation of history makes one's general reading and playgoing ! Any number of modern writers, being close observers of human nature and social systems,

instinctively "hit the trail" in their books, and it would be an enthralling pastime to gather and record the instances. Under this category, I should place "The Wooden Horse," by Hugh Walpole. It is a tale of a very aristocratic county family, the Trojans, and the wooden horse that ultimately destroys, or at least penetrates, Troy, is the eldest son, who has been away in New Zealand for a number of years, and had his always wild ideas about the things that matter in life, intensified by the freer life he found in that colony. The son whom he had sent home to school he finds to be a snob, who had been taught—

the great code of brushing one's hair and leaving the bottom button of one's waistcoat undone. Robbery, murder, rape—well, they had all played their part in the Trojan history, but the art of shaking hands and the correct method of snubbing a poor relation, if properly acquired, covered the crimes of the Decalogue. . . . This Code of the Quite Correct Thing advanced beyond the art of Perfect Manners; it extended to literature and politics

The coming of "the wooden horse" means the breakdown of these false standards, and the whole story is fresh and vigorous, and can be bought for 1s. 6d., Wayfarers' Library. J. M. Dent & Son. *The Golden Scarecrow* and *Fortitude*, by the same author (also 1s. 6d.) are well worth getting. The first, sympathetic studies of child-life, or rather of what is rarer, child-thought, and the latter "a true and faithful account of the education of an explorer." This explorer is educated by life, not the schools, so that his education is worth hearing about.

* * * * *

One of the minor statistics of the war would be to estimate how many soldiers carried pocket editions of "Omar Khayyam" about with them. At least two of our soldier Plebeians have written about it lately—the one to say, "It is wonderful how the lilt of the lines buck you up," and the other to say, "Our Padre gave me a lecture on it—detrimental, of course, but his arguments fell on deaf ears." Some time since a correspondent wrote to the *Manchester Guardian* :—

That Omar may be found in many dug-outs and billets is true. My own experience, however, was that it was not so much the preference of the army as the preference of the people at home, who, in response to an expressed wish for a book of verse, sent Omar for reasons we often speculated upon. When we did turn to poetry I must confess we found Omar more likeable than Rupert Brooke, Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Nicholls, and other war poets. But war poetry, we decided, was like the patriotic song—purely a civilian cult. We frankly yawned over the "Times Broad-Sheets," and it was not long before one ingenious person discovered what excellent pipe-spills they made!—If we read newspapers, he continues, it was to the advertisement pages that we turned, devouring the theatre notices, and such like. They conveyed to us the spirit of an orderly existence, now far away, but to which we hoped to return some time.

Perhaps it is Omar's suggestion of a disorderly existence which appeals to the others.

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.

METHODS.

The formation of local branches and classes for the study of social science, in connection with the Central Labour College (now the Labour College), such classes to be maintained and controlled, wherever possible, by Trades Unions, Trades Councils, or other working-class organizations; and the linking-up of these branches into Districts (or Divisions) with a District (or Divisional) Committee appointed by the branches.

The issuing of a monthly magazine, mainly devoted to the discussion of Labour questions, theoretical and practical.

The assistance in every way of the development of the Central Labour College (now the Labour College), or of any other working-class educational institution, and their maintenance of a definitely working-class educational policy.

MEMBERSHIP.

Open to all who endorse the object of the League.

Each Member shall pay 1/- a year to the Central Fund towards general expenses, publications, &c.

All expenses incurred by District organizations shall be met by an additional payment from members within that area.

MANAGEMENT.

An Executive, together with a Secretary-Treasurer and Magazine Editor, elected at the Annual Meet.

THE "PLEBS" MAGAZINE.

The Magazine is published monthly, price 2d. (2½d. post paid).

Subscriptions (payable in advance): six months 1/3,
Yearly 2/6.

P.O.'s TO BE FORWARDED TO

(Mrs.) WINIFRED HORRABIN

176 SPRINGVALE ROAD,

(Sec.-Treasurer)

SHEFFIELD.

The Plebs League

(See Constitution on previous page).

Secretary-Treasurer : MRS. W. HORRABIN.

Executive Committee :

FRANK S. JACKSON

B. S. MACKAY

GEO. MASON

J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD

C. T. PENDREY

TOM QUELCH

C. TERRY

The Plebs Magazine

is obtainable from :—

- LONDON. MR. HENDERSON, 66 Charing Cross Road, W.C.2.
B.S.P. Office, 21a Maiden Lane, Strand, W.C.2
H. YOUNG, 68 Red Lion Street, W.C. 1.
A. E. DENNINGTON, 518 Romford Road, Forest Gate, E.
- GLASGOW. S.L. Press, 50 Renfrew Street.
Herald League, 94 George Street.
Reformers' Bookstall, 126 Bothwell Street.
- EDINBURGH. J. NIXON, 16 Waverley Park, Abbeyhill.
New Age Bookshop, 43 Broughton Street.
- FALKIRK. J. WILSON, The Bookstall, 76 Graham's Road.
- ABERDEEN. A. WHEELER, 26½ Gallowgate.
- NORTHUM- Sec., C.L.C. Classes, Socialist Society Rooms, Royal Arcade,
BERLAND Pilgrim Street, Newcastle-on-Tyne.
& DURHAM. E. EDWARDS, 3 Duke Street, Ashington, Northumberland.
W. LAWYER, 6 Wear Street, Chopwell, co. Durham.
- LANARKSHIRE. G. RUSSELL, 20 Clark Street, Blantyre.
- BURY. J. AINSWORTH, 70 Shepherd Street.
- BRISTOL. G. W. BROWN, 112 Bishop Road, Bishopston.
E. G. ANDERSON, 16, Bruce Road, Easton.
- DONCASTER. W. PENTNEY, 91 Earlesmere Avenue.
- WIGAN. A. EVANS, 62 Clayton Street.
- ROCHDALE. G. BROOK, 7 Leamington Street.
- BOLTON. J. LEACH, 98 Davenport Street.
- BLACKPOOL. W. PICKLES, 13 Hull Road.
- MANCHESTER. W. LANDER, 13 Dettingen Street, Duchy Road, Pendleton.
F. G. TEMPLE, 411 Astley Street, Dukinfield, Cheshire.
- LEICESTER. C. H. SMITH, Llanberis, Harrison Road, Leicester.
- LEEDS. H. DUNCAN, 26 County Arcade, Briggate, Leeds.
- BRADFORD. E. H. DRIFFILL, 103 Kirkgate (opposite Co-op).
- HULL. R. MELL, 54 Carlton Street.
- COVENTRY. H. KING, Welland Road, Stoke.
- SHEFFIELD. C. WATKINS, Handsworth.
- WOOLWICH. C. T. PENDREY, 75 Arsenal Road, Well Hall, S.E.9.
- SHREWSBURY. W. H. PRATT, 12 Havelock Road.
- CHESTERFIELD. F. ROGERS, Rock Side, Brimington Road, Tipton.
- WARRINGTON. A. E. SEABURY, 3 Frederick Street, Latchford.
- BIRMINGHAM. E. R. ROBINSON, 31 Ashmore Road, King's Norton
B. ROWLANDS, 120 Winson Street, Dudley Road.
- HUDDERSFIELD. J. TOWNSEND, 1 Market Place, Huddersfield.
- HALIFAX. J. W. THOMAS, 154 Hansom Lane.
- S. WALES. J. GERRY, 31 Salisbury Road, Barry, Glam.
T. E. HUGHES, 9 Dyfodwig Street, Treorchy, Rhondda.
W. H. MAINWARING, Ar-y-Bryn, Blaenclydach, Rhondda.
W. H. OWENS, 16 St. Anne's Road, Gilfach, Bargoed, Glam.

And numerous other agents

Or from SEC., PLEBS LEAGUE, 176, SPRINGVALE ROAD,
SHEFFIELD.