

GIFT
JUN 2 1928

The PILEBS

*Organ of the National
Council of Labour Colleges*

Monthly 4^d

Published on the 15th of each month.

MAY-JUNE, 1928

THE WOMEN OF NEW RUSSIA

by CHRISTINE MILLAR



EDUCATION BY WIRELESS

by MARK STARR

LENIN ON MATERIALISM

by EDEN & CEDAR PAUL

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Organ of the National Council of Labour Colleges

Vol. XX.

MAY-JUNE, 1928.

No. 5 ✓

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ON EMPIRE DAY *And Some Other Matters*

MAY 24th is Empire Day, and on that day millions of young British citizens will be told how wonderful and sacred a thing the Empire is, how the Union Jack is the symbol of peace, prosperity, and piety, and how the people of other, inferior races everywhere have always rushed—and are still rushing, except when misled by evil agitators—to place themselves within its shade. Such "lessons" are, of course, inculcated on other days of the year, too. But on the 24th of May they are invested with religious significance, and reinforced with solemn ritual.

I.W.C.E.rs will accordingly fail in their obvious duty if they let the opportunity slip for counter-propaganda—both among the young and their elders. It is our job to emphasise the facts which are left out or slurred over in the school history-books; essential facts about the way in which the Empire was "built," and the way in which it works to-day. We ought to have Empire Day celebrations of our own; and they should be in the spirit, if not the form, of the one for which the Vicar of Thaxted was responsible last year, when, while elsewhere in the village they were busy Saluting the Flag, he tolled the church-bell and held a

Service of Intercession for the victims of Empire.

* * *

There was an interesting debate in the House of Commons the other day on the

THE PROGRESS OF EMPIRE



question whether all elementary schools should have a half-holiday on Empire Day. The mover of the resolution was very perturbed about the "increasing menace of anti-Imperialistic propaganda" (it did not seem to strike him that if children were released from school for half a day on May 24th they might possibly be "got at" by wily anti-Imperialistic propagandists). The seconder talked less about the afternoon off, and more about the lessons which ought to occupy the morning of the day. Raleigh, Drake, Warren Hastings and Wolfe came in for extended mention.

Maxton then put the anti-Imperialist point of view. Speaking as an ex-teacher, he said that he thought he could give a very interesting Empire Day lesson on the progress

that had taken place from Sir Walter Raleigh to the Imperial Tobacco Co., coupled with the names of W. D. & H. O. Wills; or on developments in India—from Warren Hastings to the conditions of Calcutta and Bombay to-day.

Lord Eustace Percy, President of the Board of Education and friend of the W.E.A., thought it "very regrettable" that an ex-teacher should talk like this. He was sure that if Maxton were teaching children about Sir Walter Raleigh he would not "ruin his opportunity by dragging in any such nonsense as the tobacco monopoly." He disagreed emphatically with Maxton's implication "that the right conception of the teaching of history is a controversial matter!" And he insisted that "the teaching of loyalty, of obligation to a Government, is *not* propaganda."

So there you are—perfect impartiality, with the bias all on the right side!

* * *

The W.E.A., by the way, has been getting itself into hot water with some of its supporters over the Marylebone by-election. The editor of the *Highway* (the W.E.A. official organ) stood as the Labour candidate in that election; and a correspondent of the *Daily News* ("an active worker for several years in the W.E.A. movement") demanded that Mr. Ross severs his connection either with the *Highway* or with the Labour Party. Otherwise, the W.E.A. will be suspect "as being in effect a Labour organisation"!!!

And there are even graver considerations.

Surely Mr. Ross is aware that the W.E.A. receives year by year substantial grants from the Board of Education and from Education Authorities on the assumption that the W.E.A. is a strictly non-party organisation, and that it would be most impolitic to do anything that would place such grants in jeopardy.

Most impolitic!

* * *

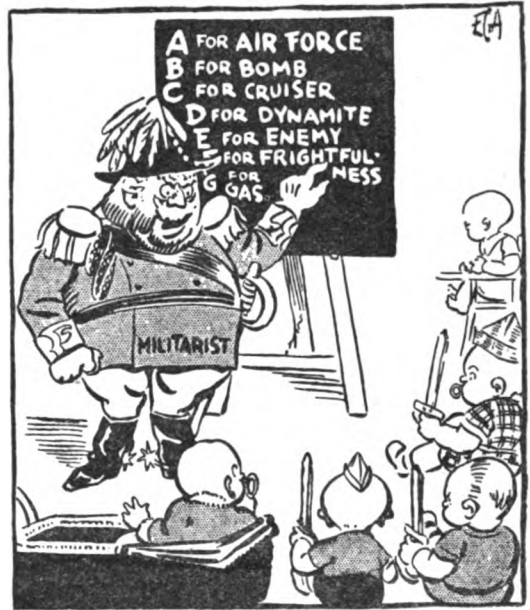
It will be seen from the advertisements appearing elsewhere that the N.C.L.C. Summer School at Cober Hill, Scarborough, is to discuss the problems facing

a Labour Government. This will give all of us an opportunity of teaching our Labour Party grandmother to suck eggs. If the next Labour Government is not a success it will not be the N.C.L.C.'s fault! The Belgian School at the Brussels Labour College will naturally deal with international matters and most of the lectures will be given in English by Belgian comrades associated with the Brussels College.

Everyone who has been to Cober Hill knows that it is an ideal place in which to spend a holiday. The same may be said for the Brussels Labour College, which is beautifully situated in its own grounds on the outskirts of one of the finest capitals in Europe.

In these days of social life on a large scale many of us in the movement are simply signatures or names to each other. The Summer School gives a splendid opportunity for meeting in person. Send on your booking fees and get your organisations to provide scholarships. Last year a number of difficulties cropped up at the Summer School because many of those who came did not book until shortly before the

School itself. As far as possible, therefore, preference in the arrangements will be given to those who book early.



THE MILITARISTS' ALPHABET
(from the *Educational Worker*, organ of the Teachers' Labour League.)

THE WOMEN OF NEW RUSSIA

By CHRISTINE MILLAR

IN these days of delegations there is no excuse, in the real, wear-your-Plebs badge-in-bed household, for not knowing about Rabfacs and Comsomols, the Genotdel and the Glavpolitprosvet. Times have changed since 1914, when the name *Russia* conjured up, for many of us, little more than a map, some depressing novels, Siberian exiles, and the Japanese war. Peter the Great and Catherine we knew from history books, but Russia as a land where ordinary people jumped on ordinary trams to go to a meeting and agitate for an eight-hour day, the expropriation of the landowners and a democratic republic had not come into the consciousness of the average worker.

In reading Vol. I. of *An Illustrated History of the Russian Revolution** one's mind goes back to the days when many workers belatedly awoke to the reality and significance of Russia's problems. This volume takes us by word and picture from 1905 to 1917. It recalls that the strikes and armed insurrections which led to the overthrow of the monarchy were merely part of an anti-Tzarist movement in which factory-workers, rich and poor peasants, soldiers and sailors, members of the middle class and of the capitalist class (which was little more than beginning to covet power) all sought to further their own aims. In reading of

* Martin Lawrence, 10/-.

these days of upheaval one can imagine the tension which the revolutionaries must have felt when, in a strike-committee, they heard the armed police outside preparing to fire on the building; when, in processions, they marched forward to within a few paces of the rifle muzzles of the waiting troops, not knowing whether to expect a murderous burst of firing or the silent sympathy of the soldiers; and when, in prison cells, they recognised their free comrades' voices raised outside amid the growing din of an attack to free the prisoners.

The later chapters show how the spread of class-consciousness amongst the workers and peasants changed what looked like being a triumph of capitalism into a working-class revolution.

No Quick Transformations.

That the revolution did not instantaneously transform several millions of unwashed, rag-smothered, illiterate Russian peasants into clean, well-dressed, well-educated internationalists is admitted in *Woman in Soviet Russia*.^{*} This book gives full and frank treatment to all that has disappointed and disillusioned delegates who expected to find the Socialist Commonwealth delivered complete, like an American portable house, in next to no time. The author, however, claims that the improvements already brought about—in the face of odds only now being appreciated in this country—call for world-wide admiration; that the rate of progress will be more and more rapid now that the gigantic task of restoration is completed; and that any new, objectionable features (and some were to be expected in such a violent, transitional and experimental period) are held up to healthy public criticism and will pass away.

Hacking Down Prejudice.

Under the old régime the relation of wife to husband was almost that of serf to master: anything approaching comradeship was non-existent. In affectionate

moments he treated her to the endearment "old horse-radish." Any property she had before marriage came under his control; she could be refused a passport if he withheld consent. To-day "All that proclamation and law could do to remove discrimination against women in every relationship, from family to State, has been done in Soviet Russia." The villages lag behind the towns, yet year by year more women are attending rural schools and meetings (which doctors, agricultural experts and other specialists are instructed to address), electing women to Soviets and sending women delegates to All-Russian Congresses. Woman is losing her old, individualistic outlook, and instead of complaining of what she suffers, many a woman is now asking "How can *we* organise to improve *our* condition?" Though few women have risen to international prominence, thousands are "hacking away incessantly at the thick walls of ignorance and prejudice which the centuries have built around their sex."

Before the new decrees on marriage were codified as law they were discussed interminably. The expressed view of the majority is that marriage should take place only between people planning a long, common life together, and conscious of the social consequences of a frivolous and irresponsible attitude. On the other hand, an unhappy marriage need not bind two victims for life; marriages are dissolved without loss of reputation. Equal protection is given to both parties, and responsibility for children is shared, whether the marriage is registered or merely recognised, short-lived or lasting. One political enthusiast insists that what matters most is equality of revolutionary fervour, and that physical attraction is a relic of barbarism!

Revolutionary Morals.

There are two opposite extremes, particularly among the younger Russians. On the one hand is the type that says that all enjoyment should be "cast in a political mould" or that all pleasure should be re-

^{*} By Jessica Smith, Vanguard Press, 2/6. (N.C.L.C., 2/9 post free).

IF YOU KNOW OF A BETTER HOLIDAY than a Summer School, don't come to Cober Hill

nounced in order that every minute and every faculty can be devoted to the Socialist Commonwealth; on the other is the type which Bukharin sardonically described: "If bourgeois circles had nice manners, then the proletarian must be rougher than ever, never fail to keep his hat on in the house and spit on the floor. The real revolutionist had to let his shirt hang in rags, wear filthy clothes, since cleanliness was a bourgeois habit, and the more perfection he could attain in everything contrary to bourgeois habit, the greater his revolutionary spirit." Lenin pointed out that laxity is opposed to bourgeois *precept*, but in line with bourgeois practice, and not, therefore, revolutionary. Abnormalities were to be expected from some of those who were just entering adolescence when a devastating war, followed by revolution and famine, ravaged the country, and families and homes were broken up. "The physical and psychic disorders resulting from hunger, illness, overwork and violent readjustments" are working themselves out.

The straightforwardness of Russian ethics is typified by their adaptation of "Honour thy father. . ." The Russian says, "Honour thy father if he is a class-conscious revolutionary; if not, educate him."

Besides taking steps to socialise housework, the Russians are simplifying the mother's problem of trying to rear children without losing her chance of helping in creative, social work, but communal life is not being forced on the people, nor are children "taken away from" their parents to nursery schools. Throughout the horrors of war, revolution and famine, when homeless and starving parents were seeking to keep themselves and their children *alive* they did not theorise about *how* to live, and many were glad to live communally and to place their children in better conditions than they themselves could guarantee. As reconstruction advances people will *choose* how to live; many already can do so.

Legislation and Prejudice.

"Legislation cannot wipe out the prejudices of centuries in a decade." For

generations the mental hold of the Church has been powerful; women have been treated as burden-bearers, not entitled to privilege or consideration; dirt has been regarded as a matter of course. . . . Many thousands are neither literate nor able to understand the aim of a Socialist Commonwealth. Thousands who do understand in the main are still so shackled by prejudice and custom that there are, here and there, husbands who beat their wives for going to meetings, or object to wives remaining on Soviets after marriage; mothers whose babies are born in sheds because women in childbirth are considered unclean and put outside; mothers who have their babies sprinkled with holy water to drive away evil spirits, but not to drive away dirt; there are parents who beat their children for going to school; households that take into new, model houses ikons and "plush divans and ponderous wardrobes full of ancestral bugs"; there are complaints that "if God doesn't send enough grain, women's rights are useless." Complaints still heard about day nurseries are: "Why shouldn't the young mothers have to bring up their children themselves as we had to?" "They will probably take the crosses off our babies' necks, the Godless ones!" "A clean place like that is too good for children; it's a waste!" Some school nurses still use dirty aprons for blowing noses—"the noses are dirty, and the handkerchiefs are so clean!"

An Uphill Fight.

Against these accumulated prejudices of the ages the Russians are waging a strenuous and effective war. It is not yet claimed that in Russia a smoothly working plan is providing for all the cultural and material needs of the people; what is claimed is that there is a plan that has a chance of freeing minds and bodies from unequal economic pressure so that all will have an equal chance of building up and enjoying a Socialist Commonwealth. As yet "all we can look for are possibilities, tendencies, beginnings," and these exist on all hands.

THE CORNISH MINER

By W. COLDRICK

“**T**HEY are as rough as bears, selfish as swine, obstinate as mules and hard as the native iron.” This is not a description of the miner of to-day by the *Morning Post*, but is one of the Cornish Miner of the eighteenth century by an outsider (*The Cornish Miner*, by A. K. Hamilton Jenkin. Allen & Unwin, 12/6.) It may be the nature of most things to change, but unchangeability seems to be the nature of the miners’ opponents.

In the history of the Cornish miner, the author gives a very realistic picture of the life and activities of the men who have made the name of Cornwall a household word in mining circles the world over. From the fifteenth century until to-day, men have left the coasts of Cornwall to wrestle with the mineral world wherever mining is found, and in so doing have rendered no small service in the development of an industry upon which the fortunes of civilisation have been largely based. The struggles and successes, the pains and pleasures, the fears and superstitions which have characterised the Cornish miners for centuries are graphically recorded by Mr. Jenkins.

The Wreckers.

The fortunes of the copper and tin industries have constantly fluctuated and periods of prosperity have always been succeeded by those of adversity. In the bad times many miners resorted to fishing or agriculture, and not infrequently found other pursuits much more congenial than the winning of copper and tin ores. Thus, we are told, the miners would occasionally leave the mines to look after themselves, while they gathered in their hundreds and thousands, with hatchets ready, to pursue the course of a ship which could be seen from the coast. The wrecking of one of these ships meant a substantial gain to

those who seized it. The work of stripping a ship of its cargo seemed to be very easy compared with stripping a mine of its minerals.

A Four-Hour Day.

From the days of the “Streamers,” who did much to disfigure the landscape of Cornwall by their surface workings, to modern copper and tin mining, with its subterranean levels wending their way beneath the waters of the Atlantic, is a long step. Many terrible sacrifices made by the miner mark the way. The machines which made underground work possible, by pumping out water and extracting ores, have not been an unmixed blessing. They have meant the piling up of fortunes for the favoured few, but the rock-drills brought with them the deadly disease of miner’s phthisis, the curse of all metal miners, and many thousand tombs to-day stand as silent testimony to the price paid by the Cornish miner for the introduction of machinery. The work of some of the miners prior to the introduction of machinery was so severe a strain that no one could stand it for more than a four-hour day. When the machine lightened this task the owners levelled the balance for the miner by increasing the length of the working day to eight hours.

In detail there may be a considerable difference between copper or tin mining and coal mining, but experience convinces me that mining is much the same the world over whatever may be the particular minerals mined. Thus as one reads of the Cornish miner struggling in that subterranean world to win the valuable ores from their geological fastness, amidst the seen and unseen dangers of falls, foul air and flooding, one has only to know a coal mine to find complete parallels in the daily life of the coal miner. How like, too, are the complaints of the plundering of wealth by middlemen, the impositions of the royalty

owner, and the grasping character of the investor which leads to the "plucking out of the eyes of the mine" with regard to the future welfare of the industry.

No Lighthouse, By Request.

The author of the *Cornish Miner* is certainly not a Marxian and in a few places one can detect the philosophy and outlook of the Liberal who can be outspoken in his criticism of the evils of landlordism, but mild in his rebukes of the vices of capitalism. Still there is much in this book which confirms the Marxian outlook. Mining has given Cornwall a social structure different from that in Devon or the counties farther east. The effect on morals is noticed in the attitude of the Cornishmen to the erection of the first lighthouse at Lizard Point, where "wrecks were frequent." They regarded it as an attempt

to deprive them of "God's Blessings." We mustn't forget either the prayer of the local parson, who prayed: "We pray Thee, O Lord, not that wrecks should happen, but that if they do happen, Thou wilt direct them to the shores of Cornwall." Thus did the reverend gentleman express the views of his hungry flock.

The trade union movement has never flourished in the mining areas of Cornwall. This is due, I think, to (1) the isolated character of the industry, (2) the miners' practice of working their own patches, and (3) the tendency to combine some other subsidiary occupation with mining itself. The Cornishman has ever been proud of his skill and muscular prowess. There is ample evidence in this book to show that if he had exercised his mind a little more and his muscles a little less his path would have been much easier.

THE SICKNESS OF THE COTTON INDUSTRY

By J. W. HUDSON

STUDENTS of industrial history in Lancashire have realised the dearth of any really valuable works on the cotton industry. In consequence almost any kind of book that attempts to deal with the trade is welcome.*

Lancashire Under the Hammer is a well-written and comprehensive story. It is not a work of research, but a clear description of the chaotic manner in which cotton capitalism has drifted.

The Money Grabbers.

There is so much chaos and drift that it is almost impossible to get any valuable research material about the industry. As one reads the descriptions by Bowker of the

doings of the money-grabbers, one can visualise the resultant sufferings of the operatives. The women were practically all that were left as operatives during the war and were mercilessly fleeced of their rights. Since the war the "business" men have demoralised the whole of the operatives by miserable wages and have created a standing army of 49,000 unemployed.

Bowker is a Liberal, severely criticising the decline of capitalist cotton. He thinks the industry can be saved by a Super Cotton Control Board. His criticisms are good for all to read. They will make worker and employer alike sit up and take notice.

Whether his "remedy" will be tried by those who have the power is very doubtful. Economic pressure will compel them to resort to some kind of trust or rationalisation eventually, but how soon, it is impossible to say.

Studying Strategy.

The employers of the cotton industry, like the mineowners, wanted to reduce the costs of production. They know all the factors that make up the cost of cloth, but they have got direct power over only two of

* *Lancashire Under the Hammer*. By B. Bowker (Hogarth Press, 3/6 net).

Hands Off Our Wages and Hours. By Z. Hutchinson (Bacup Weavers' Association, 2d.).

them, viz., wages and hours of labour. These must be attacked. At the moment they are studying strategy. They have not yet agreed how and when the ultimatum shall be issued.

The unions have stood well together up to the present; but anyone with inside knowledge of the organisations is bound to agree with the comments of P. L. Taylor in the December PLEBS. Capitalist logic will force the employers to scientific control and organisation. The unions ought consequently to create scientific working-class organisations to take over the industry, but they are to-day in as bad a plight as the industry itself. It is very difficult to decide where to start to re-build. The unions are weak in numbers, weak in structure, and have no common policy, except in resisting worse conditions.

A Cotton Official's Viewpoint.

The pamphlet by Hutchinson is a substantial document. It contains a lot of figures on foreign competition and on fixed interest charges. I do not think anyone could disprove his contention that the wages and hours in this country are in no way responsible for our loss of trade. One-third of the trade has gone, and someone else has got it. Who and why?

To me the figures given on pages 12 and 13 do not prove what he contends. They appear to mix capitalist production with human needs. The market is a world market, and in supplying it capitalist production takes no account of where human beings are concentrated, except as buyers. If one section seizes part of the market some other section must lose. The world market is not expanding.

Hutchinson appears to regard over-capitalisation as the chief devil to be slain. Here again I do not agree that his figures are as valuable as he contends.

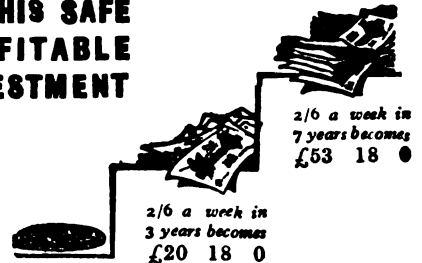
We must agree that capital reductions should take place instead of wage reductions, but will either, or even both, make it possible to sell yarn and cloth?

The worker-student will look for more permanent "remedies" than any contained in either of these interesting works.

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IV. THE POINTERS-OUT

By J. P. M. MILLAR

IN the dock for teaching the theory of evolution. Such was the position in which an American school-teacher found himself not long ago. The fact that a man could be charged for explaining a theory accepted by the whole scientific world caused many scientists to sit up and take notice of "Monkeyville," as the scene of the incident was nicknamed. Apparently the struggle between science and superstition had by no means ended.

Struck with the importance of spreading scientific knowledge among the masses, Dr. James Harvey Robinson has written *The Humanising of Knowledge* (Workers' Education Bureau of America, 2/6). Appropriately enough the first chapter is entitled: "On Man's General Indifference to Scientific Truth." Our old friend apathy!

The Human Mystery.

The average man hasn't the scientific turn of mind. He's not a discoverer, "a wonderer, a pointer-out." "Come nicht, come ninepence," sums up his outlook. The scientific man does not realise, says Dr. Robinson, what a "grotesque mystery he and his doings constitute" in the eyes of the average man. Not only is the scientific man a stickler for painful accuracy in observation, measurement and statement, but he "interests himself in what appear to the overwhelming mass of mankind to be stupid trifles which promise neither pleasure nor profit. What difference can it make that a caterpillar has four muscles or four thousand, as described by the indefatigable Lyonnetz. . . . ; whether there are a thousand or eighty thousand species of beetles?" Again, what use is there in describing the marriage customs of the

small, obscure tribe of the Todas? Yet, there is little doubt that the answer to these and similar questions makes up the bulk of scientific knowledge.

As the heap of countless little discoveries of no apparent importance—"unconsidered trifles" so far as the average man is concerned—accumulates, the bits and pieces are sorted out and like the fragments of a jig-saw puzzle gradually take shape. The result is great discoveries that present the average man with a wireless set, or a remedy like insulin that cures the previously incurable, or a theory that explains to him that the world is not a flat surface, or that he must pull up his slacks if he wants to be a noticeably better man than the monkey is.

Man's Conceit.

During the middle ages man looked upon the world as the centre of nature and himself as the centre of the world. The sun shone to ripen his grain, the moon shed her beams to light his path at night, the dew fell to nourish his crops. In other words man was IT. Against this man-centred idea of the world the scientific thinkers of the early seventeenth century had to wage war. Man to understand the world correctly had to be taught that important as he is to himself, he is of only microscopic importance to nature.

The same sort of experience that has fallen to the lot of natural science has also been shared by social science. In early times the village was the be-all and end-all so far as social life was concerned. Inhabitants of other villages were foreigners and had to be treated accordingly. Later, capitalism, by welding the feudal towns and villages into an economic unit, forced on the human mind the conception of nationalism—the parish pumps, though hallowed by age, had to give place to the "democratic" parliament.

To-day the development of international capitalism is forcing on the minds of the workers the idea of internationalism and the "democratic" parliaments are being invited to go into retirement with the parish pumps. That at least is what the thinkers, the scientific brains, "the wonderers, the

pointers-out" are realising. But just as in "Monkeyville," the average brain wouldn't see the truths of evolution or took no interest in them, so thousands and thousands of workers take little interest in internationalism. To them it is merely a word—an idle sound. It is therefore up to the thinkers of the workers' movement to make them realise that internationalism is in reality the expression of powerful economic forces that, like a mighty river, must be controlled and utilised unless men desire to pay the penalty that neglect will surely earn.

THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL

By R. W. P.

STEKLOFF'S *History of the First International*, published at 12/6 by Martin Lawrence, is the first full length history of the old international to be available in English. It has certain considerable faults. For example—it omits all reference to Flora Tristan. It is pro-Marxist in the bad sense—that is, it often endeavours to make Marx the man appear to be always right, which is an attribute of God and not of Marx or Lenin. It is inclined to substitute abuse for explanation—for example, the unfortunate Proudhonists are rarely allowed to appear without some phrase like "the stupid Proudhonists." Now that is a foolish way of writing history, even if your object is nothing but to grind an axe. It does not convince your reader. If your history has shown that the Proudhonists were stupid, there is no need to repeat it: if not, to throw adjectives about merely raises the suspicions of any alert student.

Marx on Nuclei.

One most unfortunate admission of Stekloff's is his failure to explain the *methods* of Bakunin which burst up the old international and which Marx and Engels' furious fury. It was, to use a modern phrase,

denounced with concentrated and continuous organisation of nuclei, whose proceedings were kept secret, and whose members were required to put loyalty to the nucleus and the whole organisation before any personal or other loyalty. Of course, I wouldn't like to suggest that the present policy of the Russian C.P., and the bitter

"YOU PAYS YOUR MONEY—"

"The cultivation of open-mindedness is the only way to temper the victory of the extremists by a wise moderation."—Harold J. Laski.

"Cursed is he who does not know when to shut his mind. An open mind is all very well in its way, but it ought not to be so open that there is no keeping anything in or out of it. It should be capable of shutting its door sometimes, or it may be found a little draughty."—Samuel Butler

Quoted by J. B. S. Hardman in *American Labor Dynamics*.

condemnation of "nucleusism" by Marx, has anything to do with Stekloff's silence.

"A Paper Movement."

But it would be ungenerous to dwell on the lesser faults of Stekloff's book. It is a contribution of great value to the Labour movement, and much original research has gone into the work. Particularly, Stekloff should be commended for the scrupulous fairness with which he examines the relative strength of the Socialist (Marx) and Anarchist (Bakunin) sections of the workers, and concludes that, despite the apparent victory of The Hague conference (1872), the real strength and the mass of the organised workers were at that time with Bakunin, and that Marx and Engels were grasping to their respective bosoms a paper movement.

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EDUCATION BY WIRELESS

Broadcasting the University Point of View

By MARK STARR

GREAT inventions sometimes have pathetically futile results. Electricity came with all its wizardry—and a hideous whisky figure advertisement disfigures the Thames side, while the *Daily Dash* calls aloud to high heaven. The chemist makes a discovery by patient research—and men choke with mustard gas. The advance of aviation gives us the power to bomb sleeping women and children. A wonderful printing press turns out our many-paged salacious Sunday papers. The cinema has arrived as a world force but, with a few exceptions, is monopolised by cowboys and sheiks permanently rescuing misjudged maidens, whose problems end in large-size osculations.

Will it be the same with the new great power of wireless telephony? Shall the

in 1926. While Labour can run an independent newspaper, it cannot run an independent broadcasting station to tell the truth. (Chicago has a Labour station.)

The New Tale-Teller.

New Ventures in Broadcasting (B.B.C., 1/-) is the report of a Committee set up to study wireless as an adult educational agency. It gives the details of the amazing growth from the first Chelmsford concerts, in February, 1920, to the two-and-a-quarter millions of licenses and ten to twelve million listeners-in in 1928. Overnight a new power has sprung into being. A new technique of importing information and a new art form are being created. If we are all eyes at the cinema, we are all ears before the loud speakers. To hear A. J. Allan tell

DO YOU PIONEER OR ARE YOU PUSHED ?

*A large amount of real social progress is brought about by what may be much more accurately described as force-change than as change of heart. In every society about two-thirds of the members are continually being pushed or pulled along by the remaining third; the latter do not stop to convert the former, or to educate them into wider thought-systems, but just insist on what they think best and leave the others to adjust themselves as best they can. And this method is anything but futile. . . (Professor E. J. Urwick in *A Philosophy of Social Progress*.)*

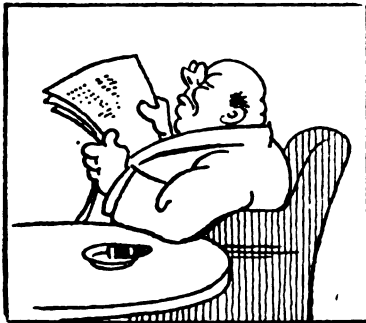
ether carry messages about the latest leg show or somebody's mustard?

In the United States, according to Sinclair's *Oil*, thousands of boobs are being fed with pap at the end of a wire. Here in Britain the excesses of private enterprise are held in check by the State monopoly of the B.B.C., and there is a chance to exercise more control than if private profit were the only aim of the broadcasting company. This monopoly has its dangers, as was vividly illustrated by the mendacious bulletins issued during the National Strike

a story is to witness the re-creation, with an enormously enlarged audience, of the power exercised by the wandering minstrel before thought was transmuted into print. Little wonder that the story-tellers of the Turkish bazaars have united to defend themselves from the encroachments made by the radio station at Angora. Yet no one who has spoken before "the mike" (I had the experience in Moscow and Charkov) will doubt the special gift involved in securing intimacy with the great unseen body of receivers.

"Safe" Controversy.

At present the proportions in the wireless programmes are 62 per cent. music, 20.8 per cent. "talks" (including news and commentaries), 2 per cent. drama, and 15.2 per cent. strictly educational. The latter is designed chiefly for schools, and at such hours that the ordinary adult working-class listener is excluded. The Committee discuss ways and means of increasing the



"I can't understand the endless complaint of the unemployed. I myself have never worked, but I've never been miserable about it."

(*El Svenska Arbetar-Esperantisten*)

talks, and wish the Treasury to forego some of its present receipts to give an opportunity for expansion under a proposed Central Council for Adult Education. Controversial topics are to be permitted, and the lecturers are to have the liberty assigned to them by the "great University tradition," instead of having to submit a typescript previously for censorship. But speakers are to be chosen with "strict care," to ensure that "only those with a proper sense of their responsibility should be asked to deal with subjects of a controversial kind." This probably means that J. B. S. Haldane will not be allowed to talk about science and religion, A. J. Cook about industrial peace, or Bertrand Russell about education and philosophy.

Leaving out the Labour Colleges.

At present the B.B.C. ignores the greatest movement for workers' education in this country—like Mr. Joad in the *New Leader*

(27/4/28) they apparently have not heard of the N.C.L.C. According to the *Edinburgh Labour Standard* (21/4/28), when uninvited Labour College delegates appeared at the British B.B.C. Conference, they were told that the basis of participation was agreement to further adult education through the Universities. Mr. Pugh, of the W.E.T.U.C., who sat on the Committee, surely might have anticipated that the lifting of the ban on controversial matters would raise the controversy about adult education itself.

Can we make any use of the talks as at present arranged? I think we can. An N.C.L.C. class might have spent a very interesting time listening to the Master of Balliol shadow-boxing with Marxism. To students concentrating on social science, many of the technical talks will have only a secondary appeal. There will be significant gaps in the history talks in the future as in the past. Yet the language teaching, music appreciation and the general knowledge talks have their uses. We have to keep in touch if only to provide an antidote. We can make both individual lecturers and the B.B.C. itself aware of their present failings. Incidentally, any teacher who can afford 8/- should make that subscription to the B.B.C. for the juvenile and adult educational pamphlets. The illustrations, maps, book lists and diagrams make them worth while.

OUR PUBLISHING DAY

Will readers please note—and make known—that THE PLEBS is published on the 15th of every month.

This is not just a whim on our part—it is done for good and sufficient economic reasons.

But as certain subscribers have objected that, because of the date on the cover, the magazine seems already 'old' before it reaches them, we shall in future put the names of two months on our front page. This present issue is the May-June number. Next month will be June-July. And so on.

MAN IS A SOCIAL ANIMAL That's why he enjoys an N.C.L.C. Summer School

THE UNDYING FIRE

A German Poet of Revolution

By M. FORTES

IT is not easy to put revolution into poetry. The thought and feelings and deeds of the true rebel are unique and do not fit readily into the moulds of ordinary speech. A revolutionary poem which is both revolutionary and great poetry deserves to be cherished. I have just spent a stimulating week-end with a book, which, though it never attains the peaks, nevertheless earns our gratitude for the author.* Seductively printed and illustrated in a bold and clear manner, so that its appearance almost proclaims its purpose, it is a book of verse generally vigorous and straightforward, free from rodomontade or flourishes. Sometimes a flash of satire illuminates a poem, as in the *Ballad of Blood* :—

“Mr. Cook, the banker,
Nods his head in amazement.
Yes, a splendid idea;
But who would offer his own blood?”

Sometimes the writer verges on the sentimental.

However, I don't want to expatiate on the literary merits or demerits of the book. Its value, to me, was that it directed my thoughts to important and much-neglected elements of the World Revolution, which have existed and will perpetually exist, irrespective of race, creed or country.

“The Return of Prometheus.”

In the preface we read: “Prometheus, the Greek legend relates, snatched fire from the gods and brought it down to mankind. For punishment he was chained to a rock. Every day an eagle tore his liver to pieces; every night it healed again. After such atonement, forgiveness thundered from Heaven. Prometheus was allowed to return among the gods.” Here ends the myth. This book tells that Prometheus remains unrepentant, determined that mankind must

not only possess the fire, but that *all* mankind must master it in creative and fearless liberty as well. To this purpose Prometheus dedicates himself, enduring torment over and over again. For Prometheus still lives in every century, in every land of the Earth. Again and again he finds re-incarnation in “the glorious rebels who fight for the future, unfalteringly stand up for the right, and sacrifice themselves for freedom and revolt.” And as constantly he meets the doom which is inevitable as long as “the men of dollars” rule. Men, women and children—the Prometheans arise and perish; but nothing is ever lost; the stream swells. Revolutions initiate evolutions. In the long run, the dollars cannot prevent the final victory of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity in all branches of human activity. Mr. Luitpold tells us about some of these rebels and innovators from Prometheus of the myth down to Joey Amoona, who in 1925 braved the Alaskan winter to carry aid to a plague-stricken village. A vast theme for any book.

A 17th Century Rebel.

I must repeat that the peculiar value of this book is that it directs attention to manifestations of the revolutionary spirit which we are inclined to ignore or even despise. We have become accustomed to think of revolution in terms of Workers and Capitalists, of the rising of the masses to cast off the tyranny of centuries, of strikes and armies, of the destruction of a pernicious political and economic system. Mr. Luitpold does not neglect this aspect of revolution. He has a poem on John Lilburne, according to the authorities a pestilential political agitator of the seventeenth century.

“What have the writings
Of the learned sirs to say
About John Lilburne and his good comrades?
Ah, that might injure the gentlemen!”

* *Die Rückkehr des Prometheus.* By Josef Luitpold. (Buchmeister Verlag, Berlin, 1927).

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For John gave out this slogan—

“Down with the hedges, tear open the gates!
English soil must be free!
English wheat must grow for everybody,
Each person must sup off English bread!”

A cry which still resounds though Lilburne
received his due reward!

The Fraternity.

But, says Luitpold, revolutionaries appear in strange and often deceptive guises. And yet they are on our side; their fight is our fight. For though our primary effort is to abolish the economic incubus which hampers human progress, we must always bear in mind that we are also striving for a more humane and reasonable world, where men can talk and think freely, where each man will help his neighbour cheerfully, where war will have become anathema, and the black plantation worker will be entitled to the same human desires and satisfactions as his white brother on the office stool. Hence anyone who at any time in any country has stood up for human rights and values is one of our fraternity.

Therefore Mr. Luitpold writes a poem about Florence Nightingale, for she was such a one, though we would hardly think of claiming her for our ranks. So also Sogoro, the Chinaman, who in the seventeenth century suffered torture and execution, together with his whole family, for bearing a petition from his fellow-peasants to the Emperor.

Then spoke Saki his wife,
And her voice thunders through the dim past:
“When will the hangman tremble at length?
We die but we will live forever.”

The Silence of Malplaquet.

The English soldiers who refused to cheer Marlborough after the battle of Malplaquet in 1709, added something to the tide which will eventually sweep away war.

So till the last Marlborough has disappeared
And the last Caldogan has found a decent
occupation,
Praise and glory to you, in all times distant and
near,

Holy and noble silence of Malplaquet.

When in 1871, Leclair disobeyed his captain, and turned his gun away from the Communards, he too was doing his bit for the revolution; and when, in 1919 the

“devilish mob” at Kladno did not hang “the extortioners inflamed with double usury,” but merely elicited the promise

“I shall abandon trade

Shall never and nevermore take usury”
a great deed had been done in the name of Revolution. Even Charles Bixton, the “organised hat-worker,” who gave his blood at the Hospital in Bloomsbury to save someone he did not know at all, merits our honour. He was one of us. It was he that caused “Banker Cook’s” amazement.

We Honour Our Own Heroes.

Mr. Luitpold’s book, then, in spite of shortcomings as poetry, has its value. The history books make a great deal of the victory of Malplaquet, they never mention the silence of Malplaquet.

And yet, though the ruling order constantly roots it out, the Revolutionary Spirit persists. It reappears constantly in unexpected places; often we ignore it—until perhaps the other side seizes upon it and distorts it for its own ends. This book helps us to realise that our fraternity is far more widespread than it seems to be, including many unconscious elements and all the races of the earth. The stream swells, the tide rises; can it be constrained forever?

PLEBS readers will be the more interested in the book which forms the subject of the above article, since its author, J. Luitpold, was a delegate to the International Workers’ Education Conference at Oxford in 1924, and was a strong supporter of the I.W.C.E. point of view as against the “class collaborationists.”—Ed.

KATHLEEN STARR.

PLEBS everywhere will, we are sure, regret with us Kathleen Starr’s resignation, after seven years’ good work, from the PLEBS Office-Secretaryship. A breakdown in health and a serious operation last autumn have necessitated a complete rest, at least for a time. Mrs. Starr stuck to her post until the transference of the N.C.L.C. headquarters to London and the amalgamation of the two offices were completed, but has now, on medical advice, had to give up.

During her “seven years’ hard” she had made herself friends in every part of the movement, and we—and they, we are sure—hope that, in some capacity, she will return to our ranks later on. A presentation from past and present Plebs E.C. members is being made to her shortly.

IS THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT TOO LATE?

By A BIOLOGIST.

III. SCIENTIFIC INDUSTRIALISM.

I COME now to *the* feature of our present civilisation—that is, the exploitation of natural reserves by means of science. It is certain that knowledge of nature is very old and that there were men, some three or four thousands of years ago, who knew much of what we call natural and physical science. It may have been called magic then. The literature of classic Greece shows us that the power of human thought is not any more penetrating now than it was in what we are pleased to call “ancient times.” But the curious thing is that the investigation of nature has tended very rapidly during the last hundred years to become utilitarian. Even the scientific literature of the middle of the nineteenth century shows the contrast between our present-day attitude and that of the pre-industrial age—for science up to the 'thirties of last century was predominantly pre-industrial and scientists were “cranks.”

Gross Materialism.

To-day it is profoundly different. Science is “encouraged” in a thousand ways—for a purpose. It is little use now to expect the support of the State, or of wealthy men, in any purely scientific project—thus the British Government will never again organise and provide for a “Challenger” Expedition. But there are “economic” and industrial scientific investigations in being in every British University; there is a big State “super-Department”—the “Department for Scientific and Industrial Research”; perhaps about two millions a year are spent on carrying on research in connection with the army, navy, aeronautical and other Government departments, and every great business now maintains its staff of scientific investigators. The output of all this organisation in respect of pure learning is pitifully meagre and the wonderful results of physical

science in relation to the nature of the atom have all been accomplished by a few private workers who are employed in the Universities.

But industrial research has made possible the vast expansion of modern industry—at a cost. The cost is, for one thing, gross materialism. (“Materialism” does not mean in this sense the opposite to what a friend of mine called the “Holy Ghost-attitude”—it means motor-cars, big yachts, big mansions, cigars, port wine, and all the other appurtenances of the “captains of industry.”) The other significant cost of modern scientific industrialism is its own undoing.

Exhausting Nature's Capital.

For it is getting more and more clear nowadays that industrialism is “living on capital.” To use its own jargon, it is only possible, on the present scale, by reason of the depletion of natural stores of energy and material. Coal and natural oils are the bases of industrialism and it is now characteristic that these natural stores are being used up *acceleratively*. Even now it is becoming possible (from our increasing knowledge of geology) to estimate roughly the extent of those stores that remain and we can safely state the duration of those reserves in terms of a few centuries. Another world-war will immensely deplete them.

People are impressed with the enormously destructive weapons of modern, scientific war, but that impression is, I think, exaggerated. It is clear now that, on the whole, the defence will always be as good as the attack. But the significant thing, from our point of view, is this—increased power of defence reacts to increased power of attack and so on, *acceleratively*, more and more using up natural energy. So great will be this consumption of coal, oil and wood in the next war that a general col-

lapse of industrialism is bound to follow—and perhaps arrest the war in a general crash of civilised institutions.

For, so far, nothing known to us can replace coal and oil and growing vegetation as the source of energy. The visionaries who have explored the constitution of the atom and the interiors of the stars do not give us any hope of new means of getting energy on such a scale as will replace our old reserves. With the depletion of those old reserves scientific industrialism is bound to crash.

In the first of these articles I referred to the "dark horse," i.e., the Labour movement. I must leave the consideration of this to another article.

THE BOOKSHELF

By J. F. HORRABIN

THERE are two Foxes at present writing books of interest to Socialists: Ralph, and R. M. (I wish R. M. would call himself Richard, so that it would not be so easy to confuse the two of them.) Ralph Fox is an ex-graduate of Cambridge, has spent some years in Russia, is a Communist, and is now, I believe, on the staff of the *Sunday Worker*. R. M. Fox was an engineer, did three years at Ruskin College, and now resides in Dublin. Get them sorted out in your mind, because, despite the similarity of their names, they really are two distinct and separate individuals

Each has recently published a book; Ralph Fox a novel about post-revolutionary Russia—*Storming Heaven*; R. M. Fox a book about certain aspects of present-day civilisation (in Russia as in other parts of the world)—*The Triumphant Machine*. Both are very well worth reading.

A First-Class Novel.

Storming Heaven is, as I believe T. A. Jackson has remarked, the best novel about the Russia of to-day which has yet appeared in English. In its scope, its vividness, and its easy human style it deserves to be put

alongside such a book as Upton Sinclair's *Oil*. It gives one a wonderful panorama of Russian life—in Siberia during the days of the White bandits, in the villages, on the steppes, and in Moscow itself. It is never propagandist—it deals with men and women and life. It can (and should) be read for its own sake. Yet, of course, it is a more than ordinarily interesting novel to Socialists just because it is a picture of Russia.

And, when you come to think of it, you need, if you want to understand the Russia of to-day, to study something else besides economic development, and Government policies, and theses. You've got to know something about the kind of people who live in Russia, and the way they have reacted to the events of the last few years. The peasant problem becomes a more real thing when you have met, in print at any rate, a few individual peasants. And in *Storming Heaven* you see these people all the more vividly because you are looking at them through a British, and not a Russian, writer's eyes.

Above all, you get from the book some idea of the *spirit* that is building the New Russia. "What," the hero of the book asks a Communist friend, "is your idea of life?"

"To make things go" is the answer. "To waken the world. There's these deserts to reclaim, all Russia to be covered with railways and air-routes, factories to build, new things to be discovered, to make men freer. Oh yes, I like to make things go, to turn a wheel and make something move. To plan the production of a new commodity . . . that's life for you . . ."

And the Communist, an ex-railwayman, goes on to describe what he describes as "one of the best moments of my life." During the Civil War he had been in charge of a train, taking food and machine parts to a factory at the end of a long branch line. They were held up at the junction, the station-master insisting that there was no engine to take them on. At the point of a revolver he remembered that there were three engines in the sheds, but all were disabled.

"I took him into the sheds, and being a railwayman I pretty soon saw that one of them had not been disabled by any accident. So I gave him another minute to tell me what had happened to



the engine. He thought I was bluffing. I wasn't, and at the end of the minute that nice white tunic of his was spoiled and they were carrying him out of the shed."

All night a bunch of volunteers worked to make that engine go. By dawn they succeeded.

"I blew the whistle all the time as we came out of the sheds. The people in the town thought it was an alarm and came out to see. But all they saw was the stationmaster's body in the waiting-room, and me playing his funeral march on the whistle as I took the train out of the station. That was life, Vanya, my boy, making something move, bringing bread to the workers, giving them a chance to win the Revolution in their factory."

Read *Storming Heaven*. It's the kind of book Jack London would have written about Russia if he'd lived to go there.

The Machine—God or Devil?

R. M. Fox's *The Triumphant Machine* (Hogarth Press, 5/-) is a book of a different kind. It is a little inclined to be "bookish," though it is saved from that, at any rate in the earlier chapters, by the evidently first-hand knowledge of modern workshop life. These chapters study the effects of Mass

Production. and modern scientific methods applied to industry, on the workers concerned.

Now this is a matter of first-class interest to I.W.C.E.s since only by understanding the psychology of the men and women we are trying to reach in our classes can we make our educational work effective. Mr. Fox is entirely pessimistic about the effects of machine work:—

It is galling to have to fix eyes, mind and muscle for hours on work that is not really sufficient to occupy the mind. A reaction is bound to come if the brain is not dulled. Lurid and sentimental films, melodrama, jazz, dancing; anything which has colour, romance, sensuousness, passion or excitement is demanded. . . .

"I can't even settle to read!" said one man, voicing a general workshop complaint. "Sometimes I try. But after two or three minutes I sling the book to the other end of the room and go off out."

Now the interesting question raised, but not really answered in these chapters is whether machine work necessarily, of itself, has these bad effects on the workers; or whether these effects are largely the result of modern speeding-up methods, undue specialisation, etc., as well as of social conditions outside the factory. Mr. Fox hates the machine with a deadly hatred. He is a little sardonic about the enthusiasm with which the Russians are, so to speak, clasping it to their bosoms. But one feels that in this matter he lets his feelings get the better of his judgment. He certainly makes one realise the magnitude of present evils. But one wants to know how far these are inevitable in machine production. Now and again we get vague hints of possible developments. Thus—"Mr. Ford's hint of interchangeable occupations may prove to be a corner-stone of the future industrial order." But we never get anything more than hints. And I for one would willingly have sacrificed the later, somewhat "chatty" chapters about "Machine Civilisation and Literature," and "The Machine Drama," for a more definite discussion of the way out of the evils he has so feelingly described.

SOCIAL SCIENCE & SCARBOROUGH'S SEA & SAND

await Students at the N.C.L.C. Summer School.

LENIN ON MATERIALISM

By EDEN and CEDAR PAUL

Without a revolutionary theory there cannot be a revolutionary movement.— Lenin, Works, Russian Edition, Vol. V., p. 135.

Only a party guided by an advanced theory can act as vanguard in the fight.— Lenin, Works, Russian Edition, Vol. V., p. 136.

The immense importance attached by Lenin to theory is perhaps best shown by this, that he himself undertook the great task of generalising, on behalf of materialistic philosophy, the main achievements of science since the days of Engels, and of comprehensively criticising the anti-materialistic trends of certain Marxists.— Stalin, Leninism, p. 95.

A MANUAL of revolutionary materialism (Lenin would have called it dialectical materialism) has yet to be written. Engels' *Anti-Dühring* is the foundation, but is out of date. Hardly less out of date are the writings of Dietzgen, which are somewhat severely handled by Lenin, amid lukewarm commendation. Lenin, unfortunately, did not fill the void, for his book,* written twenty years ago, is not a succinct and formal exposition, but controversial throughout—a detailed discussion of views which the author subjects to the fire of adverse criticism. Such books are difficult reading, and are little adapted for elementary study. Let us, however, make the best of what we have got, and, ignoring Mach and Avenarius, and their Russian followers against whom the author is mainly arguing, extract as far as we are able, the kernel of positive doctrine which Lenin is expounding.

* *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. Critical Notes concerning a Reactionary Philosophy, by V. I. Lenin, translated from the Russian by David Kvitko, being the thirteenth volume (the first to be issued) of Lenin's Collected Works now in course of publication, by Martin Lawrence. London, 1927. Price 10/6.

A Mishmash.

English readers who want a concise exposition of the philosophical outlook here called empirio-criticism (a sort of mishmash of agnostic empiricism and Kantian criticism) will find it in Karl Pearson's *The Grammar of Science*, which Lenin singles out and speaks of with respect as the most clear-headed and consistent exposition of the outlook he opposes. In what follows, we are (unless otherwise stated) expounding or quoting Lenin.

What Really Exists?

Materialism is one of conflicting ways of answering the basic philosophical problem: What really exists? Lenin (p. 14) quotes Fraser: "This is the gist of the whole question. According to the materialists, sensible phenomena are due to material substance, or to some unknown 'third nature'; according to Berkeley, to rational will; according to Hume and the positivists, their origin is absolutely unknown, and we can only generalise them inductively, through custom, as facts." He then goes on to quote the phrasing of Engels, who divided philosophers into two great camps, materialists and idealists: "Whilst to the materialists nature is primary and spirit secondary, to the idealists the reverse is the case." The agnostic or positivist would-be middle course is not, says Lenin (following Engels) really a middle course at all. Hume is, he contends, as much on the side of the reaction, as Berkeley or any other idealist; just as Huxley, who is materialist for the purposes of scientific investigation, but Humean in philosophy, is but a "shame-faced materialist" after all.

Is Matter Primary?

For Lenin, this is the acid test. In scientific investigation, in the laboratory, every one is a materialist. The objects of chemical and physical investigation are taken as "real" entities, which exist independently of the observing mind. The

matter is primary and the thought is secondary, the thought being a "reflection" of reality, and continually, as science progresses, growing more like that reality. But, when he leaves the laboratory, your chemist or physicist may, as a philosopher, contend that thought, spirit, is primary after all, and real-seeming matter an illusion. If so, says Lenin, he is a reactionary philosopher, is substantially a supporter of "fideism"—champions faith rather than knowledge. He would "make nature a part of reason, instead of making reason a small part of nature." (p. 125.)

Within the domain of materialism, not all that can claim that name is acceptable to Lenin. He rejects "metaphysical materialism" and "naturo-historical materialism" in favour of "dialectical materialism." What does he mean by this rather unhappy term "dialectics?" It is by no means easy to say. Sometimes the word has an unmistakably Hegelian flavour, as in the appendix (a fragment) "On Dialectics," in which it implies a theory—"metaphysical" assuredly, if ever a theory were metaphysical—derivable from Heraclitus quite as much as from Hegel, to the effect that "all existence really constitutes a union of opposites." Sometimes it has a much clearer significance. "Dialectical materialism insists on the approximate, relative character of every scientific proposition concerning the structure of matter and its properties: on the absence of absolute boundaries in nature; on the transformation of moving matter from one state to another. . . etc." (p. 221.) This also may be derived from Heraclitus the Obscure, who said "Everything is in a flux." And does "dialectic" in that sense mean much more than "evolutionary," from one point of view, and "revolutionary," from another? We sometimes wonder whether "dialectic," as used by many Marxists, means any more than "that blessed word, Mesopotamia."

* * *

What Rules the Roost?

It is no use lamenting that Lenin did not find time before he died to write that manual of revolutionary materialism. He

has been dead four years now, and it is time someone else got on with the job. Someone who, while recognising that reason is, in very truth, only a part of nature, and a small part, sees that it is something new in nature, and a rebel against nature under the old non-rational aspects. "Materialist theory," said Marx, "must not be content with explaining the world, but must change it."

Someone, too, who does not take too narrow a view of "reason," but gives adequate place in his conception of the mind to the unconscious urges revealed to us by Freud, someone able to effect a synthesis of Marxism with the New Psychology.

Someone, finally, who is not content with the clockwork mechanism variety of determinism. This discontent with oriental fatalism is implicit in the theory that mind is a rebel element in the universe. "Matter" may be as primary as you please, but it no longer rules the roost. Mind may be a "dialectic" outcome of matter; but when once mind has emerged, the universe ceases to be a clockwork mechanism ticking on blindly to a foreordained end. In *theory*, Lenin was a determinist of the hard-shelled, the oriental, the fatalist kind. For him, as for Engels and Marx, freedom was only "a knowledge of necessity." In *practice*, for them all, as for Marx in the foregoing quotation, freedom was revolutionary freedom, freedom to change the course of the world.

THE PREMIER'S PYJAMAS

The new type of lantern provided by the N.C.L.C., despite the fact that it is no bigger than a small attache case, can be used for all kinds of electioneering and propaganda work in the evenings, as it will throw pictures and slogans on any light coloured surface. At the recent London elections one of the lanterns was used by an N.C.L.C. candidate. On that occasion the picture was thrown on a white quilt hanging on a good lady's clothesline. The good lady herself thereupon quickly appeared and demanded to know whether the picture would wash off! At the next general election Mrs. Baldwin will have to dry Mr. B's pyjamas indoors lest they be used to reflect the slogan "Vote for Mac."

AMONG THE BOOKS

By
"PLEBS" REVIEWERS

YERNEY'S *Justice*, by Ivan Canker (Vanguard Press; 2/9 post free from N.C.L.C.) is a story of the simple single-hearted peasant seeking for justice—the right to live in the house he has built on the land he has tilled. In it we have a parable touching the very core of the workers' struggle. From mayor to judge, to magistrate, to priest, to emperor he goes—in vain; but he persists. "See how they're hiding justice from me," he declares. "But they're as foolish in doing that as if they were trying to blow out the sun." It is good to see works of international fiction included in the publications of the Vanguard Press. This book is said to have helped bring about agrarian reforms in Central and Eastern Europe, and the author is claimed as the greatest writer Yugo-Slavia has produced. K.S.

Only recently has it been possible to get in the compass of one book particulars of the various types of adult educational bodies. We therefore welcome the second edition of the *Handbook and Directory of Adult Education* (Deane and Sons, 2/6 paper, 3/6 cloth). N.C.L.C. education and W.E.A. propaganda, prison education, the extramural work of the Universities, Board of Education grant regulations, etc., all have their sections. The book is essential to everyone seriously interested in workers' education. It is regrettable, however, that the geographical survey should be so misleading. For instance, according to the survey, the N.C.L.C. does no work in East Lothian, Midlothian (excluding Edinburgh), Perthshire and West Lothian. In point of fact it has classes in all four counties. What the reason for the omissions in this and many other instances is it is difficult to say, as the N.C.L.C.'s printed report clearly gives the towns where classes are run. Anyway the net result is that, in comparison with the other educational bodies, the N.C.L.C.'s work is grossly minimised. No doubt, now that attention has been drawn to the matter, the next editions will provide a more accurate survey. H.O.

I confess that, as a rule, I can't be bothered with a book of short stories, but John Reed's *Daughters of the Revolution* (A Vanguard book—N.C.L.C., 2/9 post free) carried me through from cover to cover. We certainly expect a lot from the author of *Ten Days that Shook the World* and *Daughters of the Revolution* does not disappoint us. J.P.

The Revolt of the Samoans, by H. E. Holland (Clarte Book Depot, 4 Willis St., Wellington, N. Zealand, 6d.) is a short account of certain

recent happenings in Western (late German) Samoa, the group of islands held under mandate by New Zealand. It appears that the natives have some reason for regretting their transference from German to British rule. At any rate, under the new order, they have had an opportunity of learning, from actual experience, that "Prussianism" is not a German monopoly.

Misleaders of Labour. By W. Z. Foster (Trade Union Educational League, \$1.25). This is an amazing account of the graft and corruption which are alleged to be practised by many of the Trade Union leaders in U.S.A. Although the book suffers from some verbal redundancy in the early pages, it should be read by all trade unionists. G.P.

Although the writer of *Towards the Peace of Nations* (by Hugh Dalton, M.P.; Routledge, 5/-) disclaims any official utterance, this book is a very good example of the Social-Democratic, the second International point of view on War and Peace. Marx and Lenin have no mention, although MacDonald and Brailsford have many, and the class struggle and imperialism are left out of the picture. Capitalism receives only one mention, to say that while it may aggravate it is not a predominating cause of wars. Russia is referred to patronisingly once or twice as an unimportant outsider; and while a "Labour Government" is made a staff in a chaotic world, the working class and its organisations do not appear in the picture. The Dawes Scheme and MacDonald's connection with it are applauded. A perfected League of Nations is held up as the Mecca of the future. Wars are to be cured by political arrangements to "smooth over differences," and the Labour Party in championing such arrangements is to act just as any Liberal Government might do, only with more courage and conviction—that is, presumably, the only distinction. The book as a whole is clearly designed to attract bourgeois Liberal opinion to the Labour Party.

As an exposition of this view it ought to be read and studied. It is clearly, pleasantly and "chattily" written. It contains quite a useful summary of the discussions over the Protocol and Disarmament, Locarno, and Sanctions. When he has read it anyone with a smattering of Marxist knowledge should be able to see the extent to which the Labour Party has become "a second party of the bourgeoisie." X.Y.Z.

The L.R.D. has published *Ten Years of Soviet Rule* (price 6d.) with a preface by George Waddell, president of the A.U.B.T.W.

What's So and What Isn't. By John M. Work (Vanguard Press, 2/6). A string of most vague assertions regarding the evils of capitalism and the glories of socialism. It reads like an American attempt at Blatchfordism, but is not half so successful. G.P.

WHAT'S DOING

The N.C.L.C. at Work

THE following is a list of new affiliations obtained in April by our local colleges:—
London, 2.

NELSON CLOTHLOOKERS AND WAREHOUSEMEN. This Union has arranged an educational scheme with the N.C.L.C. providing the usual facilities.

SUMMER WORK. The Summer Work, including the very important tutors' training classes, should now be in full swing. Week-end Schools could be run with Marxism and History as a subject, and John S. Clarke's book as the text book. Care should be taken to see that the branches of Unions, whose members are entitled to attend Day and Week-End Schools free, have plenty of notice so that the members will have an opportunity of attending. Particulars of Day and Week-end Schools should be sent to Head Office if possible a month beforehand, in order that the Transport Workers' Union may provide scholarships.

SUMMER SCHOOL. Students are reminded that the N.C.L.C. has arranged to accept instalments of Summer School fees.

WHAT THE DIVISIONS ARE DOING.

DIVISION 1.

The Women's Training class at King's Cross resumes on May 14. Two summer tutors' classes have so far been arranged—one at Stamford Brook on Modern Working Class History and the other at Leyton on Economic Geography. A day school for women was held at Battersea with T. Ashcroft as lecturer. W. H. Bagot, of the E.C. of N.U.D.A.W., gave a very interesting address on his recent visit to Russia at the end of the Divisional Council meeting. These monthly discussion meetings are proving a success. A dramatic Group is at work preparing for our Garden Party at Highfields, Golders Green, on July 21st. There are still vacancies for our Divisional week school at Lancing, June 23rd-30th Charge, £2 for the week. The London A.E.U. District Committee is providing a number of scholarships to this school.

DIVISION 2.

The Littlehampton class are arranging for an annual meet for May 20th, with three tutors for the school work. Comrades from Guildford, Portsmouth and Brighton are expected. Full programme can be obtained from Miss S. Pedley, 11, Talbot Road, Littlehampton. Guildford class are arranging for a Flannel Dance for May 11th to raise funds and advertise the work. The Oxford class are organising two day schools and also another river trip. The Bournemouth class hope to set up a tutors' class. The visit of Tom Ashcroft to Guildford was very greatly appreciated. The new series of lectures on Soviet Russia attracted

additional members at Bournemouth, Oxford and Guildford. Some good press reports also secured.

DIVISION 3.

St. Albans so much appreciated Cedar Paul's song recital on April 15th that they hope to arrange a repeat visit. The much debated topic of Industrial Peace was discussed at a special lecture. The same topic will be the subject of lectures at Peterborough and March. Colchester Shop Assistants combined business and pleasure by having a talk on Education amidst a social evening. The Division 3 E.C. has arranged to ask Com. Hulyer (the new Cambridge secretary and recipient of the A.U.B.T.W. Scholarship) to share in representation at the Annual Meeting at Cober Hill. The Annual Delegate Meeting of the Division has been fixed for July 28th. Will all class secretaries and teachers please book that date as we hope to combine with it a Week-end School for which we are booking the General Secretary and others. Norwich is receiving a visit from J.F.H. on June 24th, and Ipswich holds a school on May 27th. Braintree Women's Section is to be visited on May 10th and Billericay L.P. on May 30th. In the latter place Miss Thompson has combined public speaking with Trades Unionism to such good effect that class members now publicly debate with their Tory opponents. Staines is also making headway with its speakers' class.

DIVISION 4.

The Division E.C. have decided to run a Division Camp School this summer, during the first week of August. Scholarships will be offered for both the Division and National Summer Schools, open for competition by students, secretaries, and tutors. Thanks to the splendid co-operation of Comrades Wadge, Geery, Tillman, and Pearce the South Wales and Mon. N.U.R. Educational Scheme was unanimously readopted at the annual meeting. Newport L.C. aided by the enthusiasm of T. Richards is out to raise £40 to set up a College Library. Western Valley L.C. concluded the session with a social and rally—the evening was full of good intentions, but Comrade Chivers suggests music classes for next winter! The results of recent Lantern Lectures have fully justified the E.C.'s expenditure. During the past eight weeks ten lantern lectures have been given to affiliated bodies and Trades Councils. One aged moralist in our midst is not pleased with such innovations because "the pictures lead the young men astray." The Division Rally at Cardiff on Easter Monday was an absolute frost, in the Dietzgen sense of course. The Org. Tutors, and the enthusiasts from Rhondda and Newport patiently waited the promised invasion from north, south, east and west—but alas!—and someone whispered "not leadership this time, thank God." The

Welsh Division W.E.A. has issued its Annual Report, with the usual list of benefactors. It is interesting to note that Mr. Baldwin's Government contributed £309 16s. 5d.—to secure that the coal-field will be safe for democracy.

DIVISION 5.

To wind up the session the Bristol College held a very enjoyable social. The College Council is now arranging with the Organiser for a tutors' class. Following an address by the Organiser the Stapleton Ward of the Labour Party has become affiliated to the local college. Cheltenham College is making arrangements for a Day School to be held towards the end of May. The class organised for the Bath Labour Party Women's Section will run on through the summer.

DIVISION 7.

The colleges in this Division are now busy arranging day schools, and for this purpose the colleges have been grouped into convenient geographical areas for mutual assistance in making them a success. Each college in turn will have to arrange a school and by this joint action there will be continued reunions of the active workers. The first will be one organised by the Keighley College to take place at "Happy Valley," near Bingley, on Saturday, May 26th. Visitors are asked to make their way to Bingley and then from there by bus to Harden. The Division Organiser will be the lecturer. The Shipley College are arranging a school for Sunday, June 10th, at the Otley Clarion Camp. Bradford runs one at the Dyers Club, Elmroyd, Brighouse, on Saturday, June 16th, Slaithwaite a day school in their Socialist Club on Sunday, July 1st, with Frank Dixon and Roland Hill as lecturers. Classes are now being run at Leeds (A. Haigh, tutors upon teaching methods); Halifax (tutor, F. Shaw), Bradford (tutor, H. Scarfe), and Slaithwaite (tutor, H. Darnell). Halifax are arranging a day school at Hardcastle Craggs and Dewsbury a school in the Textile Hall, Union Street.

DIVISION 8.

NORTH LANCS. AREA.—The Annual Delegate meeting of the North Lancs. Area was held in Blackburn on Saturday, April 28th, and sixty delegates attended from affiliated bodies. J. P. M. Millar attended and gave a greatly appreciated address. The Nelson Clothlookers' Association after being addressed by the Area Organiser, has agreed to a full scheme for its members. A special effort will be made this summer to draw other Textile Unions into the N.C.L.C.

The Nelson Weavers' Association has granted scholarships to class students who wish to attend the Week-end School that is to be held at the Ribble Valley Clarion Clubhouse on the 16th and 17th of June. Dr. Johnstone will be the lecturer, and the charge for board and residence over the week-end will be 8/8d. Applications for places should be forwarded as early as possible to the organiser. Two Tutors' Training Classes have begun.

S.E. LANCS. AREA.—The Tutors' Council is still giving due attention to Tutors' Training Classes. The Students' Association is giving valuable assistance in the production of diagrams, etc. To get on the tutors' staff means going through special classes. Established tutors will not be exempt, but will take training courses for their particular subjects. The Council wishes to express its appreciation to all concerned.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT.—The Transport Workers' Union is offering six scholarships for the Day School at Parkgate on May 20th. The A.U.B.T.W. student recommended for the Scholarship to the National Summer School, Scarborough, is Mr. G. Manning, Stockport Branch. The Liverpool Committee congratulate the Publications Committee on the splendid April issue of PLEBS.

DIVISION 9.

All the classes running during the Winter Session in the Durham College Area have arranged for courses for next winter and other classes are expected to materialise. This College will shortly lose the services of Comrade Moran, whose duties now determine that he shall travel to the furthestmost parts of the earth. We understand the Willington Class, of which he has been tutor, will show in a material form its appreciation of his services. We are sorry to lose Moran not only because of his splendid work but also because of his fine personality. Moran carries with him our best wishes.

The Darlington College is doing good work in organisational improvements.

DIVISION 10.

J. Wilson, of Lanarkshire, reports arrangements for a Summer School. Edinburgh held one on the 20th April and had two lectures in the Zoological Gardens, one on "The Struggle for Existence" by Miss Jacob and the other on "Parliament" by Dr. Drummond Shields, M.P. Stirlingshire has had a good session since January and Glasgow has just finished a year with a large number of students and many branch lectures. Aberdeen have finished a good session with a balance of 10d. It is hoped that with the new organisation and all the districts pulling together the College can look forward in the future to greater work and usefulness in the Labour movement.

DIVISION 12.

Nottingham is running a Tutors' Class during the summer months. A class commences in Lincoln on May 17th. Arrangements are in hand for a number of Day and Week-end Schools. The first is at Northampton on Sunday, May 20th. The organiser will be the lecturer. Five other classes have been commenced, and several more will be going within the next few weeks. The Nottingham area will miss Comrade Lygo, who has gone to Sheffield. His services as lecturer in Nottingham and Ilkeston during the past winter have been much appreciated. No. 7 Division will gain what No. 12 has lost.

Scarborough Summer School

COBER HILL GUEST HOUSE,

July 7—14th (seven days).

Programme. Lectures and discussions on the problems that may face a Labour Government—Industrial and Co-operative Problems, Problems of Finance, of Foreign Affairs and of the Subject Races. The names of the lecturers will be announced later. A. A. Purcell, M.P., has already promised to deal with India. *Fee for board and tuition and games:* £3 3s. per week, tutors, class secretaries, etc., £3.

Brussels Summer School

BELGIAN LABOUR COLLEGE,

near Brussels, August 4—10th (six days).

Programme. Lectures on the Subject Races and the International Trade Union Movement and on the Concentration of Capital and the Trade Unions, by Edo Fimmen, Secretary of the International Transport Workers' Federation, and lectures on a Workers' History of Belgium and on the Belgian Trade Union, Labour, Co-operative and Educational Movements by the Staff of the Brussels Labour College. All lectures will be in English, the principal international language (Peace, Esperantists!) *Fee for board and tuition* £2 12s.

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