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ORGAN OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF  
LABOUR COLLEGES

# THE PIEBBS

Monthly, 4d.

AUGUST, 1929

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a web of  
lies is  
woven”



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# THE PLEBS

*Organ of the National Council of Labour Colleges*

VOL. XXI.

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## A NEW CHAPTER IN LABOUR COLLEGE HISTORY

**T**HERE seems little doubt that this month will see the close of the residential Labour College in Penywern Road, Earl's Court.

“It is amazing,” said Mr. T. Ashcroft, Principal of the College, “that the very month that sees the establishment of a Labour Government, a decision should be made to sell the Labour College to the highest bidder.”

For some years now the College has been threatened almost annually with dissolution, a circumstance that must have made work very difficult both for students and staff. The College is, of course, owned and controlled not by the N.C.L.C., but by the N.U.R. and the South Wales Miners. When, therefore, a Miners' Conference decided, in view of the Union's financial difficulties, a short time ago to withdraw its support in July, it signed the death warrant of the College: the N.U.R. alone could scarcely be expected to carry on the residential work.

For some time the College has been labouring, not only with the difficulty of an uncertain length of life, but under other difficulties. Penywern Road was admittedly not suitable for a Labour College. More important than that, there was, in consequence of the separate ownerships, no co-ordination of the residential College's work with that of the National Council of Labour Colleges.

PLEASE NOTE

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on Back Page

A year or two ago the N.C.L.C. submitted to the N.U.R. and S.W.M.F. a scheme of co-ordination and joint control, but that scheme was not accepted. Had it been accepted there is little doubt that the residential College would have been alive to-day.

Our movement must face the fact, however, that this year, which brings round the twenty-first anniversary of the residential Labour College, is apparently to celebrate, not the anniversary of its foundation, but the day of its dissolution, to the unconcealed joy of the capitalist press.

With the passing of the residential Labour College, there goes the only Trade Union owned and controlled residential College in Britain, for it is no doubt fully realised that Ruskin College, had it depended solely on Trade Union support, would have disappeared long ago. It is kept afloat by Board of Education grants, philanthropic scholarships and Education Authority scholarships and now, according to *Reynolds*, a well-known Midland manufacturing firm is contemplating sending some of its younger employees to Ruskin. There are, of course, several other colleges for workers, one run in the interests of sectarian religion and the others run by philanthropists in the interests of philanthropy, and all of no use to the Labour Movement. *Their existence, however, is the plainest possible hint to the Movement that if it does not think it worth while to provide residential educational facilities for its members other people do.\**

Opponents of the Labour Movement will make a great mistake, however, if they imagine the Labour College is really dead. Marx and Keir Hardie are dead, but in fact they are more alive now than ever. The Soviet Government and the British Labour Government are striking examples of their influence to-day. We might say that both Marx and Hardie at the present time sit on the ministerial benches in the House of Commons—longing no doubt for a majority!

The residential Labour College was the first college in this country to advocate the claims of independent working-class education. It was the father of the National

\* The other day Mr. Baldwin opened a new Conservative College at Ashbridge.

Council of Labour Colleges, which has some thirty thousand class students each year, and is, we believe, the largest Trade Union educational body in the world. The size of its Correspondence Course Department astounds the members of the Labour Movement in other countries who take an interest in workers' education.

The N.C.L.C. realises the importance of residential training, especially for the production of tutors. Consequently, when the executive heard that the residential College was going out of existence, it decided to explore the possibilities of itself providing residential tuition and a committee was instructed to go into the matter.

More than that, the anti-Labour forces thought that with the dissolution of the Labour College the N.U.R. would cease its connection with the Labour College Movement. In view of the N.U.R.'s outstanding importance, that would indeed have been a victory for the anti-Socialists. The N.U.R. has, however, through its branches, played a very big part in building up the N.C.L.C., and, as a report given elsewhere shows, the Union's Conference decided unanimously that the Executive should negotiate an educational scheme with the N.C.L.C. Bravo, railwaymen!

It is now the job of all N.C.L.C.ers to help to write the new page of Labour College history that must follow the above decisions. From now on every N.C.L.C.er should have consciously before him or her the question of how to make the Labour College Movement more effective. Our Movement is entrusted with a great responsibility. It is now up to us.

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# IS RAISING THE SCHOOL-LEAVING AGE ENOUGH?

By J. F. HORRABIN, M.P.

**T**HERE appeared to be some doubt at the outset whether the raising of the school-leaving age was to be one of the immediate legislative measures of the Labour Government; and there was certainly not a little anxiety, both among educationists and among those who were simply concerned with the keeping of election pledges, as to the Government's intentions in this particular respect. Doubts and anxieties have now, however, been set at rest by an explicit announcement that the age is to be raised to fifteen in April, 1931. Whether the deciding factor was the wish to reduce the number of wage-slaves on the labour market, and so minimise the problem of the unemployed; or whether purely educational considerations determined the issue is uncertain. From both points of view the decision is important, and every Labour man or woman except those whose idea of Socialism is confined to "a bob a day more" will welcome it with enthusiasm.

But . . . yes, there is emphatically a "but." And no I.C.W.E.er will need to be reminded what that "but" is. Raising the school-leaving age is all very well—as a beginning. But another step, or series of steps, becomes at once even more vitally necessary than before.

If Labour is going to give *more* education to the children, then Labour must see what *kind* of education the children are to get.

To leave children at school for an extra year is not a step towards the Co-operative Commonwealth if during that year they are still to be stuffed with drum-and-trumpet history, taught that the Empire is God's trust to his chosen (British) people, and that the present order of society (with small modifications) has broadened down from precedent to precedent through the centuries until at last it is in actual fact broad-

based upon the people's will. A larger dose of education is only good in itself if any and every kind of education be good.

Some Labour folk seem still to believe this. Education, to them, is a blessed word, and all professional educationists are above suspicion of class bias or political prejudice. They should study the little book by Mark Starr which, we understand, is shortly to be published by the Hogarth Press; in which are analysed a number of school textbooks now in use, and their "patriotic," militarist and anti-Labour bias exposed.

It is not, moreover, a matter only of bias. It is also a question of unintelligence. To take one instance: since H. G. Wells a few years ago met a real popular demand for some knowledge of *world* development with *The Outline of History*, thousands of adults have realised the futility of much of the so-called "history" teaching in schools; teaching which is concerned solely with the sequence of certain events in this particular island—and those events not related to any coherent scheme of social growth or development, but listed consecutively in arbitrary fashion, without perspective and without any real understanding. Bias is there, indeed; but it is in large part nullified by the sheer stupidity of the method used for "getting it across."

What the Education Department of a Labour Government must do, between now and the date when the school age is actually raised, is to revise drastically the curriculum of both elementary and secondary schools; particularly as regards such fundamentally important subjects as history and historical geography.

It would be absurd to compel the children of the workers to remain another year at school and at the same time leave the control of what those children are taught in the hands of people whose whole mentality is opposed to Labour's viewpoint.

Labour *has* a point of view in education. It is the business of a Labour Education Minister to see that that point of view is expressed in the actual curriculum of the schools. The Sheffield Education Committee recently ordered a compulsory Peace Day in all the schools under their authority. We want more courageous decisions of the sort, and *on a national scale*. "Continuity" should most emphatically not be Labour's aim in the sphere of education.

# THE ADVANCE OF WOMEN

By ELLEN WILKINSON, M.P.

IS there any reason why a socialist should be pleased when some woman breaks fresh ground? A good comrade said to me impatiently when I was enthusing about a woman in the Cabinet—"But why? She signed the Blanesburgh Report. What has been gained?" Yet it is a big step forward when a woman who started life as a shop girl becomes a cabinet minister.

The most difficult lesson that the men have had to learn is that no class or nation can rise above the level of its women. While they are exploited and sweated, or, in a wealthier class, kept ignorant and irresponsible, the sons they raise bear the brand. To the young men and women who were children during the war, who know nothing of the struggles of the women for bare recognition even as competent human beings, it seems a small thing that there are fourteen women in Parliament. Why not four, or four hundred? What difference does it make apart from the party to which they belong?

A very sound answer to these questions is provided by Mrs. Neff in her study of *Victorian Working Women*.\* It is 'scissors and paste' history, long extracts from blue books, livened by quotations from novels and magazines of the period, with little understanding of the economic background beyond the obvious facts of the coming of steam power.

There is nothing very new, but the whole forms a picture of a time when, chattel slavery apart, the workers' conditions were perhaps about at their worst. Or perhaps it would be truer to say that we know more about these than others because a new reading public, unpleasantly aware that such a thing as the French Revolution had happened, was willing to read about, and weep over, the sorrows of children in cotton mills and consumptive dressmakers working 72 hours at a sitting to finish court mourning.

\* (Allen & Unwin, 12/6).

Many girls had only two hours' sleep out of the twenty-four for months together. A girl of 17, on account of an order for general mourning, did not change her dress for nine days and nights. She rested on a mattress on the floor. Her food was cut up and placed beside her as she ate. As a result she lost her sight. . . . The girls here, as in other establishments, received no extra pay for their long hours.

Mrs. Neff quotes largely from Mrs. Tonna, a lady who was too high-minded to write "fiction," so explored the details of evidence before the Child-Labour Commission, and served up the horrors, suitably spiced with piety to suit the sadistic tastes of dainty ladies, whose reaction apparently was to survey their own pretty rooms and get a warm feeling from the fact that their lives were so different.

Kate Clarke, the heroine of "The Lace Runners" was a cottage worker, a stalwart young country girl devoted to children and kind to her mistress in her time of trouble. Her touching history is a record of declining health, rebellion against ceaseless toil with no exercise, her attempt to better her conditions and her final ruin. The young "winder" who lodges in the same house takes to drink. Mrs. Tonna, with her inevitable gloom about industry, has to make her usual decision to consign her pious worker to tuberculosis and an early grave, and the more spirited ones to the public-house and the steep paths of sin. There is no other course open to them.

There were, of course, the paths of trade unionism and political agitation whose hard road some heroic souls trod to lay the foundation of a Labour Government in 1929. Mrs. Neff devotes only a few scattered references to them.

I don't suppose that the condition of women as workers was much worse than that of men. They were both the victims of insensate exploitation, but because the women were so weak and unorganisable, because piety and religion and custom were all invoked to excuse their overwork, they dragged down the pitifully low standards of their class until sheer horror at the result led men like Lord Shaftesbury and Robert Dewar to drag in the unwilling State to protect them. Curiously enough, Mrs. Neff hardly mentions that egregious crowd of

middle-class people who produced so-called feminist reasons against protective legislation for these unfortunates lest some ideal standard of equality might be infringed. We have their counterparts to-day.

I think Mrs. Neff was wise to include her chapter on the "Idle Women," for they set the standard by which all women were judged.

To get ready for the marriage market, the young girl was trained like a race horse. Her education consisted of showy accomplishments designed to ensnare young men. The three R's of this deadly equipment were music, drawing and French. . . . The stamp of masculine approval was placed upon ignorance, meekness, lack of opinions, general helplessness and weakness, in short a recognition of female inferiority to the male. Men in the society of the pure creatures modified their conversation. There was a definite line drawn concerning what an unmarried lady could not hear. Not only was the impure barred, *but also anything requiring intelligence*. Since she found opinions and intelligence an incumbrance, a wise girl got rid of them or gave up timid attempts to develop her mind. In the process of trying to be what Society expected she became unhealthy from lack of exercise and tight-lacing.

Their tight-corseted helplessness was indeed a reflex of the superfluity of worldly goods that the Industrial Revolution brought to an increasing middle-class. To-day that flow of easy wealth is receding from so wide a shore, and the independent working woman is the dominant figure. There is a whole period of economic history behind the interesting newspaper paragraph that the unemployed shop assistant of 35 years ago is to-day the first woman Cabinet Minister.

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

"Mr. Horrabin's brief, pointed,  
and extremely entertaining survey."

—The *Socialist Review*.

## AFTER TRADE UNIONISM —WHAT?

By H. NORMAN SMITH.

**R**ATIONALISATION is going on rapidly in British industry; and, if it means anything, it means that industry will be in a position to market more goods at a lower labour cost per unit of production. To market them, but not necessarily to sell them.

Rationalisation aims primarily at cheapening production; only incidentally is it concerned with distribution, the secondary idea behind it being that, if you can produce cheaply enough, you will be able to undercut in the export market and so get a bigger share of foreign trade. Yet, by hypothesis, rationalisation weakens the home market, because it involves the distribution of less purchasing power (wages, salaries) for a given output.

All this arises because the aim of industry, under capitalism, is essentially to achieve a financial result, and only incidentally to satisfy consumption needs. To the extent that rationalisation achieves its primary object its benefits to British industry are only temporary, because the advantage snatched from foreign competitors is snatched back again when they, in turn, have been driven to rationalise. Nothing in the rationalisation process accelerates the distribution of purchasing power commensurately with the acceleration in the production of goods.

Again, if process be improved, the importance of the human element in production diminishes, while that of the machine increases. If the General Strike could not paralyse society in the pre-rationalisation era, still less can it hope to succeed in the future. The teeth of the proletariat have been drawn with the pincers of rationalisation; and the Communists are left without an argument. More than that, no back-to-the-union campaigns can restore the former glory of trade unionism; and (I deliberately select an exaggerated metaphor) when the last machine displaces the last worker, then

the last trade union official will have to revise his ideas.

It is with finance, however, that I am mainly concerned. So long as the primary aim of industry is to achieve a financial result, rather than to satisfy consumers' needs, the logical end to which all rationalisation tends is a state where industrial plant of perfect automaticity, organised in completely rationalised businesses, will be potentially able to deliver to this world and every other world in the solar system an immense abundance of goods; yet no goods will be delivered, because 999 out of every 1000 of the human race, having been displaced from the rationalised factories in consequence of successive improvements of process, will, in the absence of their former wages or salaries, be left without purchasing power.

When that stage arrives some "currency crank" may suggest the obvious, namely, that the banks should devise a financial technique to enable the moneyless humans to pay for the goods the rationalised factories are able to produce but unable to sell. Possibly the pagans among the owners of the factories will applaud this proposal; for, after all, what is the use of being a capitalist employer with a perfectly good rationalised factory, if your potential customers have no money? The moral employers, however, those who go to church or chapel on Sundays, will be horror-struck. "No one," they will say, "has the right to consume except as the result of work or saving; it is immoral to distribute incomes except by way of wages or salaries, or by the profits of investment."

And the Governor of the Bank of England will add, reassuringly, that it is against his policy, anyhow, to finance consumption, though he will gladly create and lend money to the factory owners for the purpose of further improving their productive process.

Whither, then, to turn? To politics? The first few weeks of the second Labour Government have seen Parliament discussing the efforts which Mr. J. H. Thomas, with characteristic energy, has been making to "create jobs." It is curious that the first concern of a Labour Government should be to create jobs. Who wants work, anyhow? It's food one wants, and clothing, and

shelter, and a motor-car, and rose-trees, perhaps old prints, certainly decent toys for the children.

Throughout these debates much has been heard of the Treasury view (which Mr. Snowden is believed to share) that, if you take money by any recognised "sound" method, taxation or loan, and use it for work schemes, you are merely draining off from the money market finance that private profit-seekers would use for work schemes in other directions, so that the sum-total of employment is virtually unaffected.

Moreover, there is solid foundation for the belief that, given existing financial arrangements, no political Government can substantially improve the condition of the workers, because the gold standard undoubtedly works automatically to prevent it. Assume that, by some political device, the purchasing power of the masses is, for the moment, raised. Soon the law of supply and demand begins to operate. The price of a thing is "what it will fetch"; therefore, by hypothesis, the price-level rises. As soon as this happens it is common and undeniable experience that financial balances are attracted out of the London money

## **TUT, TUT!**

*"THERE are Workers' Colleges in existence in Oxford and in London, about which it is only right to say that they are not only non-religious but that one of them is distinctly anti-religious.*

*This applies especially to the Labour College in London, which is a purely Communistic or Marxian Institution, devoted to the spread of the Marxian fallacies and absurdities, and to the destructive and criminal teaching of that notorious Atheist, who was also a Jew.*

*Students from Ruskin College, Oxford, and the London Labour College are being turned out annually poisoned by false social and economic principles, which are misnamed 'scientific.'*"—A little Christian charity from the *Catholic Herald* of 6th July, 1929.



market to some foreign centre where money will buy more. Gold begins to leave the country, so that the Bank of England has no option but to raise the Bank Rate. This, by raising interest rates, draws back the gold; but the mischief is done, for tighter credit everywhere following the dearth of money throttles trade and counteracts the original cause of the prosperity we began by assuming.

Some Labour M.P.'s, confronted with this dilemma, have suggested that overseas investment should be forbidden until England's needs are met. This neglects entirely the all-important aspect of price-level; and in any case it shows to what straits an internationalist can be reduced when he is up against the relentless facts of the gold standard. A few Tories like Mr. Boothby, Mr. Stanley and Mr. Hammersley, greatly daring, did venture to query whether, after all, the amount of credit in Britain is the mathematical constant the Treasury pretends it is. The Labour Party as a whole, however, seemed only to get as far as realising that there is, outside of Parliament, some financial power that renders Parliament impotent to deal effectively with economic difficulties.

While it is evident that a Labour Government, as compared with a Tory Government, is a blessing to the working class, one must look elsewhere than to politics for a substantial economic advance, so long as political Labour slavishly accepts "sound" finance based on the gold standard; and at the moment the Co-operative Movement offers the brightest prospects. The Co-operative Movement could altogether ignore financial factors, could snap its fingers at the banks, if only it were economically self-contained.

Sustained effort over, say, a decade, might well achieve this. That is to say, it is possible for the Co-operative Movement in that period to provide itself with adequate productive plant at home, and ample sources of raw materials at home and abroad; and these materials, worked up in highly rationalised factories, ought to suffice to keep the 6,000,000 British Co-operators and their families from destitution. It would be

# RUSSIA —CHINA

MANCHURIA  
MONGOLIA  
CHINESE EASTERN  
RAILWAY, &c.

See the

## PLEBS ATLAS

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easily possible to devise the needful formula of distribution, because the Co-operative Movement does not exist, primarily at any rate, to achieve a mere financial result.

It is, however, very important to insist that the Co-operative Movement, if it is to be really effective, must strive as soon as possible to place itself out of the reach of any possible economic blockade on the part of its enemies.

I would submit, in conclusion, that trade unionists and the Labour Movement generally have devoted far too little attention to the question of high financial technique. There are signs that this matter is soon to receive far more consideration than has been given it in the past; and I desire to suggest that the time is ripe for the enforcement by the State—whether as a result of political agitation, or in consequence of pressure by a kind of Mond-Turner concert of employers and workers—of a financial technique such as that devised by Major Douglas and advocated in the "New Age."

The Douglas proposals combine the social ownership of credit with a system of price control which, it is claimed, would enable even privately-owned industry conducted for profit along the usual competitive lines to subserve the function of satisfying the needs of consumers. The claim may be exaggerated; but the Douglas scheme is, in my view, well worth while for Plebs to work out as a contributory factor to the Consumers' Co-operative state.

# WHY SCOFF AT MATTER?

Talk No. 3

By J. P. M. MILLAR

**I**N discussing the question of idealism and materialism last month we saw how erroneous it was to separate mind from matter in such a way as to regard them as two absolute opposites. The socialist (or Marxist) view is that the universe is composed of a mixture of material "things," tangible and intangible, including man's thoughts.

We realise that this materialist view is substantially different from that which looks upon tangible matter as everything and thought nothing, or the idealist view that elevates mind into something entirely superior to and different from matter, either in the narrow or in the wide sense of that term.

If, as we suppose, the material universe is composed of mind and matter in the *narrow* sense of the latter term, then mind and matter are not absolutely but only relatively different. We talk about the day of twenty-four hours. That day is composed of night and day in the narrow sense. They are not absolute opposites. Both are part of the one whole and, more than that, there is no hard and fast dividing line, for night is gradually transformed into day and day into night.

Mind and matter, in the same way, are both part of the material universe, and while we may classify them separately *in our minds* we cannot separate them *outside our minds* any more than we can "separate the wind from the air."

## All Jock Tamson's Bairns

How much mind and matter are of the same family is illustrated by the fact that matter can think and thoughts can materialise themselves. That sounds very

mysterious. It isn't so, however, when we examine it. From my experiences of matter, such as stones, tiles, wood, etc., my brain is able to build up a mental picture of a house. I have in that case turned the material into an idea. If then, I start to build the house under the guidance of the idea I have created, I am engaged in materialising the ideal.

Is matter (in the narrow sense again) superior to mind? It is, in so far as it must first exist before there can be any thinking. Brain and things to be thought about must exist before there is thought, but the brain and objects may exist although there is no thinking.

## The Mind's Special Job

In another way, however, mind is superior to matter (again in the narrow sense) in so far as matter cannot think, cannot classify. To the senses (touch, sight, etc.) everything is different. We are so accustomed to our mind automatically turning into wholes the hundreds of sense impressions we get every minute that we are apt to overlook the fact that everything is different to our senses. To our eyes one dog is not the same as another; it's our mind that classifies the two different animals under the one name.

This faculty of classifying—of thinking—is a really wonderful faculty if one bears in mind that it is the faculty that makes wholes out of our endlessly different sense-impressions. If we could recall our experiences when we were young babies we should remember that there was a time when we were under the impression that our hands and feet were no more parts of us than was the cradle or the doctor. That was because everything to our senses is separate and it is only with the development of our minds that we are able to classify the sense-perceptions and make wholes out of what appear to be separate things.

Our senses, for instance, may give us the following quite separate impressions—deafness, speechlessness, softness, weight, growth, yellowness, etc. Our mind sums those sensations up and the answer is, not in the funny sense, a lemon. Again, our senses

give us the impressions of yellowness, softness, sounds, movement, growth, etc., and our mind sums that up as a Chinese.

Let's put the position in table form :—

<i>Our senses get the impression of</i>	<i>Our mind sums those up under the classifications.</i>
(1) Deafness Speechlessness Softness Weight Growth Yellowness, etc.	} a Lemon.
(2) Softness Sounds Movement, Growth, Yellowness, etc.	} A Chinese.
(3) Doesn't grow Sharp Hard Yellow, etc.	} A Brass Nail.
(3) Doesn't grow Round Hard Yellow, etc.	} A Bead.

The mind's capacity for summing up, however, does not stop there. If it is given the sense-impressions that make up both the lemon and the Chinese, it produces the idea of living matter. If it is given the sensations that make up the ideas of a brass nail and a bead it produces the idea of non-living matter. And if it is given the characteristics of a banana, a Chinese, a brass nail, and a bead it gives us the conception of matter which includes, of course, living and non-living matter.

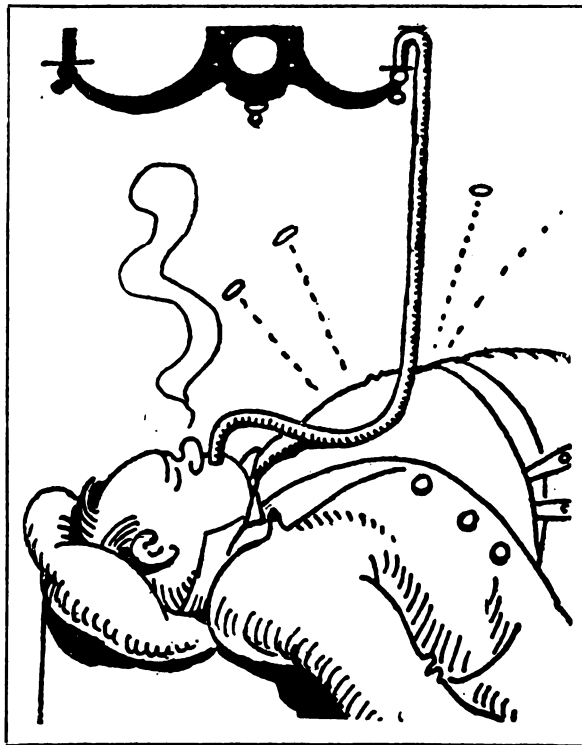
The faculty that our minds have of adding, of making wholes out of parts, is of priceless importance to us and is always improving. The primitive shepherd, for instance, could only be sure he had all his flocks when he had recognised them by their individual features. Observation of oriental shepherds of recent times confirms the literal truth of the Bible figure, "He calleth his own sheep by name." Later the shepherd counted them by tally, say by nicks on his stick,

and only much later did he learn to count them by number. In the case of a shepherd with a hundred sheep all he now wants to know is that there are one hundred. The figure one hundred stands for a hundred different fleeces, four hundred different trotters, two hundred different ears, etc.

We have now seen that matter in the narrow sense is superior to mind in so far as there must be matter before there is thought. On the other hand, mind is superior to matter in that it is able to produce ideas. At the same time, however, just as a railway ticket and a pawn ticket are both members of the ticket family, so are mind and matter in the narrow sense the two main groups into which we classify all the "things" that go to make up the material universe, *i.e.* matter, in the wide sense.

Those who wish to go further into this subject should read the *Positive Outcome of Philosophy*, by J. Dietzgen (10/6, post free, from the N.C.L.C.), and *Thinking*, by F. Casey (3/3, post free).

#### INTELLECTUAL SUICIDE



Swallowing the Bosses' Bunk. From *Illinois Miner*  
Collected by Mark Starr in his travels.

# “NATURAL” MAN & CIVILISED MAN

By W. T. COLYER

EVERY propagandist of Socialism is familiar enough with the objection that, human nature being what it is, the socialist objective is an unrealisable dream. Five times out of six the objector who takes this ground has only the haziest notion of what he means by the terms “human nature” and “socialism,” but when seriously put, the difficulty is one that deserves a reasoned answer. A speaker who knows his case can answer quite effectively in more than one way, but some of the views of human nature that are being commended in certain Labour circles to-day are enough to make the scientific socialist break out into a cold sweat. One wonders what happens to people who propound such views when they run up against a really capable opponent.

Mr. H. J. Massingham's new book, *The Heritage of Man*,\* provides many excellent examples of the assumptions that can be arbitrarily made by tender-hearted people who want very badly to think well of Nature and of their own kind. Two quotations with which he respectively prefaces the entire book and the section entitled “From Nature to Man” well indicate his general view. The first is from King Lear:—“Is there any cause in nature that makes these hard hearts?” and the second, of which I reproduce here the opening sentences only, from Erasmus:—

“From Nature man receives a mild and gentle disposition, so prone to reciprocal benevolence that he delights to be loved for the pleasure of being loved, without any view to interest; and feels a satisfaction in doing good, without a wish or prospect of remuneration. This disposition to do disinterested good is natural to man. . . .”

Determined from the outset to prove that “Nature is all for happiness” (p. 45) and that what he calls “the original nature” of man can be “disentangled” from “the systems, tradition and machinery of civilisation which have modified it” (p. 142), Mr.

Massingham is led into a variety of strange and contradictory positions which would hardly be worthy of discussion in PLEBS, were it not for the acceptance which some of his conclusions are finding among the more sentimental sections of the Labour Movement. “Life and death,” he tells us, “are so interlocked within the economy of the universe that they are not separable, and whose falls foul of death is unfitted to pronounce upon its services to life” (p. 33). He is at great pains to show how the singing nightingale is not at all seriously disturbed when the sparrow hawk swoops at him and misses; that the sparrow doesn't worry when he leaves his tail in the cat's claws, and that, according to Alfred Russell Wallace, “even in the case of man . . . seizure by a lion or tiger is hardly painful or mentally distressing, as testified by those who have been thus seized and have escaped.” From which the logical inference would seem to be that it would be more humane, as well as more economical, to throw condemned criminals to the lions and tigers in the Zoo, instead of hanging them as we do now. Evidently, too, a lot of unjustified admiration has been wasted upon the early Christian martyrs. Death in nature, except when inflicted by man, seems to be almost agreeable and certainly beneficial to the victim's fellows, for “the overwhelming majority of animals destroyed by predatory beasts and birds are those whose disability or lack of health and vitality or incapacity to learn by experience would, if they had survived, imperil the vigour of the species.”

After labouring this point to the full, explaining that live herrings don't mind in the least if you turn sea lions among them (p. 34) and that “the very armature of the natural slayer, tooth and claw and fang and muscle of lightning, is Nature's quality of mercy, Death's gentlest minister,” Mr. Massingham grows indignant at the suggestion

\* Jonathan Cape, 10s 6d.

that man's killing habits have any relation to "Nature." Apparently increased efficiency in killing by man never becomes "Death's gentlest minister," and "the conduct of primitives" is marked by "complete harmony and absence of violence or cruelty" (p. 40).

### The Inferior Animal

Man, according to Mr. Massingham, is inferior to the other animals in most respects. Man's behaviour during historical times has not been "an expression of his instinctive human nature" but his "customs and institutions" were "a cultural imposition from without and due to the contact of early migratory civilisation with primitive society." Before discussing the nature of this "cultural imposition from without," let us pause to note that the other animals suffer no such impositions; they are what they wish to be.

"The flying reptile chose to become a bird; the alert secretive reptile, nuzzling and scuttling among the roots of the herbage, chose to become a mammal; the parasite chose to remain at a table from which the other diners had departed upon their affairs. That is all there is to say" (p. 37).

Mr. Massingham may consider himself very lucky if he never runs up against people who think that there are still one or two things to be said even after this concise explanation of the way in which "every species, high or low, is endowed at birth with . . . the choice to explore new fields of adventure and the capacity to change into something fuller yet of life" (p. 37).

Now for the theory that pugnacity is "unnatural" to man and is only "artificially imposed on human society" (p. 141). Mr. Massingham cites the names of numerous peoples who were beautifully peaceful but who have disappeared. It is not clear to me why he does not apply to them his general principle with reference to the destruction of other creatures and conclude that they must have been suffering from "disability or lack of health and vitality or incapacity to learn by experience" which "would, if they had survived, imperil the vigour of the species." That, however, by the way. Even to-day he finds a few people unfamiliar with war. They are (so Mr. Massingham tells us on p. 194) the Punan

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of Borneo, Nansen's Greenland Eskimo, the Negritos of the Malay Peninsula and the Congo, the Northern Ojibway, the Paiute of Nevada and the Californian Indians. Without being cynical one may enquire whether the lack of pugnacity in these peoples is not simply one of the symptoms of a general deficiency of energy and intelligence. It is significant that although they have wasted no time and strength on destruction their contribution to the sum of human knowledge and to man's conquest of the forces of Nature is negligible in comparison with what has been achieved by more vigorous peoples in their spare time between wars.

To say, as Mr. Massingham does, that "the primitive condition of mankind represents the raw material of human nature, the undiluted source of human conduct before manipulation by the institutional forces of a civilised mode of living" seems to me to be sheer nonsense. The probability is that there was a stage in human evolution at which mankind as a whole lived in the same way as the peoples he mentions, but that the bulk of the human race, even if it

did not exercise the "choice" which Mr. Massingham attributes to the reptiles, at any rate proved capable of reacting to its environment in such a way as to produce more complex types of individuals by whom a social organisation was created through which further progress was rendered possible. War was an inevitable concomitant of the institutions set up during this progress, and the argument against war to-day does not depend in the least upon the fact that it is unknown to a few backward and unattractive peoples who have remained some thousands of years behind the rest of humanity, not only in respect of fighting but of all the constructive arts and sciences. If that is to be the argument, what reply can be given to those who say, and with justice, that a fighting European, whether he is an "artificial" product or not, is an immeasurably more useful and desirable being than some Northern Ojibway who has never heard of war, or sanitation, or electricity, or anything else outside the place where the Ojibways live?

## The Human Babes of Wild Nature

What else is there to produce any changes in any thing, except Nature, and human nature which is itself part of Nature? What but the interplay of Nature and human nature is responsible for all that has happened since the bulk of mankind resembled the Northern Ojibway? Human nature is a constantly changing thing, and we can no more define what is "natural" to man by reference to the habits of those primitives whom Mr. Massingham affectionately describes as "the human babes of wild nature" than we can postulate what is "natural" to an adult from the unpleasing personal behaviour of a very young child. Unless Mr. Massingham is prepared to argue that it is unnatural to show the slightest consideration for anyone else's comfort because a baby will yell all night if it feels so disposed, or to exercise any conscious supervision over one's bowel movements because babies take no such trouble, he will have, I am afraid, to abandon many of his inferences from the conduct of his "human babes of wild nature."

When Mr. Massingham talks about pug-

nacity and other qualities being "artificially imposed on human society," what he really means is that certain characteristics were naturally developed in response to particular stimuli coming either from Nature or from the social institutions that grew out of man's own experience or contact with Nature.

Our generalisations about human nature, to be worth anything, must surely be based on the largest possible number of observations of human conduct under divers conditions. Under capitalism war is as "natural" as it is inevitable. Influential members of the ruling class entertain reasonably well-founded hopes of profiting by it; they also control the agencies through which the necessary stimuli can be applied to those who are called upon to do the actual fighting. Under a socialist system the motive of individual profit would have been removed, and the rank and file of the fighters would not be subject to the direction of a privileged class. War would under such conditions become unnatural.

In closing, it is only fair to say that the essays comprised in the volume under review cover a very wide field. Rather more than sixty pages are devoted to "The Tragedy of Buddhism" and there is a charmingly written chapter on "Bird Lovers." In this latter, Mr. Massingham develops the theory that mating birds are full of romantic sentiment altogether transcending mere sex attraction. For my own part I cannot reconcile the complicated emotions here attributed to birds with the insensibility to fear which was described a little earlier in the book when Mr. Massingham was out to show that Nature was never cruel. But whether the romancing is done by the birds or by Mr. Massingham—and I have a very definite personal opinion on that question—he has made a very readable story out of their behaviour. In any event Mr. Massingham's romancing about birds—if such it be—will do neither them nor us the slightest harm. His romancing about social history, on the other hand, at a time when the most painstaking and scientific thought is necessary for the solving of urgent practical problems, may be productive of incalculable harm.

## HINTS ON STUDY FOR THE BEGINNER

By J. H. ROCHE

**M**ANY difficulties present themselves to the worker when he commences to study. He often knows neither how, nor where to begin and, consequently, may give up in despair thinking he has undertaken a task beyond his powers. It is for such workers that the following suggestions are made.

The first essential is *regular* (and punctual!) attendance at a class, because each lecture is based upon the one preceding it, and if one is missed study becomes difficult.

In study the aim of the student should be a mastery of the *principles*. This demands that the study should be systematic. To study by fits and starts is exactly how *not* to do it. Decide how much time per day you can give to the study and keep to your decision.

The taking of notes at lectures is also **important**. These notes are of two kinds—lecture notes and supplementary notes. For lecture notes get a good-sized notebook. On one side place the main headings of the lecture. On the other side, under its respective heading, write the matter that is placed on the blackboard, and any supplementary notes that occur to you and seem important. Your skeleton of the lecture now requires to be supplemented by reading notes.

The value of reading is often overlooked and many are content with the sporadic perusal of a few pamphlets or books. It should, however, be remembered that reading is to the mind what food is to the body, and too little reading results in a starved and stunted mentality. On the other hand, indiscriminate reading may be harmful to one's mental growth, as indiscriminate eating is to the body. Whilst reading is, therefore, essential, care should be taken in the selection of the matter to be read.

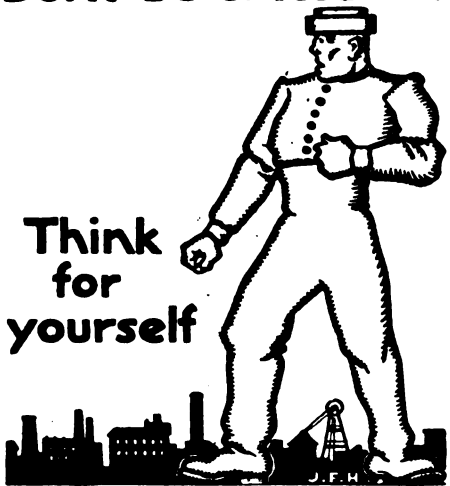
The student should possess a text-book on the subject he is studying. This provides him with a basic outline, but this outline requires filling in with other details. These details may be found in other books, of which a list is usually given in the text-book.

Whenever possible the most useful of these books should be bought. (In this respect the formation of a book-club in connection with the class is particularly useful, as some of the books are too costly for the limited cash of the worker). Some books may contain only a chapter bearing on the subject. It is, therefore, advisable

Read a chapter through to get the general sense. Having done so, read it again; have your note-book handy and take down the main points. Then place your book on one side, and, from your notes, write the main points of the chapter in your own language. Compare what you have done with the original and see whether you have missed out any of the essentials. "Slow Work!" you will exclaim. Admittedly! but it is sure work and it leads to a thorough grip of the subject, and when one is accustomed to the method, one can work easily, surely and quickly.

The next task is the combining of the

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to consult the tutor about the collection of books. *What to Read*, published by the PLEBS, will be helpful. The books which are too expensive for the student to purchase can usually be secured through the public library and wherever possible this should be done. The point is to get the books, and *read* them. This brings us to reading notes.

While reading, the student should have by his side a good dictionary and make a practice of looking up the meaning of every unfamiliar word. Failure to do this may mean that the passage is not understood, for the meaning may depend upon that particular word.

two sets of notes and the writing of an essay.

The man who wishes to succeed must think, and the man who wishes to have his thoughts clear must put them accurately into words. To write is to think, and the ability to write can be acquired only by practice.

Study includes the writing of essays, and the value of this to the student cannot be over-estimated; in fact, the best way for the student to test the thoroughness of his understanding of the subject is to submit essays to the tutor. Make a practice, therefore, of writing essays.

The material for the essay is contained in the notes, and the first task is to make a



skeleton of them. This is the important part of the work. *It means thinking out the job before you do it.*

In making the skeleton it must be borne in mind that the whole composition is made up of units. These units are the paragraphs. Again, each paragraph may be considered as a whole composition of which the sentence is the unit. Each paragraph deals with the development of one idea. The consecutive paragraphs, therefore, link up the main ideas of the essay. Thus, in planning, the first task is to decide what you are going to write about. This is your topic, or subject. Place this at the head of the paper upon which you are preparing your plan. The next thing required is to write down your main points. Suppose you are writing about the N.C.L.C. Your main points might be :—

The N.C.L.C. is an independent working-class organisation, as is proved by (a) its insistence on independence in working-class education; (b) the fact that it does not and will not receive support from the employers; (c) its entire dependence on the support of the working-class organisations; (d) its insistence that the end towards which workers' education must be directed is the emancipation of the workers; and (e) its belief that education can be an effective weapon in the class struggle.

This covers what you want to say. Make the points under the letters (a) to (e) your paragraph headings and underneath them place your notes. You will thus have a complete skeleton. The final task is to give it a body by writing it out in full.

Write easily as you would a letter to a friend. Begin "Dear Comrade," if that makes writing easier. Avoid the use of big words: clear and simple language is always the best. Do not be afraid of making mistakes. Say what you have to say as effectively as you can and practice will bring improvement.

N.B.

(For those who have difficulties in writing there are the N.C.L.C. Correspondence Courses in English and Article Writing specially drafted for the use of workers.—Ed.)

## THE BOOKSHELF

By J. F. HERRIN, M.P.

SEVENTEEN years ago I wrote my first article for the PLEBS—an account, under the title "Faded Laurels," of an almost forgotten eighteenth-century poet named Stephen Duck. Duck was a thresher, born in Wiltshire, and as the earliest purely proletarian poet in English literature he has a special interest for worker-students. But he is seldom or never given a place in literary histories and I had never seen his name mentioned the time when I wrote my PLEBS article until the other day, when I picked up Mr. Edmund Blunden's *Nature in Literature* (Hogarth Press, 3/6).

In a chapter headed "The Farmer's Boy," Mr. Blunden discusses Duck and Bloomfield (who flourished—or perhaps one had better just say lived—a century later than Duck); and he quotes interesting passages from Duck's earlier poem describing the life of a farm-hand throughout the year. I was naturally glad to find Mr. Blunden emphasising, from the point of view of a literary critic, exactly the same "moral" which I, as a Pleb, had stressed when writing of Duck. Had the Thresher Poet, he remarks, been content to go on with writing in his own dialect of the country life he himself knew, he might have won a larger fame. But he let himself be "taken up" by wealthy patrons, and became a clergyman; and there followed "the rapid extinction of the poet of the fields and the appearance of a trim Horatian completeer." For "neither the poor smock-frocked poet, nor those partly commendable ladies and gentlemen his patrons, realised that 'the voice of nature' was possible poetry."

It is a story with a moral for all of us. As I observed in my original article—with special reference to the educational policy of Ruskin College—"poets are not the only people who can be killed by patronage."

\* \* \*

I turn to a poet of a later day—Edward Carpenter, who died at Guildford on June 28th. Carpenter can scarcely be described as a proletarian; yet no poet, either as regards the spirit of his work or the deliberately chosen conditions of his daily life, has more completely identified himself with the movement of the workers. He reversed Duck's procedure, for he began in Holy Orders and ended as a sort of small-holder, living close to the land. Duck began by singing of the actual life of the fields, of Hodge and Madge; and ended by inscribing compliments in verse to "A Screen worked in Flowers by Her Royal Highness, ANNE, Princess of Orange." Carpenter, a well-to-do bourgeois by birth, chose to live with, and to write of, the common people.

Do you remember "In the Drawing Rooms" ?

In the drawing-rooms I saw scarce one that seemed at ease;

They were half-averted sad anxious faces—impossible pompous faces—drawing miowling faces—peaked faces well provided with blinkers—

And their owners kept standing first on one leg and then on the other.

I felt very depressed . . . .

\* \* \*

So I cried in my soul even for the violence and outrage of Nature to deliver me from this barrenness.

And then, on a railway journey, his eyes fell on "the grimy and oil-besmeared figure of a stoker."

Close at my elbow on the footplate of his engine he  
was standing, devouring bread and cheese,  
And the firelight fell on him brightly as for a moment  
his eyes rested on mine . . . .

In a moment I felt the sting and torrent of Reality.  
The swift nights out in the rain I felt, and the great  
black sky overhead, and the flashing of red and  
green lights in the forward distance,

The anxious straining for a glimpse sideways into  
the darkness—cap tied tightly on—the dash of  
cold and wet above—the heat below . . . .

The weird look of hedgerows and trees in the wild  
glare as we pass, the straining and leaping of the  
engine, and the precious human freight madly  
borne behind,

The great world reeling by, the rails and the ballast  
ribbon-like unreeling . . . .

And the long hours of unremitting watchfulness, and  
the faithful unremitting service of the machinery  
. . . .

\* \* \*

All these in his eyes who stood there, lusty with well-  
knit loins, devouring bread and cheese—all these  
and something more . . . .

How in a moment the whole vampire brood of flat  
paralytic faces fled away, and you gave me back  
the great breasts of Nature, when I was rejected  
of others and like to die of starvation.

And from the stoker Carpenter turns to all the men  
and women who do the day-to-day work of the world :—

It is not a little thing, you—wherever you are—  
following the plough, or clinging with your feet  
to the wet rigging, or nursing your babe through  
the long day when your husband is absent, or  
preparing supper for his return—or you on the  
footplate of your engine—

Who stand mediating there against Necessity,  
wringing favours and a little respite for your  
fellows . . . .

It is not a little thing that by such a life your face  
should become as a lantern of strength to men ;

That wherever you go they should rise up stronger  
to the battle, and go forth with good courage.

Nay, it is very great.

I do not forget. Indeed I worship none more than  
I worship you, and such as you

Who are no god sitting upon a jasper throne,

But the same toiling in disguise among the children  
of men and giving your own life for them.

Here, indeed, is the spirit of a New Age in poetry.  
Duck—Carpenter. There is a whole cycle, or all but  
the full cycle, of social change between the two.

\* \* \*

Too wordy, too diffuse, the literary critics say of  
Carpenter. It may be so. But if it be the hall-mark  
of a real poet to compress into one vivid, unforgettable  
phrase some one aspect of truth, either about society or  
individual men, then the man who (in "England,  
Arise") wrote that shattering line—

Over your face a web of lies is woven

—was a poet indeed. There is the whole case for In-  
dependent Working-Class Education in half-a-dozen  
words !

## WORK v. TOIL

By R. M. FOX

(Author of *The Triumphant Machine*)

**I** REGARD Henri de Man's *Joy in Work* (Allen &  
Unwin, 8/6) as one of the most important books  
published in recent years. This may be because  
he is working at a problem with which I have been  
occupied for some considerable time, namely, how,  
either in socialist or capitalist society, the worker can  
get the largest measure of joy and fulfilment in work  
and escape the blunting, dulling effect of toil. Most  
of his waking hours are spent in the workshop and the  
influence of the workshop carries over into his general  
daily life, making or marring his happiness. The  
author puts his indictment of the modern factory in  
these words :—

"Industrial work actually is burdensome when it  
is done under the stress of need, when it is enforced  
on social inferiors by social superiors ; its perfor-  
mance actually is a mark of social inferiority when  
it is done by persons who may stand at the lowest  
grade of culture and intelligence without being un-  
fitted for it ; it actually is less intelligent than  
mental work when it is nothing more than the work  
of semi-automatised machine slaves ; the lot of the  
manual worker actually is one little to be envied  
when his work can provide him with nothing more  
than the barest subsistence, and when it leaves him  
with the minimum of freedom and pleasure ; it  
actually is debasing when it compels a man, under the  
lash of hunger, to obey a master in the choice of  
whom he has no influence ; it is certainly anything  
but beautiful when it has to be carried on in hideous,  
gloomy, prison-like factories ; it certainly is un-  
hygienic when it exposes those who perform it to  
the risks of over-fatigue, occupational disease, and  
avoidable accidents ; it unquestionably is dirty when  
the workers have to go home from their daily rounds  
blackened with grime, powdered with dust, or  
smeared with oil."

These are the realities of industrial life. But in  
spite of this unfavourable summary, the author contends  
that man will naturally seek joy in work. And what-  
ever barriers modern industry sets up, to prevent the  
realisation of this need, will eventually be burst by  
the workers who will shape industry to their human  
requirements. He does not think that man's happiness  
must always be found outside his working hours (a  
belief often put forward by 'advanced' thinkers, outside  
the factory, as an excuse for dodging the whole question)  
but sensibly remarks—

"One who is a citizen and a human being outside  
his daily round of toil, naturally aspires to be a  
citizen and a human being also when he is at work.  
Thus, in the end, the stream of impulses which have  
been thwarted in daily work, returns with renewed  
energy to wash against the dam barring its natural  
course."

He turns to the workshop as the place where the  
question of whether people will find satisfaction in their  
working lives will be finally solved.

"The actual producers' joy in their work, and,  
consequently, in great measure, their effective pro-  
ductivity, will not be so much promoted by any  
centralist relations of ownership as by a local reform

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of working conditions in respect of workshop technique. . . . The worker in a bureaucratically-controlled State enterprise makes acquaintance with 'reasons of State' only as a form of coercion, which conflicts with a true spiritual sense of working community. . . . From this outlook socialisation from beneath, socialisation on the psychological basis of working solidarity and of a healthy democratic *esprit de corps* in the individual enterprise, is far more important than can be any socialisation from above."

Of course to limit the question to the workshop is just as absurd as to rule the workshop out of consideration altogether. Such evils as excessive speeding up, bureaucratic control, insecurity, the 'inferiority complex' of the worker, are all dependent upon social considerations as well as the technical arrangements of the factory.

Mr. de Man does not despair of industrial civilisation. When it gets rid of its ridiculous obsession with rapid production of goods which cannot be disposed of and begins to consider the producer, man will then get the advantage of all those technical aids to production which the age is giving us.

" . . . Technical progress is only a cultural problem so long as it is in its early stages. As soon as machine production has developed far enough to be taken as a matter of course by everyone, the problem of the aims of life assumes an entirely new aspect inasmuch as there is at least a possibility of enfranchisement from that obsession with the material which poisons contemporary bourgeois culture."

### Shop Control

We are inclined to lose sight of the aims of life when we discuss our political theories and our industrial mechanisms which are only means to an end. Machine work can be used to release energy when excessive speeding up does not fray nerves and cause fatigue by demanding that close constant attention be given to some monotonous insignificant machine process. Workers in the shop are the best judges of how far variety and ease of work can be combined with effective production. This raises the question of the workers' participation in shop control. The question of workshop management has not yet been thought out realistically by the Labour movement. Henry de Man has collected reports from 78 worker-students from the Frankfurt Labour College and these confirm the view that after a minimum subsistence has been secured, what the worker finds most intolerable is his dependent position in the works. The most important social cause of distaste for work, we are told, is the "disciplinary subordination" of the worker. But not one of these workers denies that some degree of "disciplinary subordination" is necessary. The worker does not object to the "series of persons who have to undertake technical and organisational guidance of the work." What he does object to is that this "disciplinary hierarchy" adds to the necessary technical guidance, motives of private gain on the one hand and motives of social domination on the other.

### Pleasure in Work

Normally the competent worker loves good tools and good work. His unhappiness at work is intensified when the firm neglects to supply the necessary tools and equipment. Most workers can tell stories of having to scramble for tools, drawings, for equipment of various kinds. Trained in a school of technical accuracy and of voluntary co-operation at work, the

worker comes to love efficiency for its own sake. The good workman is always admired by his fellows. Consequently it is nonsense to suggest that if the modern worker had a greater voice in workshop arrangements this would make for inefficiency or muddle. Modern industry has given the worker's mind a distinctly rationalising bent, his natural impulse is to do things easily and well, with the saving of unnecessary labour. The supervisor who helps him to do this will not be interfered with. It is the ignorant, incompetent bully, whose idea of supervision is to bark at the workers in the shop, to irritate them, to humiliate them at every turn, who has to be muzzled. The business man used to wasteful, competing struggle is far more of an obstacle to industrial efficiency to-day than is the worker whose life is given to quietly constructive effort. The lines of future industrial control are revealed in this passage :

"In a democratic age, the authority exercised over a working community, like the authority exercised over any other community, can only be fruitful when it is based upon a voluntary subordination, is the outcome of trust and the consciousness of a joint aim."

Personally, I look forward to the time when, in the workshop, methods of workshop organisation will be discussed and decided on like matters of policy in a local Labour Party. Not all will take part in these discussions, but all will have the power to ratify or object. This will be the greatest safeguard against factory abuses. Foremen and managers will be accepted as men possessing organising qualities through which the common will of the workshop can gain expression. This may appear fantastic to many readers, but it so happens that I have just returned from a visit to the Innsbruck Co-operative bakery, owned and controlled by the local Labour Party and trade union movement. Inside the works the workers' committee settle shop details. All the workers take a pride in their machinery, in their output, in their baths and rest rooms, in their excellent work and holiday arrangements. Here at least there is joy in work. And only on these lines will the worker get from under the machine and cease to feel the weight of a crushing industrial autocracy. With a growing sense of industrial mastery, that joy in work which is usually regarded as too utopian to talk about, will be achieved.

\* \* \*

I confess to having read only a dozen of Mr. A. A. Milne's rhymes for juveniles, some of which had the merit of being amusing. In *When We Were Very Green* (Arthur, 2/- net), Mr. K. S. Bhat follows in tacketty boots where Mr. Milne trod in eider-down slippers. Mr. Bhat has striven with the labour of Hercules to be funny and has succeeded in being ridiculous. These are the kind of verses that sit up like a plaintive puppy and beg to be criticised. I shall humour Mr. Bhat, but he is really not worth it. According to the gospel of Bhat there is not an honest man (with the exception of Bhat) on the face of the earth. Tory, Liberal, Labour, Communist, Socialist, Independent, Labour-leader of the T.U. Movement, Member of Parliament for anything and anywhere—all are tarred with the same tar-brush of black rascality. If this farrago had been redeemed by cleverness one might have let it pass; one might even have chuckled, for no healthy man minds an occasional kick at his posteriors if his funny-bone is jabbed at the same time. But to perpetrate forty-eight octavo pages of ditchwater dull efforts and charge two bob for it is the last word in charlatany.

J.S.C.

# RAILWAYMEN SOLID FOR I.W.C.E.

(We are indebted to the RAILWAY REVIEW for the following report of the very important decision made by the N.U.R.)

**A**FTER consultation with the delegates concerned with the N.C.L.C. resolutions, the Standing Orders Committee recommended the following resolution on the matter to be submitted to Congress:—

"That this Conference of representatives of the National Union of Railwaymen instructs the Executive Committee to negotiate forthwith with the representatives of the National Council of Labour Colleges with a view to the adoption of a scheme for the education of members of the N.U.R., including education by correspondence courses."

Mr. E. B. Hamblin (driver, Southall) moved the resolution.

Since 1908 the N.U.R., in conjunction with the South Wales Miners' Federation, had maintained what was known as the Labour College. The Labour College had allowed twelve students from the N.U.R. to be educated for two years. The South Wales Miners' Federation were unable to continue their support through financial difficulties, and the E.C. had had to agree that the Labour College, as a College, must cease. Though he had been one of the supporters of the Labour College in the past, yet it had only educated twelve students for two years, whereas by adopting the scheme in the resolution they were putting forward a scheme which was going to educate the whole of their members at a cost very much less than it had cost them to maintain the Labour College.

## Vast Advances of Science

To keep up with the vast advances made by science they wanted their members educated, as the changes brought about by science were going vitally to affect every member of the organisation, as well as every member of every trade union in the country. The National Council of Labour Colleges provided not only classes, but provided week-end schools, correspondence courses, etc. He hoped their members would take the fullest advantage of the scheme, so that their organisation could be equipped much better than it was at present, good though it was. Members who attended these classes would give a better quality to the debates at the Conference. He was sure they would be doing a benefit, especially to the younger generation, if they equipped them with an educational scheme. To fight successfully against the other people they wanted their members to do their own thinking. (Applause). The passage of the resolution would provide the means whereby their members would receive the fullest independent working-class education. (Applause).

## Looked with Pride

Mr. R. Rigby (goods porter, Preston No.2), in seconding, said that the N.U.R. had not progressed as much as

it might have done in the direction of granting facilities for the education of its members. As he looked with pride upon the many members of their organisation who had risen to high distinction in various public bodies up and down the land, he realised it must have involved a very hard fight on their part without the organisation granting them any facilities in the way of education. He also recognised that the younger members of the organisation, who had more opportunities for recreation and amusement than the older men had, did not seem inclined to do the same studying without facilities being given by some other organisation that the older men did. If they were to maintain their prestige as a union, which was second to none in the land, and if they were to have a group of younger members to take the place of the older ones as they retired, some educational facilities would have to be put in their way, therefore he supported the resolution. (Applause).

## Into the Streets

Mr. J. Grierson (goods porter, Gorton No. 2) believed in not merely a few individuals going up to London or anywhere else for their education, but in making the teaching of the Labour Colleges more widely spread among their members—taking it into the streets, into the countryside, and into the homes of the members. What the Labour Colleges would do was to give them history from the working-class standpoint and to review every incident which happened from the working-class outlook. He had always held their organisation in high esteem for the part it had played in working-class education and also the South Wales Miners. They could look forward to a hopeful future in educational matters if the resolution were carried. He wanted to see that type of education spreading, particularly now that there was a Labour Party in existence. He did not want their people to be Labour one day and Liberal or Tory another day. He wanted the working-class movement to be Labour all the time, whether the Labour people made mistakes or not—(applause)—and not merely to be carried by all the winds which blew. (Cheers).

## Carried Unanimously

Mr. W. Corlett (telegraph linesman, Ashton-under-Lyne, No.1) considered the words "including education by correspondence classes" were very important words. (Hear, hear). He did not agree with the seconder that the N.U.R. had not played its part in the past in providing working-class education. He thought it had, but the domestic responsibilities of a great number of their members had prevented them from taking advantage of the classes and education which had been given under the rules. He hoped Congress would adopt the resolution unanimously, as their branches throughout the organisation would be given the same educational facilities as were available in the large towns.

Mr. R. J. Currie (driver, Edinburgh No. 3) also supported the resolution.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

\* \* \*

*The Co-operative Directory, 1928* (Co-operative Union, 10/-) is a concise compilation of the names and addresses of all the Co-operative Societies in the U.K. conveniently classified under the heads of Distributive, Productive and Special Societies. In addition, names and addresses of Secretaries of the various bodies engaged in Co-operative propaganda, etc., are given. A very full and comprehensive work of reference for those interested in the many-sided activities of the Co-operative Movement. J.H.

# TWO BOOKS ON RUSSIA

By C. S. TAYLOR

**O**F the making of many books on Russia there is no end. The history of that country has always been interesting, but since 1917, when the Russians threw over their oppressors and initiated a new system of society it has become of absorbing importance. Everyone talks of Russia, writes of Russia either in terms of approbation or condemnation. That country is, to-day, the scene of the greatest experiment in the world, whether in the sphere of the economic structure of society or in the realm of science, art, education and the many different expressions of the fundamental economic change. So now there is a continued flow of reports of delegations, now of Trade Union delegates, delegations representative of workers in different industries, of educational experts, of women, of capitalists seeking opportunities for trade, and of individual accounts of those privileged to pay a visit to the country and to stay there, some for a short period, some to live there for a number of years.

Two such accounts have recently been published. One, *Dreiser looks at Russia* (Constable, 5/-) gives the facts and impressions gained by the well-known American novelist during a visit of eleven weeks in the winter of 1927-1928. He went there, as he says, by the invitation of the Soviet government under certain definite terms, and was the guest of the government. To those who are familiar with his novels, and on the other hand with numbers of books on Russia, this is a very disappointing book. There is not very much that is new in the way of facts, and some of those facts are not correct. To give an example. On page 241 there is told the story of one of the homeless children, the innocent victims of more than ten years of war, revolution, civil war and famine. Dreiser says, "One of those numerous homeless children for whom Russia is always going to do something and never does. Money for poor, starving American miners in Illinois, say, or Sweden. Two million roubles for striking miners in Wales. Money for propaganda in China, Turkey, Germany, Poland, France, but no money for ragged, cold, homeless babies on the streets or in the vacant cellars." Then on page 243 is an argument with the interpreter as to what the Government is doing and the interpreter's reply, "The Government is trying to take them up as fast as it can."

When I was in Russia in 1925, I went to what was called A Reception Station for Homeless Children in Moscow. Looking up notes made there and still remembering the impression I had of the tremendous difficulty of the task, and reading articles on this very subject in the *Manchester Guardian*, I become indignant that anyone can go out and give accounts of the work being done and the problems that are being solved, in such an unsatisfactory way. Dreiser has the fluent pen for the novelist but does not seem to realise in the least the greatness of the task which the Russians have to do, nor to see the whole history of the last ten years. He is constantly amazed, bewildered, and confused. If he had spent a little more time in that great historical museum in the Winter Palace in Leningrad he might have seen things in truer perspective.

Dreiser emphasises the spying and the prying and the watching. It may be true in his case, but when I was there I was never conscious of it. Of course there are restrictions which one expects, but I was never interfered with in anything I wanted to do, and walked about as freely as I do in England.

The book is interesting from the individual point of view, and will be read by many who do not read seriously, and as such, is no doubt a "best seller," but to those who are concerned for Russia, it is dangerous and contradictory, and throughout, most irritating.

The second book is *Life under the Soviets*, by Alexander Wicksteed (John Lane, cheap edition, 2/-). Mr. Wicksteed has lived in Moscow since 1923, and is a teacher of English there. This author, too, is an individualist. He does not claim to see or "look" at the whole of Russia, but does tell of the things he has seen, of the folk among whom he has lived. It is written easily, plainly and what is more with a humorous outlook. He has valuable chapters on education, housing, amusements and those subjects which are of especial importance to dwellers in cities. The question of the "Rabfacs," the nearest approach to N.C.L.C. education in Russia, is particularly interesting. Although in the introduction, written by Mrs. S. Webb, he is twitted for the statement that he finds "Russia is the freest country in the world," the reader feels that for him it is so and although a candid critic of the Soviet regime he has the discriminating outlook which sees Russia, its people and government as a part of a great world movement, a historical process. Certainly a book to read in that way, absorbingly fascinating and bright and all for 2/-, and on its cover the familiar picture of Lenin wearing *such* a smile, and his cap at *such* an angle!

C. S. T.

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# THE EPIC STORY OF TRADE UNIONISM

By J. HAMILTON

"WE have seen the Trade Unions develop, from fortuitous and furtive local associations to resist petty oppression, into wealthy and powerful corporations which collectively form the most powerful element in the social fabric of the country." Thus sums up the author of *The Story of Trade Unionism*\*, and undoubtedly Trade Unionism is a mighty force in our modern economic life.

Barely more than a century ago, Trade Unions, as we now know them, were non-existent. Previously there were combinations of craftsmen. In the City of London they were called "Companies," a name under which they still survive, although their rights and powers are vastly different than they were in their heyday in the 15th and 16th centuries. In those days Guilds were empowered to seek out and prosecute those practising a trade, unless they were admitted members of the Craft Guild. The master craftsmen of the Guild employed and trained apprentices who, in their turn, after stringent tests, became master craftsmen and members of the Guild. Each member of the Guild worked at his trade and the modern relationship of employer and employed was unknown.

But economic circumstances changed with the passing of the years, commerce expanded, machinery was introduced, crafts were sectionised, capitalism developed, and now we have the employing few and the employed many. No movement or organisation can exist until the need for its existence is imperative, thus the employed, finding that they as individuals could not resist the tyranny of the employers, formed themselves into Trade Unions for the purpose of mutual protection. Hence Trade Unionism is the child of the capitalist system.

Trade Unionism has enormous potentialities for good, and no great capitalist, commercial or political interest is powerful enough to ignore it. Yet how few people, and even trade unionists, know anything of the history or purpose of the movement. Undoubtedly this is partly due to the fact that orthodox educational institutions usually ignore it or else wilfully distort it. As a sample of the latter an extract from *A First Book of English History*, a much-used school book, is typical: "To the general trend towards peace there were only two serious exceptions during the years 1925-27, and both of them owed their seriousness to one and the same cause, viz., to fomentation by the Soviet Government in Moscow. The first was the coal strike and the supplementary General Strike of 1926; the second was the anti-European, and peculiarly anti-British movement in China. The coal strike, which came as the culmination of a long period of agitation and unrest in the British coal-fields, began on May 1, 1926, and continued until it died out in disastrous failure towards the end of the ensuing November. For nine days (May 4 to 13, 1926) it was reinforced by a General Strike, involving, besides the miners, about a million and a half of working men and women. It was the most formidable challenge

to constitutional government which this country had known since the seventeenth century. Fortunately, the nation realised its sinister significance and completely defeated it. The results of these two lamentable essays in industrial war, although immeasurably injurious to all who were involved in them, were not wholly without compensation. The complete collapse of both the strikes, and the incalculable losses and miseries which they brought in their train, immensely strengthened the hands of those who were striving for industrial peace."

The author of this perversion is a Professor of History of King's College, London, and he has also written a book against Socialism. Any book, therefore, which outlines the development of the Trade Union Movement in England from the Combination Act of 1799 down to the reactions of the General Strike—the Trade Union Act of 1927 and the existing tendency towards "rationalisation"—is to be welcomed if it is dealt with in an objective fashion. This the author of *The Story of Trade Unionism* valiantly attempts to do, but there are a number of palpable slips. For instance, when he says "The prospect of profit is the mother of invention, and hundreds of ingenious minds were stimulated to set about devising machines that would multiply productivity." Alas, the life history of many inventors gives the lie to this. Another sample, shall we say of pseudo-objectivism, is the statement that *Das Kapital* had appeared in 1868, but "the pseudo-scientific Socialism it set forth made little or no impression."

Despite this, and a number of other inaccuracies, the book is very readable and full of facts. It should be useful, and especially so to anti-trade unionists who merely denounce without understanding. Some day we hope a full history and analysis of the movement up-to-date will be written by one who has had practical experience of it. Until then the Webbs' History still holds the field.

\* \* \*

The little book of some 50 pages, with the very intriguing title of *Conservatism and Wealth—A Radical Indictment*, by O. Baldwin and R. Chauer (Williams & Norgate, 1/6) is very enjoyable reading. The writers confess "that imbibing the pure milk of Conservatism has not convinced them that it is possible to live by such nourishment." The influence exercised on Conservatism by the political philosophy of Burke is presented in a readable manner, together with the enlightened social insight of Shaftesbury and Disraeli. Finally, the essay summarises the indictment in the form of nine paragraphs which will be helpful to those endeavouring to convert those whom the writers assess as having got a "charity complex" and then liberally quotes from *Labour and the Nation*. One could imagine this essay being the notes for a much more comprehensive and philosophical, as well as ethical survey of modern Conservative thought. M.F.T.

\* \* \*

No one who wished to get a glimpse of realities in Russia to-day would fail to read the *Diary of a Communist Schoolboy*, reviewed in the PLEBS some little time ago. That book has been followed by *A Diary of a Communist Undergraduate* (by N. Ogniov, Gollancz 7/6), in which we follow youth from School to University. It would be too much to expect that the later book be quite as good as its predecessor, but it is good and gives one some idea of Russia's difficulties. Messrs. Gollancz manage to get hold of some unique books.

M.M.

\* *The Story of Trade Unionism*, by Robert M. Rayner, with illustrations. Longmans, 6/-.

# UNDER CANVAS

*A Reply to the Challenge of the Scouts*

By RUTH WADDINGTON

**I**N Socialist circles there has long been a realisation of the menace of the Scout Movement. Scouting presents so much that is attractive to the child and adolescent; so much that is wholly desirable, however viewed, that it has proved an admirable medium for the inculcation of governing-class ideas.

The only effective reply to the Scout Movement is a Socialist Youth Movement. The Socialist Sunday Schools are part of that reply. The S.S.S. Movement has its camps, its tramps and its dances, as well as its more obviously serious work for Socialist education. It is doing its part to attract young people to Socialism. It is, like the rest of the Socialist Movement, hampered by lack of money and more seriously still, by lack of help. Despite the work it is doing and the urgent, obvious need for the development of a youth movement, the S.S.S. Movement is not only definitely discouraged, but frowned upon in official circles. However, its work goes on.

At Rouse Farm, Keston, Hayes, on the borders of Kent and Surrey—one of the few unspoiled stretches near London—the London S.S.S. Movement is holding its camp this year. At Whitsun, a crowd of seventy Socialists, ranging from fifteen months to fifty years of age, revelled in the freedom of camping and for three weeks from July 27th, the Red Flag will fly at Rouse Farm and this Tory area will enjoy a series of invasions by S.S.S. members. Interested PLEBS readers who would like to join or visit the Camp can get full particulars and a copy of the Camp's own duplicated paper from Ruth Waddington, 63 Ellerdale Street, S.E.13.

Camping is a pastime that has always had a particular attraction for Socialists because of the opportunity it offers of escaping from the conventionalities and restrictions of capitalist society. It gives, too, an opportunity for communal effort that is itself a pleasure. Apart from the work of fireman and cook, which needs really qualified comrades, the whole of the work of the camp is shared by the campers. In the course of a week, everyone gets a turn at everything from peeling potatoes to scrubbing dixies. To the new camper it is always amazing how the work of camp proves to be one of its most enjoyable features instead of the anticipated necessary evil, just because of the fact that everyone shares. And, of course, where work is properly shared, there is very little for each one. Scrubbing out a dixie to the tune of "In California's Darkest Dungeon" proves to be as much fun as any game.

Folk dancing, games, rambles and picnic outings naturally form a large part of camp life, but perhaps one of the most enjoyable features of this side of camp is the evening Camp Fire. It is then that the sense of unity is most apparent. And it is this that makes it an important contribution in the development of a Socialist bias. A happy crowd gathers round the burning logs and sings to its heart's content. Sings everything from the songs of the "Wobblies" to "England Arise."

It is thus that minds can be shaped towards Socialism.

Our German comrades have learned the value of the call of the open-air in attracting the youth of the country to Socialism. The S.S.S. Movement is leading the way here.

# AMONG THE BOOKS

By

"PLEBS" REVIEWERS

**A** PLAY by the Capek brothers is certain to be read with interest, and *Adam The Creator* (Allen & Unwin, 3/6 and 5/-) well repays reading. Adam, disgusted with the world, destroys it with the Cannon of Negation and the Voice of God says, "All right, go ahead and make a better one." This Adam proceeds to do, to find the life of a creator to be a hard one, for no sooner has he made Eve, to be his wife, than she turns from him in disgust. He decides he needs a friend so he creates Alter Ego. Alter Ego is very scornful of Adam's attempt at creation, and shows Adam he can do better by creating The Mass. He then shows Adam that to be a Leader is greater than to be a Creator. So the game goes on until finally, when Adam would destroy the world again, he is stopped by Oddly-Come-Short, not because of any theories but just because he wants to live.

There is some fine irony in the play, and good skits on theorists, but it would need a discerning audience to be a successful play. L.T.

*Selections from Lenin*, Vol. I., 1893-1904 (Martin Lawrence, 2/6) will be welcomed by all students of

## THE REASON WHY

*"I have a timber factory," said Mr. James Fiddes, the Aberdonian inventor, to a Daily Herald reporter. "Among other things I make barrels. In making a barrel 37 different machines are used. If they are all going at full pressure they should make 148 barrels in an hour and a half.*

*"When I come into my office I can see by a glance at the recording instrument how many have been made, although my office is as far from the machines as this hall is from the Abbey. If I come in at half-past nine and find that the dial reads less than 148, I want to know the reason why.*

*"I find the machine has had an amazing effect upon the morale of my workmen since they have known of its existence. The best workmen are keener; they know I am aware of their industry, and can afford to pay them more. If they are kept waiting for materials now, they make a stir about it."*

revolutionary theory. It incidentally forms one of the chapters of the early history of the Russian Social Democratic Party, a history that is carried up to the eve of the split into the Bolshevik and Menshevik factions. This book throws the limelight upon many of the party problems of organisation and tactics that confronted the Marxian movement in Russia.

In 1924, Allen and Unwin published Max Eastman's book, *Marx, Lenin and the Science of Revolution*, which contained many quotations from Lenin's writings, particularly his "What's to be Done." These quotations were furnished as an attempt to prove that Lenin, in practice, as the "Engineer of Revolution" contradicted Lenin the Marxian Theorist.

Now that we have *What's to be Done* published in its proper setting in these selections from Lenin, both this work and that of Max Eastman should be read in order to realise how Lenin understood and practised Marxism, and how much Eastman failed to understand it. In fact, running right through these writings by Lenin we get an application of Marxian principles to specific conditions in a thorough-going fashion. A party was necessary that had to recognise the peculiar features that prevailed in Russia and had to outline a policy and tactics accordingly.

The opposition by Lenin to the other theoreticians, as exemplified in this book, boils itself down to this basic situation—On the one hand, that there were those who wanted to imitate the organisational development of the Social Democratic movement of those countries of Western Europe; on the other hand, stood Lenin who recognised more clearly the specific conditions of Russia, and hence the need for the maximum amount of flexibility consistent with the principles of Marxism. Lenin's aim was for a party that was in conformity with the Russian situation and one that was guided by well-trained theoreticians.

The following quotation, to be found on page 42, neatly bovrilises his viewpoint:—"Finally, with regard to the question of tactics we will confine ourselves to the following: social democracy does not tie its hands, does not restrict its activities to some pre-conceived plan or method of political struggle fixed once and for all; it recognises all methods of political struggle as long as they correspond to the forces at the disposal of the Party, and facilitate the achievement of the best results possible under the given conditions."

Lenin's struggle against the Utopians and his opposition to those who were not prepared to face the realities of the situation and to utilise all groups that were struggling against Czarist autocracy, was unflinching. He fought the opportunist, anarchist and indisciplinarian elements of the Russian Social Democratic Party unceasingly, each of whom is portrayed with characteristic clarity and crispness. Appended are instructive reference notes appertaining to the controversies with which Lenin deals.

To those seeking to draw a critical distinction between (1) that portion of Leninism which is fundamental and generally applicable and (2) that portion which is peculiar to Russia, the book should prove invaluable. J.J.

\* \* \*

In a country like Russia, where the conditions are so different from those prevailing at home, the problems of education are of great interest, particularly to those of us actively engaged in educational work.

The latest book, *Schools, Teachers and Scholars in Soviet Russia* (Williams & Norgate, 2/- and 3/6) is the

report of the two Teachers' Labour League delegations which visited Russia in the summer of 1926, amplified by an investigator who spent nearly six months during winter and spring, 1927-28, on behalf of the League, covering a very wide area of the country to study educational work in all its aspects.

Professor Goode contributes a foreword in which he says that "it is a report made by teachers who were investigating their own job. It is not only a report by experts, but also, as I can testify, an accurate one." Interesting comparisons and amplifications can be made by reading *The New Schools of New Russia*, by Lucy Wilson (Vanguard Press), Scott Nearing's *Education in Soviet Russia* and the chapter on Education in Wicksteed's *Life under the Soviets*. All these bear witness to the words in the report that "in spite of material poverty, the educational service in Russia is throbbing with experimental and constructive intellectual activity."

A number of photographs add greatly to the value of this book. J.H.

\* \* \*

*Exercises in Economics* is an interesting book, published by Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, Ltd., at 2/-. The author, Mr. Alfred Plummer, has adopted a method which makes economics interesting even to the un-economic mind, by using question and answer. The questions are in dark type and after you have answered them yourself you can see what Mr. Plummer has to say. That most PLEBS readers will disagree with Mr. Plummer frequently, in no way lessens the value of the book, for it is well to test the soundness of our Marxian theories of value. It is just in this that the book falls short of being a suitable textbook for ourselves, for here we have all the mystic symbols of the University ritual which must be learned by heart—marginal utilities, and diminishing utilities—and it all seems an enormous effort to say the same thing in a confusion of names as Marx said quite clearly in his "socially necessary average labour power."

The book, however, would be a good aid to any teacher, and is worth the money. A.W.

\* \* \*

In *The Blank Wall*, by Stacey W. Hyde (Longmans, Green and Co., 7/6) Mr. Hyde has not lived up to the promise shown in his *Shopmates*. A careful reading of this book produces very little to commend it. At times it is melodramatic—one would think that the slacker becoming a V.C. hero was finished with in serious literature. At other times it is noveletish. Into the mouths of his characters the author has failed to breathe the breath of reality. They do not live. They are all shadows, wraiths, moving across the background of a factory. The coincidental plays a more than active part in the unfolding of the story which removes the last traces of reality from the whole conception. It is a disappointing book.

Mr. Stacey W. Hyde is possessed of a style which ought to bring forth rich gifts. His philosophy of life needs overhauling and strengthening. If the factory cannot do that for him it would be better for him to leave it entirely alone and seek new media for his expression. It is a great pity that he has produced this book, for he is capable of much better work. We are convinced that he will do better. He need have no fear for his publishers, for Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co. do know how to make a beautiful book.

H. H.



# WHAT THE N.C.L.C. IS DOING

15 SOUTH HILL PARK GARDENS

LONDON, N.W. 3

**W**EEK-END SCHOOLS.—Nearly all the Week-end Schools that have recently been arranged have been devoted to several and often widely different subjects. Colleges will often find it of great educational value to limit a week-end school to the discussion of the aspects of one subject, for example, there might be a school on working-class education with J. F. Horrabin's book as the textbook; there might be another on Marxism and History, with J. S. Clarke's book as the textbook, and so on.

For organising a Day School on two totally unconnected subjects L - - - college has won the national medal. The subjects at its day school were:— (1) English Local Government; (2) The Marxian Interpretation of Witchcraft.

**WINTER SESSION**—Preparations should now be made for the winter session. In addition to making the actual arrangements for classes, arrangements should also be put in hand for visiting branches of working-class organisations, especially those with N.C.L.C. schemes. The speakers who attend these branch meetings should of course draw attention to the classes that have been arranged and should endeavour to enrol members for the correspondence courses. In addition, as a preliminary to the opening of the classes, the larger centres at least should each organise a propaganda conference which should be addressed by some prominent N.C.L.C. speaker. This conference would not only serve as a means of advertising the classes, but be a means of encouraging working-class organisations to affiliate. It is hardly possible to exaggerate the value of such conferences as a preliminary to the opening of the class session.

**NEW (NOT RENEWAL) LOCAL AFFILIATIONS**  
—Darlington, 1; London, 1.

## WHAT THE DIVISIONS ARE DOING

### DIVISION 1.

The Sheerness Day School had a record crowd, supplemented in the evening by a charabanc load from London. The students listened to a splendid exposition of the growth of the Imperialist State and prospects of the Workers' State by Jack Jones, Earl's Court Labour College. The subject and the lecturer's method invited many questions and much discussion. The same subject was handled by the same lecturer at our "Treetops" school over the week-end, July 6th and 7th. The large number of students who assembled at the Camp spent a very jolly and instructive time. W. Archer is starting a class on Modern Working-Class History on August 9th at Limehouse with the help of the local I.L.P. The

London and Southern Counties I.L.P. Guild of Youth has now affiliated to us and is arranging a number of classes for the coming winter. The July Divisional Council meeting passed a resolution profoundly regretting the closing of the Earl's Court Labour College and expressing its appreciation of the tremendous educational work which has been carried on during the past twenty years by the staff and students and of the immeasurable assistance given to the London Division. The disappearance of the College will mean a reduction in the supply of our tutors and we shall be glad if any London reader of the PLEBS who can take classes on our usual subjects will offer his or her services to the Organiser—71 Prebend Gardens, W.6.

### DIVISION 3.

Brentwood Class expressed their appreciation of their lecturer, Jack Jones of the Labour College, and their Secy., Ted Bright, with suitable presentations at an effectively organised social gathering. This team has worked together for the last six years and shows no signs of stopping. Day Schools have been held at Ipswich, Luton, March, Colchester, Braintree and Staines; the chief subjects being "Rationalisation" and "India." Our thanks are due to the Colchester comrades who succeeded in initiating the successful and remunerative class we are now running at Colchester under the auspices of the Education Committee of the local Co-operative Society. With this help and the money received as a result of the splendid energy expended in prize-draw pushing, we have once more managed to push the divisional deficit out of sight.

### DIVISION 7.

The Division has secured the co-operation of Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., for the Hull College on Sunday,

## See to Your Library

*Every month the PLEBS reviews and advertises books of interest to PLEBS readers. Any of these books may be obtained through the N.C.L.C.*

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*Here is a job for every real PLEB. See that the library gets the books that matter and, of course, encourage your friends to read them.*

Sept. 15th. A delegate conference will be held in the afternoon and a mass meeting at night. Final details will be given in next month's PLEBS. A. J. Cook will be in the Division again for the week-end of October 26th and 27th. He will be at Hebden Bridge in the Co-operative Hall on the Sunday night. The Organiser is now arranging for the publication of Casey's economic course through the columns of the "Huddersfield Citizen." The Fifth Annual Week-End School will be held at Heathmount Hall, Ilkley, on Sept. 14th and 15th. J. F. Horrabin will lecture upon "Some Empire Problems." Will Owen (Div. Organiser, No. 4) will lecture upon "Political Theory." Terms, 12/6 inclusive. For the South Yorkshire Area, a Conference and Day School has been arranged with Charlie Brown, M.P., as lecturer on August 17th in the Conisboro Miners' Welfare Hall. Particulars from A. C. Lygo, 24 Southey Hall Road, Longley, Sheffield. On Saturday, August 3rd, a Day School will be held in the Adult School, Monk Bretton, Barnsley, with the Organiser and A. C. Lygo as lecturers. The Divisional Council meeting of July 13th make arrangements for classes and tutors for Oct.-Dec. and a comprehensive list was the result. The Divisional E.C. on the same date appointed A. C. Lygo as their second delegate to the annual meeting.

#### DIVISION 8.

S.E. LANCS. AREA—Special efforts have been made, with reasonable results, to address branches of Unions with schemes. Many members have enrolled in the Correspondence Department. With the co-operation of the Walkden I.L.P. we hope to establish classes in this district for the winter session. Our S.A. groups are active—meeting monthly to further activities and to increase N.C.L.C. prestige. Organised Rambles and Day Schools are also features. Our Day Schools up to the present have been well attended. Readers of these notes desirous of making contact with local activities throughout S.E. Lancs. should write—E. Redfern, 1 Langdale Avenue, N. Reddish, Stockport.

NORTH LANCS AREA—A Week-end School is being held in the Ribble Valley Clarion Club House on August 17th and 18th. Lecturers Alan Taylor, B.A., S. Sharples, and H. Sara. Particulars from Councillor Taylor, 17 Rose Terrace, Ashton-in-Ribble, Preston.

#### DIVISION 9.

James Stewart has had to resign the position of Secretary-Organiser of the North-Eastern College owing to ill-health. So serious is his condition that the

Division has opened a fund in the hope of getting sufficient money to enable Comrade Stewart to take the advice of his doctor. We regret that ill-health has compelled Comrade Stewart to resign and we hope he will have a rapid and complete recovery. He has sacrificed much and done good work for the movement. Comrade G. G. Hudson of South Shields is the Secy *pro tem*. Will Lawther, M.P., gave two lectures at the South Shields Day School on July 7th. A telegram was received from Mr. T. Ede, M.P. for South Shields wishing the school every success. A Week-end School was held at North Shields. The lecturers were Pat Carr, P. M. Williams and the Divisional Organiser. The discussion at the Saturday afternoon session lasted for two and a half hours. Will Lawther, M.P., is to lecture at a Day School at Willington on Saturday August 24th. Day Schools are being arranged at Blyth, Shildon and Darlington. One is also anticipated at Rowlands Gill. The Durham and District College is expecting a few more Miners' lodges to make grants to the College. The Darlington Class is combining rambles and lectures during the summer.

#### DIVISION 10.

The Treasurer of the Lanarkshire Labour College, Ian Deans, reports that the Lantern Lectures are so successful that the College anticipates having to buy an additional N.C.L.C. lantern.

#### DIVISION 11.

IRELAND—The Organiser was requested to give weekly lectures to the members of the A.S.W. in Belfast who are on strike, owing to a dispute with Harland & Wolff. The first lectures dealt with "Conditions in the Shipbuilding Industry" (with special reference to Harland & Wolff), and "Modern Finance and the Workers' Savings". If the strike continues, other lectures will deal with Rationalisation, etc. The lectures have been attended by approximately 1000 strikers who have taken a keen interest as was indicated by the questions and discussion. Many branch lectures have been arranged in Belfast and Newry and a well-attended meeting of Trade Unionists was held in the Weavers' Hall, Lurgan. Arrangements are well advanced in connection with our Annual Conference and Public Meeting to be held in the St. Mary's Hall, Belfast, on Friday, 30th August. Geo. Hicks, J. Jagger and A. J. Cook will be the speakers.

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