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# INDUSTRIAL PEACE

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## CORRIGENDA.

Page 61, line 31, the word "be" is omitted.  
 Page 76, line 41, for "adequate" read "inadequate."  
 Page 117, line 35, for "1919" read "1909"  
 Page 159, line 16, for "Edgar" read "Eden."  
 Page 163, line 5, for "undiscriminating" read "indiscriminating"

No. XIII

# SEPTEMBER

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# INDUSTRIAL PEACE

## RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT.

WITH the appearance of the current number **INDUSTRIAL PEACE** enters upon the second year of its existence. Birthdays being privileged occasions, this seems a suitable time to review our brief past and to lay plans for what we hope may prove, if not a permanent, at least a more than ephemeral future. The idea of starting a monthly publication devoted, on the one hand, to fighting against the disintegrating influences of Marxism, Syndicalism and anti-nationalism, and, on the other hand, to supporting constructive endeavours directed towards the improvement of the conditions under which the workers play their part in industry, arose out of the following considerations.

Before the avalanche of war, threatening to obliterate European civilisation, overtook our unprepared and unsuspecting nation, something not far removed from a state of equilibrium had been attained in the relations between Capital and Labour. The legitimate desire of the workers to ameliorate their lot clashing, superficially at all events, with the essential policy of the manufacturer to prevent the cost of production from swallowing all the profits of his business, necessitated frequent adjustments in the scale of wages, and although the process was not always free from strife, commonsense generally prevailed in the long run. The evils of poverty, sweating and unemployment, with their sequelæ, caused periodic unrest which, however, did not lead to the growth of any great bitterness ; whilst the general public, indifferent to anything which did not disturb the even tenor of selfish existence, seldom gave more than a passing thought to matters outside their traditional limits of interference.

Employers, acting through their federations, or independantly organised workers and non-unionists settled their differences as best they could, and, whatever the imperfections of this hand-to-mouth system may have been, there was this to its credit—the negotiations were carried out by experts, and the rules of the game were understood and generally adhered to by both sides.

During the earlier months of war an industrial truce was maintained. This was due, firstly, to an instinctive realisation of the folly, not to say the treason, of imperilling the national

cause by indulging in domestic strife at such a crisis ; and, secondly, to the fact that, contrary to expectation, the first fruits of war were higher wages and regular employment for the working classes. During this period the hardships fell mainly on soldiers and sailors, the professional classes and the small traders.

After a while war-weariness began to take the place of enthusiasm, the strain of overlong working hours began to tell, the Military Service Act to exert increasing pressure on that section of the community which preferred the comforts of home to the dangers of service overseas, and the rise in the cost of living to overtake the rise in wages. This change for the worse gave the professional agitators an opportunity of resuming their interrupted occupation of fomenting discontent and preaching dissension. Opposition to the Military Service and the Munitions of War Acts was followed by hostility to any form of national service other than that of the purely voluntary type, and pacifists, defeatists, syndicalists, Marxian Socialists and Sinn Fein sympathisers joined hands to form a ragged, but by no means negligible, band of irreconcilables who declared that the war was due to the greed of capitalists, to the imperialistic designs of the Allied Governments, to the stupidity of the British Cabinet, and to any other old excuse that would suit their purpose, provided always that the real and sufficient cause—viz., the German lust for world domination—was not mentioned. Strikes and rumours of strikes grew in frequency, and were directed not so much against the employers as against the State, and this for the following reason :—The object of the Pacifist wing of the anti-patriotic coalition being to stop the war, and the object of the Syndicalist wing being to dispossess the capitalist, a common enemy was found in the Government which, besides being by far the largest employer of labour, was also the only arbiter of war and peace. The most vulnerable joint in the armour of this common enemy was the Government's necessity for a growing supply of munitions ; for whilst the man-power problem could be solved by legislation, munitions in sufficient quantities could only be secured by bargaining, owing to the natural and proper reluctance of an elected Chamber to introduce anything in the nature of Industrial Conscription. The conspirators argued that the Government, committed body and soul, as it is, to the successful prosecution of the war and controlling an unlimited supply of cash (belonging to other people), would submit to any and every extortion rather than go short of munitions. Hence the deliberate employment

of the strike weapon used as a lever to coerce the Government—hence the growth of a spirit of insubordination directed against Trade Union Executives, hence also the necessity for confusing the issue and for finding pretexts to induce patriotic workers to face the odium of betraying their comrades at sea and in the trenches.

As time went on further complications arose. The Russian upheaval projected a great revolutionary wave throughout Europe, and British Labour politics took on a new complexion. The germs of Internationalism and Bolshevism, encouraged by fraternal delegates from foreign countries, infected our workshops, intruded into our camps, multiplied exceedingly in the receptive atmosphere of certain nondescript leagues, societies and fellowships, and rioted in the columns of the Minority Press almost to the exclusion of any other subject. Finally, the left wing of the recently reconstituted National Labour Party, deserting its old policy of confining its attention to social and industrial reform, abandoned itself to the excitements of cosmopolitan intrigue, and lost no opportunity of throwing its influence against the foreign policy of the Government.

If the foregoing survey is accepted as being even approximately correct, it must be admitted that the authors of *INDUSTRIAL PEACE* had every justification for thinking that there was room for a journal which should devote itself to recording, analysing, and discussing these associated phenomena. To the anticipated comment that the daily Press deals with these subjects from time to time, we would reply that the full significance and continuity of the situation, in all its ramifications, is lost when sandwiched between unrelated items of news, and when distributed over a wide range of newspapers which frequently contradict each other on essential points. Moreover, if we may say so without giving offence, newspaper correspondents are not invariably well-informed, and editors have been known to prefer "good copy" to specialised information.

In our summary of the cross-currents which distract the world of Labour, we had occasion to indicate the connection between four apparently distinct but in reality closely related facts—viz. (1) That the control of industry has passed to a large extent out of the hands of its old chiefs into those of Government officials; (2) that the authority of the Trade Unions has been challenged by certain unofficial leaders; (3) that a continental element has been introduced into the field of British Labour disputes; and (4) that peace in industry,

which formerly used mainly to concern wage-earners on the one hand and investors of capital on the other, has now become a question of life and death to the whole community. This transfer of authority from experienced men of business to ingenious, but often unqualified, Government officials brought about a situation which was not without danger; for power was placed in the hands of men who, however highly educated they might be in other directions, were largely ignorant of the very elements of the organisation they were called upon to control. Consequently decisions were sometimes given without any clear idea of the sequel by persons who did not so much as understand the meanings of the terms they were using. Trade Union leaders also were frequently in the dark, for not only had they to meet an unfamiliar type of adversary at the conference table, but they were confronted with the problem of the repudiation of their authority by an organised section of the rank and file in the workshops. Add the complications which resulted from the intrusion of foreign politics into the sphere of industry, and it will be seen that there was superabundant reason for the appearance of a periodical which should serve as a work of reference for tyros, as a descriptive guide to the constitution, history and objects of the various new organisations which 'are springing up in every department of industrial life, and as a commentary on current developments. Our readers must be the judges as to how far we have succeeded in giving effect to any part of this ambitious programme. For the moment we are only concerned with explaining the scope of the task to which we have set our hand.

Though it would not be accurate to say that, at the time when the publication of INDUSTRIAL PEACE was first mooted, a censorship decreed that any reference to industrial unrest was to be considered "verboten," it was certainly the case that anything like a full discussion of the subject was deprecated by authority, with the result that the widespread strikes in the engineering industry in May, 1197,\* were practically ignored by the leading newspapers, though similar restraint was not exercised by that portion of the Minority Press which supported the demands of the strikers. Presumably the object of those responsible for this ostrich-like policy was either to protect the Ministry of Munitions from criticism or to conceal from the Central Powers a state of affairs which might enable them to draw valuable conclusions as to the probability of the continued productivity (or otherwise) of this country in the manufacture of munitions. If the latter

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\* Details of these strikes were excluded from the *Labour Gazette*.

presumption is the correct one, then the censorship restriction should have been absolute because the self-delusion of going through the motions of covering up what is not hidden acts as a telling advertisement, not only of the secret itself, but also of the ineptitude of its custodians. Be this as it may, the net result was that the only people to be kept in the dark were those who should have been the first to have been informed as to the true facts of the case. In this situation the authors of INDUSTRIAL PEACE found an additional reason for their proposed propaganda; but, in order to obviate any possible danger of providing the enemy with information which he could not otherwise obtain, the typescript matter was submitted to the censor and, as an additional precaution, the publication was issued "for private circulation only" amongst a limited circle of interested parties. Some of our opponents have endeavoured to make capital out of this self-ordained limitation, and to shake virtuous heads at the alleged iniquity of "Industrial Pacifists" who attempt to disguise their capitalistic intrigues by the subtle expedient of avoiding the railway bookstalls. This serio-comic ground for reproach will be removed as soon as the prohibition against offering periodicals "on sale or return" is withdrawn.

The transition from private to public circulation synchronises with a change in the financial basis of the undertaking. As originally conceived only a strictly limited number of copies was intended, and when demands for increased circulation kept coming in the prospect of an ever-growing rate of expenditure, whilst gratifying on the score of appreciation, was not altogether welcome to those responsible for paying the bills. For the time being INDUSTRIAL PEACE, like most of its propagandist rivals, may have to be published at a loss, but it is hoped that those of our readers who have found merit in the work will help us out of this difficulty by becoming subscribers and bringing the review to the notice of their friends.

The question of admitting signed articles has been considered, but it is thought that the example of the *Round Table* is one that may be followed with advantage. In the French Press the leading articles are generally signed, in English newspapers the editorial "we" usurps an almost royal aloofness. The difference is one of custom and convenience, not of principle, but there is this to be said for anonymity—a bad article is not redeemed by a well-known name at its foot; a good article is none the worse for being by an unknown author. Argument counts when directed against the matter,

criticism levelled at the personality of the writer is often but a left-handed device for avoiding the straighter issue.

A glance at the titles of the articles that have appeared in the first twelve numbers of *INDUSTRIAL PEACE* (listed on pages 2 and 3 of this issue) will give new readers a bird's-eye view of the line we have pursued and the amount of ground we have covered. It will be seen that an attempt has been made to strike a balance between critical articles in which our opponents are attacked, and constructive articles in which conciliatory measures or meliorist suggestions are supported. It has been, and will continue to be, our method to avoid dogmatism as far as possible, and to look for the ultimate triumph of commonsense, based on well-informed public opinion, over prejudice founded on misunderstandings and buttressed by misrepresentations.

Our purpose is to place before our readers straightforward arguments on the broad aspects of the main problems of the industrial world. Pre-war relations between Capital and Labour had demonstrated already the danger of placing overmuch reliance upon so-called economic laws for the healthy development of a progressive State, and discredited rules were giving place to tentative reform on the one hand, and to the threat of industrial anarchy on the other. Nevertheless there is a science of economic management: certain fundamental laws which cannot be ignored with impunity, and certain general tendencies dependent upon complex but ascertainable facts. To discover, by honest research and discussion, the essence of these laws and tendencies, and to express it in a form which can be understood and accepted by the captains of industry and by the spokesmen of Labour is our object. Our hope is identical with that voiced by Hume in his work *Of the Liberty of the Press* viz., "That men being every day more accustomed to the free discussion of public affairs will improve in their judgment of them and be, with greater difficulty seduced by every idle rumour and popular clamour."



## THE "BLOCK" VOTE.

NEWSPAPER writers with a stronger desire for descriptive effect than a wish to be exact constantly refer to the Trades Union Congress as "The Parliament of Labour." In no way can the Trades Union Congress be compared to "the mother of Parliaments," and least of all is a comparison possible when its method of casting votes is considered. In the House of Commons voting is conducted after a strenuous debate, when all sides of the subject have been argued, and at the end every member can go into an "Aye" or "Nay" lobby, and each man counts one and one only on a division. It is true that the party caucus may have issued a three-line whip, but, if a member cares to act of his own free will, he may use his one vote how he pleases. In other words, he is a representative, not a delegate.

At the Trades Union Congress the votes are held in "blocks," on the basis of one card for every 1,000 members, or fractional part thereof represented.

Precisely what this means can best be explained by taking a separate union as an illustration. The Miners' Federation affiliates to Congress on a membership of 600,000. It is issued out with 600 voting cards, each representing 1,000 votes. The Federation could, if it liked, send 300 delegates, one for every 2,000, but it contents itself usually with half that number. A simple and apparently equitable system would be, under the circumstances, to give each of the 150 delegates four of the 600 voting cards, and let them, after having listened to the debate on the resolutions, vote as their intelligence guides them. This is never done. The whole of the votes are placed in the hands of one man. In this particular instance, Robert Smillie, the President of the Miners' Federation, walks into the Congress with 600,000 votes in his pocket: this 600,000 constituting a "block."

The Railwaymen give into the hands of their leader, Mr. J. H. Thomas, M.P., another "block," amounting this year to about 400,000. The Cotton Operatives operate another block. If the new Federation of General Workers works as a unit Mr. J. R. Clynes may have 800,000 as a "block" vote. The Iron and Steel Trades again control an enormous vote, and so it works right through the Congress, even the Postal workers getting together and operating their 100,000 votes in complete unity.

It must not be presumed that the man who holds the "block" vote uses it as he pleases. Before the Congress meets, and during luncheon and other intervals, each group meets separately and considers the resolutions that are to come before Congress. The iniquity of the "block" system then becomes apparent. In the private meeting of the delegates of the Miners' Federation, to use one union as an illustration, a resolution is discussed, say, for instance, declaring in favour of "free trade." It may be decided that the Miners support the resolution, the voting being 350,000 for and 250,000 against, or, on a show of hands among the 150 miners' delegates by 80 to 70. Reasonable people would presume that when this resolution was reached in the Congress the votes would be divided, the majority in this case being counted for the resolution, and the minority counted against. What really happens is that the whole 600,000 votes are used as a "block" and would in this instance be cast for the resolution. The minority vote would be merged with the majority in every group—Miners, Cotton Operatives, Railwaymen, Transport Workers, Iron and Steel—and so on. This system of block voting operates right through the Congress on every subject of importance, and has the inevitable result of completely stifling minorities. If, to continue the illustration used, there was a substantial minority in favour of a modification of free trade, a minority of three-eighths distributed, as it probably would be, equally throughout the various groups, the group voting on a 4,000,000 Congress it totalled in the groups would be, as follows :—

|                        |           |  |             |           |
|------------------------|-----------|--|-------------|-----------|
| For the Resolution ... | 2,500,000 |  | Against ... | 1,500,000 |
|------------------------|-----------|--|-------------|-----------|

but the actual voting in the Congress would be :

|                        |           |  |             |     |
|------------------------|-----------|--|-------------|-----|
| For the Resolution ... | 4,000,000 |  | Against ... | Nil |
|------------------------|-----------|--|-------------|-----|

If, during the subsequent twelve months there was such a change of feeling as to affect one quarter of the votes, then at the next Congress the resolution on being put again would have votes recorded as follows :—

|                        |     |  |             |           |
|------------------------|-----|--|-------------|-----------|
| For the Resolution ... | Nil |  | Against ... | 4,000,000 |
|------------------------|-----|--|-------------|-----------|

whereas the correct vote as recorded in the groups would be :

|                        |           |  |             |           |
|------------------------|-----------|--|-------------|-----------|
| For the Resolution ... | 1,500,000 |  | Against ... | 2,500,000 |
|------------------------|-----------|--|-------------|-----------|

Thus, whereas a change of opinion affecting only 25 per cent. of the votes had actually occurred, the public, on the above figures, would conclude that there had been a complete turnover affecting 100 per cent. of the votes.

As a further illustration of what may happen it would be necessary to divide the Congress into two unequal sections of 2,500,000 and 1,500,000.

In the first section the "groups," in private session vote for the resolution as follows:—

|                        |           |  |             |           |
|------------------------|-----------|--|-------------|-----------|
| For the Resolution ... | 1,200,000 |  | Against ... | 1,300,000 |
|------------------------|-----------|--|-------------|-----------|

In the second section the "groups" in private session would vote as follows:—

|                        |           |  |         |         |
|------------------------|-----------|--|---------|---------|
| For the Resolution ... | 1,400,000 |  | Against | 100,000 |
|------------------------|-----------|--|---------|---------|

The first section in the full Congress would cast, through the operation of the block vote, the whole 2,500,000 against the resolution, and the second section would cast the whole 1,500,000 for the resolution, which would thus be defeated by 1,000,000 votes. But if the actual votes carried at the private "group" meetings are added together you get the following result:—

|                        |           |  |             |           |
|------------------------|-----------|--|-------------|-----------|
| For the Resolution ... | 2,600,000 |  | Against ... | 1,400,000 |
|------------------------|-----------|--|-------------|-----------|

the resolution really being not defeated by 1,000,000 votes, but carried by 1,200,000 votes. This extreme illustration is used to show that resolutions that are carried would on a fairer method of voting be lost, and *vice versa*.

It is necessary to emphasise here that in every case the decision as to how the "block" vote shall be cast, is arrived at before the question is debated in the Congress. It sometimes happens that the debate brings into prominence important facts quite unknown to the delegates when in private session with their colleagues, but no matter; the question has been decided, and the block vote is cast as previously arranged. Information respecting the decisions of groups constantly leaks out, and the whole Congress knows at times that the apparent strenuous debate is the merest window dressing. Coal and cotton, so the word would go round, or some other large combination, is united on the question, and the result is, therefore, a foregone conclusion.

At the recent Labour Party Conference the Executive tabled a resolution recommending the abandonment of the Party Truce. Before the debate commenced it was known that the Miners and Railwaymen had agreed to support with their "block" vote. There was, therefore, little question as to what the result would be. The leaders who are so powerful in the discussions of their respective groups constantly meet. Views are exchanged, and on occasion it is agreed that their influence be thrown in the same direction.

One other way in which the block vote is used is in the election of the Executive Committee for the ensuing year. This position is much coveted. To hold it is to have a standing in the Labour world that can be obtained in no other way.

It is to the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress and the Executive Committee of the Labour Party that the Government has turned right through the war for its representative Labour leaders. It is amongst them that the new orders have been showered, it is their almost invariable privilege to write J.P. after their name, and the position is constantly a jumping board to Parliamentary honours.

No Trade Union can be sure of getting a representative on the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress unless it can command at least a million and a half votes. No one combination has such a number, and consequently a system of bargaining of votes goes on behind the scenes. It is true that Congress prohibits it, but the standing order governing the situation is consistently ignored. The Parliamentary Committee numbers sixteen ; unless a Trade Union has more than 500,000 members it can only have one seat on the Committee. A "group" that has a "block" of anything over 200,000 votes, if it cares to place them in the hands of one man with full powers to use them for the fifteen candidates he pleases, provided he secures the return of its own nominee, can usually be sure of success if the man is at all capable and "knows the ropes." An examination of the Committees for years past discloses the fact that except in the rarest instances, they have been composed of men who command a "block" of votes. Instances to the contrary can usually be discounted by those who know. Harry Gosling, apparently controlling only 5,000 votes, but being the Chairman of the Transport Workers' Federation, really has a "block" of 250,000 behind him, and invariably gets returned.

The people of this country, in spite of the temporary interest raised by the newspapers, take but a passing interest in Trade Union Congress decisions. In this they may be wise. Some resolutions have been carried over and over again for many years, and are no nearer being practical politics. "Labour" at the moment occupies a much more prominent place in the public eye and it becomes necessary to point out that an overwhelming majority at the Trade Union Congress may not be all that it seems, and the rise to power of certain individuals may not be an index either of personal capacity or rational thought. The majority may have been arranged by those who control the "block" vote, and the rise to power may be merely due to a capacity for bargaining. The public arena may show and usually does show quite different decisions even among the working classes when a specific question is put to the test.

## EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK.

ALL sorts of men seek after simple principles of action : practical men, because they must have " tips " for immediate use, and speculative men because they believe in the primacy of certain ideas over others, provided these can be determined. If the unconditional principles that hold for any field of inquiry can once be formulated, the remaining work whether theoretical or practical, will be comparatively easy. " Equal pay for equal work " makes a claim to be such an unconditional principle. The claim is made, too, in cases where men and women do the same or similar work. At present, indeed, the specific scope of the claim is the range of employments in which the competition of women with men is already a fact or may be anticipated. A principle so plausible in appearance while so bitterly controversial in reality needs the closest scrutiny.

Suppose that the field were clear, that by a clean sweep it were possible to reallocate the world's work and to fix pay justly. There would then be little in the resulting arrangements to infringe the authority of this principle. And why? Because everyone would be doing his proper work. Here, then, is a new principle, the mutual adjustment of worker and work, that limits the principle of equal pay.

This new principle is, of course, but one side of the old theorem of the division of labour. Industrial effort is naturally most productive where work has been carefully subdivided and the workers have been assigned, in fairly homogeneous groups, to the work for which they are best fitted. It is an equally familiar truth that for any commodity there can only be one price in the same market. Thus in the industrial millennium every worker would be in his right place, surrounded by his peers, doing work similar to theirs and drawing the same pay.

But it is useless to assume an absolutely fresh start for industry such as would ensure an ideal adjustment of persons and tasks. Under existing conditions many anomalies persist. Take an employer confronted with an heterogeneous crowd of applicants who differ in age, sex, intelligence or training. If he can offer only one kind of work, the pay must be uniform. The employer may try, and not unnaturally, to equalise the pay downwards. If not, it will probably be because he has a theory of the matter—viz., that the work is suited to certain of the applicants only, and he will seek to rate the work accordingly.

The other side will desire, equally naturally, to equalise upwards, either to the upper limit or to a specific level, as the accidents of the case may suggest. Both sides believe in equal pay for equal work, but *conditionally*, despite anything they may say to the contrary. Both are embarrassed by the heterogeneity of the man or woman power which demands employment. Both probably regard whatever uniform rate may emerge as strictly provisional pending a better sifting of the available labour. The disparate types may have the same immediate aim, perhaps, but their grounds will be different. And their grounds may differ so widely as, despite their convergence on one momentary issue, to promise the utmost dissension and antagonism upon any threat or danger of the claim being generalised on a serious scale.

Let us take it that an essential and, perhaps, the fundamental requisite of industry is the scheduling of work and, parallel with this, the classification of labour. This view may throw light on what may prove to be the most dangerous feature of after war industry—viz., the competition of women with men.

The disparities in the heterogeneous party are mainly of two kinds, those dependent on skill and those arising from difference of sex. How are these disparities to be neutralised? The answer, in many cases, is sufficiently obvious. Differences of skill normally settle themselves. Skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled segregate easily in distinct groups and on different tasks. It is seldom in anyone's interest to confuse the distinctions among them.

The sex disparity is by far the more serious. Take a case familiar to the public, that of dilution by female labour on skilled work in the engineering trades. Government action has obtained for these women the full skilled rates. Government acted thus in pursuance of a bargain with the skilled Unions, while the Unions aimed at safeguarding the position of their members. Neither the Government nor the Unions are committed to the principle of equal pay for equal work. The attitude of the women probably rests more on abstract theory, though it might be difficult to demonstrate that the work they do is equal to the men's. The precise rates paid to them are not, however, the most important aspect of the matter. Much more significant is their intrusion into a new field. They hope to remain there. In proportion to their hopes they will be ready to admit that the terms on which they may ultimately settle down in these industries will depend less on a particular pact between the skilled Unions and the

Government than on the general principles that are likely to govern the expansion of female labour throughout industry.

The scale and the implications of this expansion make clear views of it very desirable. Before the war the competition of women with men was already felt in various quarters. Well-established in many kinds of work, and well-paid in some, women were striving here to improve their footing and there to gain one. The war has enabled them to consolidate and extend their ground. In some cases they have replaced men of various skilled crafts. But these cases are probably barely worth mention in comparison with the vast numbers of women engaged on munitions work which is suitable for women, but which must end with the war. In other cases gains of a permanent character may have been made. These gains, however, will not suffice to accommodate the vast number of women who will desire and indeed will be driven to remain in industry.

Let us look at employment broadly. There is much work that must always be men's, and, similarly, much that will never be theirs. In these distinct and exclusive spheres different rates rule. The fairly uniform advantage of the men is due, no doubt, to various causes. But when allowances have been made for such favourable accidents as their longer tradition in industry, their better organisation and higher skill, there remains a difference which is due to difference of sex. There exists a rooted prejudice against paying a woman, whose wage is probably an individual wage, the same as a man, whose wage, just as probably, is a family wage. Exceptions occur, of course, on both sides, and hard cases abound. The proportion of women with dependents may well be higher than that of men who have none. Yet it would be foolish to ignore the strength and the persistence of the prejudice, or to deny its basis of right. In the employments which must from their nature be exclusively either men's or women's you will find the sex-disparity in wages (where it exists) practically irresolvable. And these two spheres comprise so many workers of both sexes as to make the general adoption of any other principle in the employments of the intermediate and quasi-neutral sphere very difficult. Yet the prejudice against sex-equality in wages, often dormant and seldom pedantic, would, probably, tolerate a surprising amount of equalisation in detail. If the women's organisations confine themselves to making specific arrangements with groups or unions that are apprehensive of a lowering of rates upon the introduction of women, they may win many successes. For the men, not

looking ahead or around, and being intent on an immediate selfish interest, may be gradually manœuvred out of the profits of the sex-prejudice. This game, however, can only be played in calm weather. Assert the general principle of equal pay, and the sleeping prejudice will rouse itself angrily. In the stormy weather which will most probably descend on industry after the war every new tendency, each changing claim, will encounter criticism and resistance. It is a moral certainty that the claim of women to equal pay for equal work will be stoutly challenged.

The differential prejudice being securely established in its two spheres of exclusively male or female work, the intermediate sphere, we may take it, cannot be regulated by an artificial principle contrary to the prejudice. How then is peace to be kept? Capital and Labour have a long tradition of negotiation behind them. They have also the necessary machinery. Four years of Government control and intervention have not alienated either from pre-war methods of conciliation. But the industrial competition of the sexes, on the scale which may be feared after the war, is a novelty. Here no tradition exists nor any machinery. What is to be feared is a sudden and far-reaching crisis, a crisis, too, which the grant of votes to women may as easily embitter as abate.

Yet the method to be followed is really obvious. The character of the quasi-neutral employments allows of easy demarcations. Let certain types of work be assigned exclusively to men and certain others exclusively to women, up to the extreme limits of sectionalisation. If a natural principle of division is available, it should be used. If none exists, one must be invented. The demarcations may prove to be arbitrary and artificial to a degree, but once fixed they will ensure peace throughout the bulk of the disputed area. This demarcation, entailing, among other things, the eviction of men from certain ranges of work, cannot be carried out without much preparatory discussion and adequate machinery. The existing organisations of employers and workpeople have not as yet faced the problem. If the Government has been feeling its way to a solution, the public has heard nothing of it. The new Joint Industrial Councils would appear to be the proper bodies to formulate the lines of demarcation. But could they bear the strain?

Here, at any rate, is a specific question of the division of Labour that cannot safely be left to the drift and clash of tendencies, that must be met by conscious policy and planning. It is time for responsible men to address themselves to it.

## **THE EMBARGO.**

### **As the Engineer Sees It.**

WE have often had occasion to remark that strikes in munition works in war time are not due to spontaneous combustion but are the natural product of a determining grievance being superimposed upon an already existing tendency. This tendency is rooted in suspicions which are cultivated by agitators by whom the strike organisation is perfected and the outbreak occurs as soon as a suitable pretext is forthcoming.

Sometimes the pretext is a flimsy one—more often than not it is substantial, but almost invariably it is of a character which makes a special appeal to the particular class of worker which predominates in the affected area.

The recent strike in Coventry and Birmingham over the Embargo question is a case in point. It was not a fortuitous circumstance that this strike occurred in the Midlands instead of, for example, on the North-East Coast. The incidence of the restriction falls most severely upon firms which have adopted payment by results, and that system is more developed in the Midlands than it is in other parts of the country. A good deal of play has been made of the fact that the embargo only applies to a small number of firms. It is said, for instance, that at Coventry only three firms out of some hundreds were affected. But the point is not How many ? but Which ? Were the three embargoed firms the most backward or the most up-to-date ? That is the important question.

No intelligent working man is going to submit willingly to an order which prevents him from selling his skill in the best market unless good reason for the limitation of his liberty has been shown to him and until his representatives have had a chance of examining the matter in all its bearings. The greater a man's skill the more determined he is to exercise his inherited right to pick and choose his employment. A good workman has no mind to be told off to a backward firm which pays low wages and is run on antiquated lines, and he argues that the embargo, as originally designed, could hardly avoid penalising the more progressive firms, those which are capable of employing workers to the maximum advantage both as regards wages and output.

Everybody recognises that skilled labour must be rationed occasionally in war time, but there are many ways of cooking a potato, and the method which the Ministry of Munitions adopted in limiting the right of specified employers to take on more skilled men was not, perhaps, the wisest solution of the

difficulty. Nor can we see any good reason why anything that had the appearance of secrecy should have accompanied the notification of the proposed policy.

The point of view of the skilled engineer on the Embargo question is two-fold. He looks at the pay and he scrutinises the conditions.

"We were here before the war," said a well-known Trade Unionist recently, "working at our trade to which we had served a long apprenticeship. We did not enter engineering from some other occupation because our business had gone down, nor did we take on war work in order to escape from military service. We continued our regular work for the benefit of the country. As patriots we agreed to the admission of dilutees—men who knew nothing about the job, and who came from every sort of occupation—many of them youngsters who should have gone straight into the Army instead of coming in as dilutees and forcing the middle-aged married men to go in their stead. We have to teach and supervise these dilutees and, where scientific exactness is required, the actual work has still to be done by the professional engineer. Yet these amateurs are often more highly paid than the skilled artisans, who may be regarded as their officers. Can you wonder that we are dissatisfied, and that we are up in arms when the embargo prevents us from taking advantage of an opportunity of redressing this unfairness?" Such were the views expressed by a patriotic man, with sons on active service, who was throwing all his influence into the scale against the strike, and he spoke very bitterly against the newspapers which had hastened to denounce the engineers as anti-patriots, without first seeking to discover their real position.

To understand the second reason why the engineers resist the embargo we must go back to the old controversy of the "leaving certificate." Before its abolition last year this instrument was considered by the workers to place him very largely at the mercy of the employer as regards hours and conditions of labour. This "restriction of individual mobility" pressed most hardly on the less-skilled forms of labour, but the highly-skilled man watched it in operation and observed its effects. He saw the obnoxious restriction withdrawn and when the embargo was instituted he thought, not unnaturally, that he recognised an old enemy in a new garb threatening, not the unskilled, but himself, and this without being consulted or offered any *quid pro quo*. The number of firms affected at the start was, as we have remarked, immaterial. Already the biggest plums were being taken out of the pudding, and

the logical conclusion was that the smaller tit-bits would go the same road. The acceptance of the principle by the workers was, so the engineers considered, a concession of the right of the Government to extend it at their option. "The new embargo," say these workers, "would deliver the engineer, lock stock and barrel, into the hands of the employer." Industrial Labour is always wearying and monotonous, and under the stress of war, hours of work are more arduous, and there is less opportunity for relaxation. The suspension of Trade Union safeguards during the war enhances the value to the worker of his "freedom of individual mobility." The increase in the number of hours worked does not show an equivalent increase in output. Illness, time-losing, "going slow," and strikes nullify any nominal advantage dragged out of the human machine by lengthening its normal hours of labour and neglecting the necessary conditions of well-being. In the early days of the war skilled male workers often "put in" as many as ninety hours per week, and women seventy and over. Tests have revealed to the authorities what all the workers and many employers have told them repeatedly—viz., that a reduction of working hours to the normal standard does not diminish the total output, though it does make an enormous difference to the health of the workers whilst decreasing the tendency to strike.

Apart from the right to strike, which the majority of the workers do not really want to resort to, and pending the restoration of the former Trade Union safeguards, or their equivalent, engineers will continue to regard "personal mobility" as an essential line of defence against any further encroachment on their pre-war privileges. It has been well for the nation and well for themselves that the workers have not lost that line of defence against the possible arrival of a state of affairs which might lead to a progressive decrease in their efficiency.

Regarded from the standpoint of patriotic workers, the problem of the embargo resolves itself into a question of having to sacrifice a treasured right in the common interest, not as a command to be obeyed without demur. "If," say they, "you take away our only remaining defence (other than the right to strike) it must at least be a voluntary surrender of grace on our part, as a gift to the nation and a thing neither filched from us by stealth nor demanded with a big stick. Any embargo affecting the freedom of our individual mobility must be agreed to (if at all) as a temporary war measure, by our Trade Unions, on our behalf, and be administered through them."

## CORRUPT WELT-POLITIK IN ITALY.

### II.—England's Reply.

THE facts concerning the penetration of Italy by Germany before the war—or a representative selection of them—have been detailed in a former article. It remains to apply them. It has already been said that in German action there is much to imitate and much to avoid. Let us begin with the former.

Germany has seen that commercial and political action are to a great extent interdependent. But the business man in England is only too apt to shrug his shoulders as if foreign politics did not concern him. They do; and our relations with Italy are specially important to him. Controlled by German influence, or strong and hostile, she could cut our communications with the East through the Mediterranean. These have been difficult enough with Italy as an ally, what would they have been if she had been against us? She has in Tripoli the best harbour on the north coast of Africa, she holds the Straits of Messina, Brindisi, and now Avlona. Imagine—if such a thought were possible—these used as submarine bases against our East Indian trade! It is not possible, it will be said. Italy is friendly to us and has always been so. But, surely, if it be an affair of sentiment, we must be prepared to pay in sentiment. Has the Englishman who makes these assertions done so himself—during the time of the Turco-Italian War, for instance? You cannot receive all and give nothing in return. If it is to be a practical matter, we must be prepared to concede something in substance. The Englishman who affects a scorn of sentiment at home is apt to expect of the Italian that the latter should act on sentimental grounds alone. But the Italian has his practical needs. What are they and how much are we prepared to concede?

Italy has certain products which she wants to dispose of (*e.g.*, fruit, oil, macaroni, gloves, buttons, straw hats), and certain goods she wants in return (*e.g.*, coal, ink, leather, steel goods of all kinds). Business is far easier with a country which will both export and import. Germany was willing to do both. Unless we are prepared for the trade going back to Germany, someone must replace her. Who but ourselves is in a position to fulfil the conditions? It is almost a *sine qua non* that there shall be reciprocal trading. If not, as is proved at the present moment when we are supplying Italy with coal, munitions and

money, and getting nothing in return, the Exchange goes up to an impossible figure. Who can buy with an exchange of 60% against him ?

But, putting this aside as a thing that the opening out of reciprocal trade would possibly remedy, the difficulties of transport seem to make trade impossible for the moment. As regards heavy goods that is no doubt true, but there would be no difficulty in sending stuff like cutlery or stationery through by parcels post, and the channel once opened could be enlarged and deepened when peace brought a return to normality. The German was doing this for all he was worth until we stopped him. Relations were being kept up with the two Americas, with the East, with all parts of the world, by this means. Some departments of it did not, in themselves, pay. Others, such as the more expensive and badly-needed aniline dyes, more than covered the cost of postage. But, covered or not, the German had the sense to see that it was his only means of keeping his name on the overseas traders' books, and he took it. Cannot we learn wisdom from him ?

Another apparent objection is the immense amount of war-work to be done. Again the German should be an example. His need for everything destructive from shells to submarines is as great as ours, yet in spite of it he has sent millions of pounds' worth overseas. Millions more are, or were, waiting in neutral harbours with a chance of shipment growing less rosy day by day. In spite of our sea power he has traded. Cannot we trade in the strength of it ?

But to return to the disabilities which apply to Italy in particular. Another important one is the lack of reliable trade information. It is not that the Italians are not willing and eager to take our stuff, but they do not know to whom to apply. It is not that we are not ready to send, but we have no means of finding out our customers' position. The first of these propositions may be illustrated by a story. When the present writer was in the Venetian Alps, some ten years ago, he was aroused from his morning slumbers by a deputation of carpenters with the Sindaco, himself a carpenter, at their head. They had heard that an Englishman was in the village, and had come to ask if he could not get them some good English tools. They did not mind paying a price, but they were sick of that beastly German stuff (*brutta roba Tedesca*) which broke at the second or third time of using. We did what we could—sent to England for catalogues and order forms, translated measures and money into the decimal system, and left them with the form to fill up by the aid of these details and the illustrations. But

they were not highly-educated men, and it is improbable that the order ever got through. How much simpler for British houses to do their own agency work instead of leaving it to the chance amateur ! All these districts are thoroughly travelled by the well-equipped, Italian-speaking German. Why cannot our people do the same ?

They would probably say that the trade was not a profitable one, and that their energies were better applied elsewhere. It is doubtful how far this, in itself, is true. The steel trade is not confined to country districts. In Venice, in Florence, in Rome ample ironmongers' shops abound. Each one has its shelves lined with tools, and each tool bears the mark of "Solingen." Are we to be told that that is not a profitable trade ? And, even if the profit is small, there is another more profitable to be kept. Stand on the southern shore of Sicily and watch the great galleons with their cargoes of steel, coal, cottons, and what not, go by. Will not Sheffield, whilst enriching herself, do something to help Lancashire, whose Eastern trade would be ruined if a hostile Italy closed the Mediterranean route ? In the end it is worth while.

There is another objection that the British trader would make, viz., that he cannot get reliable trade information as to the credit of his intending customer, and that he cannot act without it. This may be true at the moment, but it is a perfectly remediable state of things. In the first place, there already exists an excellent trade bureau in Florence, the English partner in which has, in answer to an inquiry, made certain suggestions. He attributes German commercial success, apart from the considerations to which reference has been made, to long credits, cheap goods invoiced to the buyer payable in lire free at destination, direct railway service, and better consular service, and he suggests that English manufacturers should combine to appoint qualified representatives in Italy who would know the Italian market and could judge of what credit to allow to individual firms. These agents would, after the war, supply Italian travellers to push British goods ; and, further, that British manufacturers might combine to rent large warehouses in, say, Genoa, Leghorn, Naples, Palermo, to serve as sources of supply. The apparent hopelessness of finding competent commercial travellers is a little humiliating, but the suggestions seem practical and worth attention. The British consular service is certainly inadequate, and the consul, who is of British nationality, commercially competent, and active in pushing the interests of his compatriots is a rarity. It is up to the trader to agitate through the press and Parliament for an

improvement. The effect would be seen in his trade all round the globe.

But all is not done when the heads of business in the two countries have been put into communication. Why not put the workmen into communication too? There are plenty of patriotic labour organisations here and in Italy, whose better knowledge of each other could do nothing but good. Why not an Italian labour journal in English in London, and a corresponding English one in Rome or Florence? Why not a deputation, with a qualified interpreter at their head, to visit the industrial centres of Italy? They would be able to learn something as well as to teach. There are plenty of improvements which new developments of trade might bring to the community as a whole, which it is not directly to the interest of the employers to push, but which would appeal to the working man. Take, for instance, the splendid system of municipal dairies (*Latterie Sociali*) wherein the production of milk is grouped, the farmer getting financial help in return for Governmental control. The milk is rarely so rich as ours because the feeding is not so good, but the consumer gets standardisation, purity, cheapness and a constant supply. Think what this means to the child-life of the nation! The working man would no sooner see the system in operation than he would demand it as a right, and the whole country would benefit.

We have run through the points in the German system which we should do well to copy. What is there to avoid? The German has through all these years kept the fact that he has established a control over Italian trade and Italian politics carefully concealed, but the Italian has awaked to it at last. Now the man who has suddenly found out that he has been taken in by one of his friends is apt to be suspicious of the others; and we must not be surprised if our Italian friends look just a little jealously at our attempts to strengthen our position among them. "Italy for the Italians" is their reasonable rallying call. They do not want to replace German control by British or any other. Our answer must be a frank statement of our aims. We do not intend interference or control; we aim at reciprocal advantages. Let us be candid, not treating the Italian as an artist or a child, but as an exceedingly practical man. Let us state clearly what we hope to gain as well as what we mean to give, under any arrangements to be made. So will our mutual trade prosper, and we shall remain the better friends.

Surely such a policy with regard to Italy is within the bounds of practical politics! Certainly it would redound to the benefit of both countries and further industrial peace throughout the world.

## SOME VIEWS OF THE MINORITY PRESS.

THE *Dreadnought* publishes the text of Lenin's address to the Soviets, "which," he says, "will only attain final victory when at last we succeed in breaking down national imperialism with all its advantages of technical development and discipline. This victory we can only achieve with the help of the workers of all countries." He states that the transition from Capital to Socialism cannot be achieved without bloodshed, and the goal of the Soviets can only be reached "as the result of a fierce struggle." "Our course," he says, "must be self-centred solidarity and an iron dictatorship of the working people," and he declares that "the Soviet power has failed to display sufficient determination in the struggle with the counter-revolution: instead of being hard as iron it has been like soft pulp, on which Socialism cannot be built. We have not conquered the middle class. We must be merciless towards our enemies, as well as towards any wavering and harmful elements amongst ourselves who may dare to carry disorganisation into the hard constructive work of building up a new existence for our working people."

In the same issue (July 27th) W. F. Watson complains of Trade Union officials taking Government jobs. They must not be permitted to "re-enter the Labour movement when this ghastly crime is over," and he concludes, "place not your faith in officials, leaders, politicians, press or pulpit. Let us with the development of the Workers' Committees learn to rely more upon ourselves."

In the *Labour Leader* of July 27th Philip Snowden considers that Count Hertling's attitude on the question of Belgium is reasonable and sincere, but he looks upon Balfour's reply as regrettable and tending to prolong the war. Snowden would accept any peace offer from the enemy "at its face value" and test its sincerity afterwards. On the other hand he is pleased with Lord Wimborne's speech in the Lords on the failure of the Allied Governments "to use diplomacy for the purpose of helping to attain the objects for which they profess to be at war." Commenting on the dispute at Coventry, Snowden says that "Mr. Churchill appears to have acted somewhat hastily in circumstances where greater tact might have averted the trouble," and he says that the cause of the unrest "is the resentment of the workmen at the restriction of opportunities to move freely to establishments where they are able to obtain a better rate of remuneration."

The Rev. G. T. Sadler, of Letchworth, writes on "a commercial war," and gives extracts from speeches in support of his contention that the war is for markets, and he concludes that "the war is, then, a ghastly period in the commercial and financial contest of Capitalist States, whose competition preceded and will follow the war." Edward Grubb, a Quaker, writes on the League of Nations, and advocates complete disarmament as the only way to secure permanent peace.

A. H. Simons, of the American Mission, asks the *Labour Leader* why nothing has been said in its columns concerning the outrages of German agents upon American lives and property. "I have never seen any protests when hundreds of lives were taken by explosions, fires, and wrecking of bridges . . . in time of peace. . . . I heard Socialists, now highly praised by the *Labour Leader*, rejoice when the *Lusitania* was sunk. I know that children in the schools at Milwaukie celebrated that event in song. I know that a meeting, financed by German money, as Court records show, where many pacifist Socialists were present . . . cheered when a telegram was read announcing the sinking of another ship with women and children aboard." The *Leader* declines to accept Mr. Simons' statements and says he is no judge of evidence.

*Commonsense*, quoting A. G. G. of the *Daily News*, has the effrontery to repeat the threadbare falsehood that Lord Milner's father was a German, and its issue of August 3rd, attacks Mr. Hughes for his recent speeches. *Commonsense*, which may be said to be the organ of the Lansdownites, devotes much attention to the cost of the war, and it is evident that its peace advocacy is due very largely to its fear of the financial consequences of a prolonged struggle. This paper represents the individualist in commerce and finance and dislikes any interference with trade by the State. On August 10th it discusses the need for a Lansdowne peace if the country is to be saved from financial ruin.

The *Call* (August 1st and 8th) has a good deal to say about the Engineers' Strike. It is extremely indignant over the Government's threat to withdraw the military protection cards of the strikers, and declares that the question at issue "was the right of the Government to impose industrial regulations upon the workers without in any way consulting them." The writer goes on to blame the engineers for not making a stand earlier. They allowed conscription to be imposed without a protest, accepted the various "comb-out" proposals, and have assisted to "hound young men from the workshops to the army." Now they feel the pinch. "The engineers may be affected to-day,

to-morrow it may be the miners, the next day the transport workers." . . . Industrial conscription is the inevitable corollary of military conscription. . . . The challenge of capitalism must be taken up. "Once for all, what is it to be? War and slavery or peace and socialism? All other questions are merged in that." The Ministry is warned against thinking that the trouble is over, "*the recent strike is but a faint flicker of what will happen next time.*" The failure of the Shop Stewards to control the strike is commented upon, and they are advised to be more careful in entering upon a struggle in these critical times without fully realising what it entails, "but having once decided to make a stand against autocracy, they must be firm as a rock no matter what threats are used to overawe them." "The Ministry must be taught," says the *Call*, "that they cannot ride roughshod over such a body of men as compose the engineering industry," and concludes by hoping that the eyes of the workers will now be open and that they will see the necessity of "sweeping away the present system of private capitalist or capitalistic Government control, and institute in its place the democratic communal control of the industries of the nation." W. McLaine thinks that the strike, "short though it was, served a useful purpose. It brought to a head the question of Industrial Conscription." According to McLaine, the Allied Trades Joint Committee received a telegram from "the National Secretary of the Shop Stewards Movement offering co-operation and suggesting a national conference." He alleges that the Allied Trades Committee *altered* the telegram, and announced to the Coventry men that the Committee was calling a national conference, pending which it was suggested that all notices should be withdrawn for the time being. This article by McLaine shows that the split was deeper than appeared on the surface, and was not confined to Coventry. Evidently the Allied Trades Joint Committee wanted to control the strike and were prepared to defy the National Executives of the Unions. They also hoped to prevent the strike being directed by the Shop Stewards. In the end the unofficial element threw over the Joint Committee. McLaine concludes that the Strike Movement should be retained in the hands of the right people, "the representatives of the men in the shops." He reminds his readers that the strike of May, 1917, was brought about by sheer hard work, and says that the latest strike would have succeeded if the Shop Stewards Movement had been ready to take charge of it. "They were not ready. The control passed into other hands. The moral is obvious."

In the *Labour Leader* of August 8th Philip Snowden is very

severe on the politicians. He says the Premier's message to the Empire was "a characteristic declaration" and contrary to the "real facts" as revealed in the Secret Treaties. He condemns Winston Churchill's letter to his constituents and considers that "Mr. Asquith's cowardice as a leader has destroyed the Liberal Party without the hope of reconstruction." Turning to the Free Church Council, whom he describes as Pharisees, Mr. Snowden vents his ire because they refused to take part in an International Conference. "This loathsome self-righteousness," says Snowden, "comes very fittingly from a body of men who, for the last four years, have denied Christian principle and have aided and abetted wholesale slaughter."

Referring to the annual meeting of the Plebs League, *Solidarity* (August) says "a good number of b'hoys from different centres of industrial unrest were present." The same paper announces that "the nucleus of a really active Workers' Committee" has been formed at Lincoln and, given the opportunity, Lincoln will become an important factor in the future. Murphy, the leader of the Rank and File Movement in Sheffield, is writing an article for the September number on the future of the Shop Stewards Movement.

The *Call* is greatly perturbed at the progress of affairs in Russia, and trembles for the Soviets. "The workers should intervene. Why do they accept the word of Kerensky in preference to that of the representatives of organised Russian labour? Why do they not send their own representatives to Russia to learn first-hand the truth about the first proletarian Government in the world. If the workers of the belligerent countries don't desire the curse of Paris to rest on their heads they must intervene." "*Would that the workers of Britain led the way.*" In this issue there is a frantic appeal for assistance for the Bolsheviks signed by well-known Rank and File leaders, who conclude by saying: "*It was up to us to save the Russian Socialists and thereby to save ourselves.*"

M. E. Quelch, writing in the *Call* (August 15th), says: "The members of the ruling class have no race prejudices, nor religious prejudices, nor patriotic prejudices when profits are involved. The British workman is just a profit-producing creature to them, as is the Indian ryot or the Egyptian fellah. So long as he produces profits he is permitted to live; if he fails to produce profits then he starves."



## FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

THE strike of the Metropolitan Police is one of those occurrences which signalise a new epoch, and will have served a useful purpose if it makes people realise that the old order has indeed changed and that the policy of *laissez-faire* is a declivity which gets steeper and steeper until it ends in a precipice. It must have been within the knowledge of many hundreds of people that dissatisfaction was rife in the force, yet everybody who was in a position to influence the situation assumed that everything would be all right. They banked on the discipline and common-sense of a body of public servants which they had learnt, not without good reason, to trust. For nearly eighty years the Metropolitan Police, as a force, had never failed in their duty, and so it was assumed that they would jog along the same road for ever. There was, however, one excuse for the prevailing optimism. The organisers of the strike, for reasons best known to themselves, kept their secret so closely that public opinion was not informed as to the full extent of the grievance. Had it been otherwise there is not a newspaper in the country that would not have opened its columns to ventilate the question, hardly a Member of Parliament who would not have been proud to represent it.



It is not our intention to discuss the *pros* and *cons* of the case—the matter is in competent hands—and we can only hope that any injustices which the police have suffered from in the past will be redressed without any sacrifice of principle on the part of those responsible for the discipline of the force. We will only express our confidence that if the strikers had realised the tremendous weight that will attach to their example they would have hesitated before they exposed the cause of good citizenship to such a hazard.



“It is impossible for the workers of this or any other country to improve their working conditions unless sound economic conditions exist.” If this dictum is admitted, as we think it must be by any reasonable person, it is of the first importance to the workers that they should enquire into the nature of the economic basis of any proposed policy of reconstruction. This is what they seldom take the trouble to do. Large blocks of votes are cast at Labour and Trade Union Conferences, sometimes at the suggestion of visionaries, sometimes at the dictation of political intriguers, but very rarely, if ever, on the advice of practical men of affairs who have

studied the economic consequences of the social remedies proposed. Enthusiasm for an ideal is understandable, but long ago common sense arrived at the proverbial conclusion that nose-amputation to spite the face is not the sort of policy that pays in the long run.



The official organ of the Women's Party, *Britannia*, reprints an article from the *Empire News* demanding a voice in conferences that are called to discuss industrial disputes. It points out that about a million women are engaged in munition factories, and asks why should men, who are misled by Bolsheviks, deprive loyal women of their bread and butter without giving them an opportunity of being heard? They want to put their point of view—the view of the loyal women. They believe they will be an influence for good in settling disputes by sane, commonsense, practical means. Why should a million women workers be unrepresented on an issue which concerns them so nearly? We wonder why Mr. Henderson and his colleagues who are so keen on equal pay for men and women show no enthusiasm for the admission of female munitioneers into the counsels of industry. It is said that the result of bringing all women's pay up to the men's standard would be an addition of £150,000,000 to the yearly wage bill of the country, without any corresponding increase in production. We do not vouch for the accuracy of this figure, but we are afraid that the ultimate result of equalising the standard will be an all-round reduction in wages.



The strongest Labour man in the country at the moment is J. R. Clynes, the Food Controller. This is not only obvious to those who have attended recent Conferences, but it is proved by the fact that he was top of the poll for the new executive of the Labour Party with over two million votes, although he never lifted a finger to influence the ballot—in itself a unique incident in these days of conference bargaining with the block vote.

Not only is J. R. Clynes strong in the political sense—he is also courageous and eminently sane. His words carry conviction because they are based on knowledge and thought—they are not variations of old shibboleths faked to look like new. He is the one Labour man in the Government who has the secret of being able to utter unpalatable truths without losing his popularity in the world of labour. Invaluable as his services may be as Food Controller, one is tempted to hope

that the time is not far distant when he will feel himself called upon to lay down his administrative work and take up the leadership of the Labour Party.



His address on the "Unity between Classes," given at the Cambridge University Extension summer meeting, was distinguished by a quality which is all too rare amongst Labour leaders. Without qualifying his attachment to democratic ideals, he gave proof of a breadth of vision which sees beyond the popular enthusiasms of the moment and recognises that the general progress of mankind is not to be wrapped in the swaddling bands of a narrow sectionalism. The Press, as a whole, did less than justice to this speech, which ought to be published broadcast from every housetop. The lectures which the Duke of Somerset has since felt himself called upon to deliver to Mr. Clynes in the columns of the *Morning Post* seem to be marked by an obliquity arising either from a disinclination to think or to a determination not to understand.



Mr. Arthur Henderson, as Chairman, and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, as Treasurer, of the Labour Party, claim to be the spokesmen of a very important section of the organised workers of Great Britain. The strike in the aircraft factories in the London district and the "Embargo" strike in the Midlands which took place in July of this year were events of great importance in the Labour world. Either Messrs. Henderson and MacDonald must be in favour of strikes in munition works in war-time, or they must disapprove of such action. They cannot be indifferent. So far as we have been able to discover, they made no effort, publicly, at any rate, to make their influence felt one way or the other. If they exerted their energies in trying to bring about a settlement by private negotiation, they deserve the thanks of the nation, and we congratulate them on their single-mindedness in hiding their patriotic light under a bushel. If, however, they were too busily engaged in the ramifications of the Troelstra affair to pay any attention to the alleged grievances of many thousands of workers at home, we venture to think that the Labour Party is not happy in its choice of leaders.



The Editorial Committee of the British Socialist Party make no bones about the type of revolution they favour. The editorial foreword to Lenin's pamphlet on the Russian Revolution concludes: "Lenin and his friends have built well and for all eternity, and not only will their creation come to life again,

but it will also for ever remain the model for the builders in other countries whenever *their* time comes."



The appeal of the Society of Friends on behalf of the eleven hundred conscientious objectors who are in prison serving sentences with hard labour deserves consideration because it is temperate and because it is sincere. We take it that the general feeling towards C.O.'s is one of contemptuous dislike for men who, in the public estimation, are wrong-headed shirkers. We do not believe, however, that the nation has any desire to be vindictive. The penal instrument of hard labour, with accompanying condition of solitary confinement, enforced silence, meagre diet and insufficient air and exercise, was designed originally as a punishment, not for stubbornness, but for aggravated crime. However strongly we may disapprove of the attitude taken up by C.O.'s, we must admit that some, at least, are martyrs for conscience sake, and such men ought not to be regarded as criminals. Would it not fit the case to treat them as prisoners of war? We do not underestimate the difficulties of the situation; we recognise that the discipline of the Army must be maintained, and we remember that in the stern business of war sentimental considerations must often go to the wall; but we cannot bring ourselves to admit the necessity for meting out heavier punishment to a fellow-countryman who resists conscription than that reserved for a German pirate like Naval Lieutenant Schweiger, for example, a prisoner of war, who is said to have torpedoed the *Lusitania*. The difference between the two men may well be that, whilst one is overburdened with too much conscience, the other has no conscience at all.



The Manchester City Council has accepted a donation of £3,000 from a group of firms engaged in the principal industries of the district towards the cost of establishing a new department of industrial management in connection with the College of Technology. This recognition of the fact that management as a science is a step in the right direction, and one which we hope will be adopted in other industrial centres.



According to the figures published by the *Labour Gazette*, 582,500 working days were lost in July, 1918, owing to disputes, old and new, begun, continued, or ended during the month, as compared with a loss of 260,600 working days lost in the corresponding month of last year. The number of workpeople involved was 96,857.

No. XIV

# OCTOBER

MCMXVIII

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“The War has carried us to the depths ;  
let us build from the depths.”

—*General Smuts.*



# INDUSTRIAL PEACE

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# INDUSTRIAL PEACE

## PRINCIPLE OR COMPROMISE.

THE world is living from day to day in a welter of uncertainty. Events, whose true importance cannot be grasped and the consequences of which cannot be divined, follow each other with such speed and in such variety that the tale of undigested problems mounts higher and higher until one despairs of keeping abreast of, still less of gaining upon, the accumulation.

As a nation we have always been prone to cultivate compromise and therein we have accounted ourselves virtuous and far-seeing. We have congratulated ourselves on the possession of a national genius for give-and-take both in foreign policy and in domestic affairs, and, although self-complacency is more often rooted in prejudice than corrected by breadth of vision, we may perhaps claim with reason that we are not an impulsive people. "Slow and sure" has a British affinity, and we have been wont to distrust the more nimble minds of our friends across the Channel when we should have been wiser to curb the undue extolling of our insular superiority. Whatever merit resided in our attitude was due to the habit of digesting our problems and delaying action until we thought we were sure of our facts—quite a possible achievement in days gone by when events moved at so leisurely a pace that there was always time to clear away the swarf and litter of mistakes which must ever clog the machinery and block the path of the muddler-through.

But the habit of compromise, bowed down to as an idol and chanted as a shibboleth, at length becomes the enemy of intelligent endeavour and the negation of principle. When the time of its gestation is accomplished the long-cherished virtue emerges as a vice. Laziness and intrigue, ignorance and flabbiness, all these find a convenient refuge in the commodious sanctuary of compromise.

At one time we were near losing the war through not facing the man-power problem with decision. The government of the day took credit for the art, not to say artfulness, with which it manœuvred the Territorial Army into taking its place by the side of the expeditionary force. Conscription was introduced, not as soon as it became necessary, but after the advocates of voluntary service had been silenced by the logic of events. Credit forsooth! The result appeared in the length of the casualty lists and in the prolongation of the war. We have never begun to realise the situation until the eleventh hour,

sometimes through want of imagination, but more often through lack of moral courage—and even now we are in danger of again falling into the same miscalculations. Though writers and speakers have ransacked the dictionary in the hope of describing faithfully all that the war is and all that it means, there are still people who refuse to grasp the reality of the thing and its inevitable consequences. Just as in the beginning we were advised that half measures were better than full ones, now, as we are nearing the end, we are counselled to compromise with the enemy, and to let bygones be bygones. Mr. Arthur Henderson, for example, wants “the coming settlement to leave no bitterness or sense of wrong on either side.” Let us kiss and be friends like two schoolgirls who have fallen out over a bit of ribbon! How in the name of human nature can Belgium or Serbia smile away the horrors of the outrages of which they are the mangled victims? How in the name of Prussian arrogance can Kaiserdom feel anything but bitterness when even the minimum of retribution is exacted by a righteously indignant world?

And as in the fields of war and peace, so in the arena of domestic strife and reconciliation. Realities are shuffled away out of sight; fine phrases, false issues and fictitious agreements are engineered for the mystification of the unwary. Compromise—not the real article, but its counterfeit presentment—is paraded up and down the land. Now and again we hear rumblings like those of an earthquake, but it is not good form to take too much notice and we assume, as we have always done, “that everything will be all right on the night.” Perhaps it will be all right—who knows? But if so good luck rather than good management must take the credit. We are not tackling the problem—we are not banking on fixed principles, we are just hoping that somebody will chance upon the requisite measure of compromise and so save the situation. Principles are of secondary importance; things, like democracy, to be praised, not to be acted upon. “What,” asks Mr. J. H. Thomas, “has been the course of events during the recent strikes? Negotiations have taken place, then a rupture has occurred, a strike has followed and immediately the workers have obtained all they asked. Either they were entitled to their demands before they struck, or they certainly were not entitled to them after the strike. You cannot govern the country unless you are firm, and you have no right to be firm before you are just. These continual capitulations to brute force have resulted in the workers feeling that the only way to secure justice is to strike. . . . Such methods destroy conciliation and play right into the hands of the people who believe in Bolshevism.”

During the last few weeks three highly important Labour gatherings have been held—the annual meeting of the Labour Party, the Trade Union Congress and the Inter-Allied Socialist Conference. At all these meetings the most vital issues were shelved and resolutions were passed which admittedly were framed with the sole objects of arriving at some compromise that would satisfy the divergent claims of the more powerful groups. As a result everybody remains in a state of uncertainty—nobody can tell with precision what British Labour really thinks, or prophecy whether or no the resolutions will be endorsed at future meetings. Men whose views on fundamental questions are diametrically opposed sit on the same platform and vote for the same resolutions. Almost everybody runs with the hare and hunts with the hounds—hardly anybody takes an independent line and rides it. Public men come forward and affirm in impressive language the principles from which they will never depart, but, as a rule, no genuine action follows, and any little breeze that ruffles the solidarity of labour is quickly forgotten in renewed fraternal hobnobbing. More than a year ago Mr. Henderson promised strenuous opposition to any tendency which might reduce Britain to the condition of Russia, but he still collaborates with those who are pledged to work for the introduction of the Soviet system of misgovernment into this country. The discomfiture of the egregious Kneeshaw and the snubbing of the more dangerous Maxton at the Inter-Allied Conference were tentative steps in the right direction—but ostracism is never practised in labour politics except as a punishment for loyalty to the State.

Mr. J. H. Thomas declares categorically: (1) that the Germans do not fail to make capital out of our industrial disputes to encourage their own people, (2) that the attitude of British labour is causing grave misgivings to our Allies, and (3) that that same attitude is a danger to the best interests of Labour. He goes on to say that the apathy and indifference of the large majority of the working men are responsible for this state of affairs and that it can only be altered by the overwhelming majority of trade unions asserting their rights instead of allowing a minority to predominate. Exactly—but Mr. Thomas very well knows that the predominance of the I.L.P., for instance, can quickly be got rid of if he and the Labour members now in the Government, mean business and combine for that purpose. But there are wheels within wheels, and only the outward mechanism is exhibited. As things stand, the public note that the proposal to form an exclusively Trade Union party was turned down at the Congress by an overwhelming majority.

## A BASIS FOR RECONCILIATION.

IN attempting to find a basis for the more harmonious co-operation of employer and employed it has been usual to lay stress on the essential identity of their interests. It has been pointed out again and again that both must gain by the more abundant production of wealth, while both are losers by industrial friction, that profits are highest when wages are highest, and workers are best paid where fortunes are most readily amassed. These facts have been obvious to all who have given a thought to the matter, but their recognition has not prevented a growing spirit of antagonism between the classes engaged in industry, and it seems advisable, in attempting to assuage these feelings of hostility, to keep clearly in mind those other factors which make for antagonism of interests between employer and employed. By recognising and even stressing the conflict of interests, we are more likely to arrive at a solution of the problem which is not inconsistent with harmonious working. The conflict of interests between Capital and Labour, between employer and employed, resembles that between buyer and seller. In industry, as in commerce, such interests are opposed ; a better bargain for the one side generally being a worse bargain for the other, and this is true whether the bargain relates to goods or to services, to industry or to commerce.

But having arrived at this essential similarity in the two classes of transactions we cannot fail to be struck by the contrast in the manner and the spirit in which the conflicting interests are adjusted. Bargaining in commodities is conducted with the utmost keenness, but with an entire absence of rancour. Bargaining in services is not more keen, but it is too often conducted in a spirit of hostility and suspicion ; in an atmosphere of threats and recriminations, culminating in periodical lapses into industrial warfare destructive of the prosperity of everyone concerned.

This is the industrial problem, and to its solution there appear to be only two possible lines of approach. We may endeavour to remove the conflict of interests between the buyer and the seller of services, or we may recognise that conflict of interests as inevitable but endeavour to impart into wages transactions that spirit of mutual tolerance and goodwill which we have seen to be perfectly compatible with the keenest bargaining and the sharpest conflict of interests in the domain of commerce.

Before attempting to explore either of these lines of approach it is well to recognise a difficulty which will always confront us

—the existence of a body of persons who are violently opposed to any reconciliation between Capital and Labour and who will use their utmost endeavour to destroy any harmony of working between them. The exponents of the Class War are not to be convinced by argument. Even a demonstration on a grand scale is not likely to affect their attitude, though it may lessen the effectiveness of their propaganda. In Russia the Class War has been waged successfully up to a point, and it may be that Russia is destined to drink the cup of Socialism to the dregs, but it would be rash to expect the more violent section of our community to profit by the lesson.

On the other hand it would be unwise to overrate the power of the disruptive element. We must postulate both decent feeling and common sense in the major part of the population, otherwise our task is hopeless and there is nothing more to be said. The workers have a perfectly laudable desire to improve their economic position and they see little prospect of effecting a radical improvement by any method of bargaining, collective or other. The "Class War" group hold out hopes of a radical improvement to be attained by the simple expedient of abolishing the bargain and seizing both the goods and the money. We need not stop to consider the morality or the practicability or the probable result of this procedure. Suffice it to say that the majority, being possessed of decent feeling and common sense, may be expected to prefer a course of economic betterment more certain in its results and less violent in its method of attainment, if such a course can be clearly set before them.

To return then to our two possible lines of approach, the first is that which seeks to remove the conflict of interests between buyer and seller of labour. This is the method of profit sharing. The idea is to make the worker a partner: to make him at once the buyer and seller of his own labour.

No attempt will be made to analyse or to describe in detail the various schemes of profit sharing which have been propounded or put in practice. They may be roughly divided into two groups—profit sharing proper and profit-and-loss sharing. Both are regarded by the working classes with suspicion, and the latter with aversion.

In profit sharing proper the firm usually presents a portion of its capital to the employees and pays them a dividend thereon, the supposition being that they will thenceforward have the interests of the firm at heart and will abstain from any action which by injuring the firm would endanger the workers' share of capital and profits. Several such schemes are in successful operation and are deserving of nothing but praise. If a wealthy firm chooses to bestow a portion of its wealth on those who

helped to create it, rather than to invest it in industry, one need not question the benevolent intentions which prompted the action, whatever may be said of the relative advantages of the two modes of disposal, viewed from a social standpoint. But such schemes do not seem to have any special significance in relation to the industrial problem because they can never be of more than limited application. No one who has seen or experienced the struggles of a young firm in the early years of its existence would suggest that its arduous progress would be assisted by profit sharing. To begin with there are no profits to share, and when there are they are all too small for the necessary development of the business. Although the profit sharing workman is nominally his own employer, his share in the business is necessarily small and cannot be regarded as an effective insurance against industrial strife. It may even be a direct cause of it. One remembers the case of a well-known firm which adopted profit sharing and for many years paid a substantial dividend to its employees. Then followed a year of bad trade. There were no profits and no dividends and the workmen promptly went on strike !

In profit-and-loss sharing the workers are invited to invest a portion of their earnings in their employer's business. Obviously it is never likely to have more than a limited application, nor is it desirable that it should be generally adopted. A firm may be an admirable employer but a very doubtful medium for the investment of a poor man's savings. All forms of profit sharing are viewed with suspicion by the working classes, who regard a share in their employer's business in the light of a hostage intended to limit their freedom of action. For these and other reasons it seems unlikely that profit sharing, though admirable in conception, can ever be so widely adopted as to constitute an important factor in industrial life.

It remains to consider the second alternative. Can we leave in the hands of the workman that complete freedom of bargaining which he naturally and rightly cherishes, recognise his right to make the best and the keenest bargain for his services which is consistent with the economic conditions of the moment, and at the same time impart to the bargaining process that spirit of mutual tolerance and goodwill which is a commonplace in the buying and selling of commodities ? Or is there something inherent in the selling of services as distinct from commodities which necessarily engenders a feeling of hostility and suspicion ? Evidently not, for the most highly paid services are bought and sold under conditions of keenest competition but without a trace of that bitterness which so frequently accompanies the transactions of the " Labour Market."

It seems clear that the essential difference between the two groups of transactions is one not of kind but of class. The transactions of commerce are transactions between members of the same class—the capitalist class. The transactions of the labour market are transactions between members of two different classes—the capitalist and the non-capitalist. Remove the class distinction and the class hostility will vanish.

There are two conceivable ways in which the class distinction can be abolished. By abolishing the capitalist or by abolishing the non-capitalist. The first way is, or was, the way of Socialism.

It so happens that the war has provided our society with a very extensive practical demonstration of State control of industry, and from this experience two conclusions emerge. The first is that State control does not diminish but tends to increase industrial strife. The temptation appears to be irresistible for the workers to combine to exploit the necessities of the State for their own advantage under threats of such violent interruptions of industrial life as would completely disorganise society. Doubtless the peculiar economic conditions of war time are unusually favourable for such action, but against this must be set the sentiment of patriotism, the realisation of momentous issues at stake, which exercise a powerful restraining influence. Even taking these factors into consideration he would be a bold man who in the light of the past four years' experience predicted industrial peace as a result of increased State control or State ownership.

The second conclusion that emerges is that their experience of the State as employer has in a marked degree disillusioned the workers themselves. They have tried it and they do not like it. They have found that "wage slavery" under private employers is mildness itself compared with the yoke of State control, and they are accordingly directing their efforts in quite other directions. The "Rank and File" and the Syndicalist movements are as little conducive to State Socialism as to industrial peace.

There remains then the expedient of eliminating the non-capitalist—in other words, of converting him into a capitalist. Before examining the possibilities and the difficulties of this proposal it may be well to sketch in outline the kind of society we have in view, not that such a society is held to be immediately or completely attainable, but with the ideal community clearly before us we shall be in a better position to judge how far it is desirable, attainable, and workable.

We are to imagine then a community every member of which is a worker and a capitalist, subsisting partly on the fruits of

his own activities and partly on the interest of the capital which he has saved or inherited. To give definiteness to our ideas let us suppose, for the sake of the argument, that the people generally are possessed of capital amounting to about £1,000 per family of five persons, yielding an income of about £50 per year. The amounts of capital and income would, of course, vary, and the actual figure is, comparatively speaking, of secondary importance. Many families would have incomes sufficient to render them independent of the necessity for wage earning, but we may assume that only a small minority of the independent would consider themselves absolved from the duties of active usefulness, and we have warrant for this assumption in the actual society of persons of independent means to-day.

We have to consider first whether such a society would be workable and desirable and whether its constitution would be conducive to industrial peace.

There is no doubt that a society of capitalists would be workable. It involves no economic innovation but merely an extension of the system with which we are familiar, the only social system which has ever been known to succeed in industrial communities. It would chiefly differ from our own society in the more democratic control of industry, the workers having a voice in the management of concerns in which they were financially interested, not necessarily those in which they were employed.

That a society of capitalists would be relatively peaceful is hardly less certain. There would be complete freedom of combination among employers and employed, freedom of collective or individual bargaining, freedom of strike and lock-out, but there could be little or no class antagonism, and there would be no desire for war for war's sake and certainly none of that impulse to destroy capital and injure the capitalist which appears to rank among the strongest motives for stirring up strife. The gospel of the class war would fall on deaf ears.

Not less important than industrial harmony would be the increased self-respect, freedom of action and independence of the capitalist worker. You cannot exploit a capitalist, you cannot sweat him, you cannot starve him. The feeling that the worker must accept the wage that is offered him or starve, though it may rarely have a solid foundation in practice under modern industrial conditions is one that is often played upon by the propagandist, and it rankles. The importance of a permanent income in sickness, unemployment and old age is too obvious to need exposition, but something further must be said on this subject in a second article.

## WOMEN'S PLACE IN INDUSTRY.

ALTHOUGH the future position of the women workers must largely depend on the conditions which regulate the conversion of Industry from the arts of war to the arts of peace, it is certain that they will be the chief sufferers from the dislocation and unemployment inevitable to the period of transition. Of the 1,442,000 women now engaged on work formerly done by men, the majority passed through months of acute distress, occasioned by the gradual closing down of the luxury trades, before they were drafted, during the spring of 1915, into new and temporary occupations. If only about nine per cent. of these eager substitutes were strangers to industry, a very much larger proportion were totally unaccustomed to the strenuous and frequently dangerous work of munition factories. These establishments differed from each not only in the rates of pay but in the conditions of work. In some of them the women received equitable treatment, but this was by no means universal. Except in the textile trades, where the bulk of the Trade Union members are women, the district rates of wages applied to men only, who were further protected by the "Fair Wages Resolution" of the House of Commons, which compelled employers engaged on Government work to pay the standard rate of wages. But none of these safeguards could be invoked by the woman substitute, who had no powerful Trade Union behind her. Finally, under the Munitions Act of 1916, the Minister of Munitions was authorised to appoint a special arbitration tribunal for the purpose of standardising women's wages, their hours and conditions of labour.

The Women's Wages Tribunal is composed of representatives of Employers, of the men's Trade Unions, of the women's Trade Unions, with a few independent members possessing general experience in wage questions. As the Ministry of Munitions is incomparably the largest employer of women the world has ever seen, this Tribunal was confronted with a very difficult problem. It had not only to regulate rates of pay for women who were doing work previously done by men, but also the wages of those employed on work which women—and in some cases boys—did before the war at a prevalent rate of from 10s. to 12s. a week. Taking 20s. a week as a basis, the Tribunal has now established a minimum wage of 26s. 6d. a week for all women employed on munition work in Government-controlled establishments. This advance constitutes the greatest improvement in industrial conditions on a wide scale that has ever taken place in the United Kingdom.

A few months ago another board was created by the Ministry of Munitions, in conjunction with the Admiralty, whose functions are purely consultative. It is called the Women's Trade Union Advisory Committee, and consists of fourteen members, ten of whom are women prominently connected with the Labour movement. This body is intended to be a permanent institution which will endeavour to formulate a policy that shall govern not only present but future relations of women to industry. It will also provide a weekly meeting ground where such policy can be explained and where grievances can be ventilated, and it may be taken as evidence of a desire on the part of the present Government to set an example to the private employer by regulating the conditions of female labour in a spirit of equity and amity.

In order to carry out this ideal it is essential to discover some symmetrical adjustment of the claims of men and women in industry that will enable both to contribute in the measure of their different capacities to the work of the world. The phrase so often repeated in this connection, "equal pay for equal work," is an illusive one. In a strict mathematical sense, the work of the average woman is not equal to the work of the average man, and never will be, and the fact that isolated women have succeeded in learning skilled processes with a rapidity and in executing them with an efficiency at least equal to that of their male predecessors does not invalidate this statement. An element, and to a certain extent the most important element, in equality is continuity. The industrial life of women is in the great majority of cases a mere prelude to marriage. Miss B. L. Hutchins, in her *Statistics of Women's Life and Employment*, puts the proportion of married women in the total population of 11,518,815 at 64 per cent. at the age of 25. At 35 this proportion rises to 75 per cent., of which in normal times all but a negligible number are thereby withdrawn from the industrial arena. But after the age of 45 the proportion declines, and at 55 the percentage of widows is as high as 31.4, while at 65 it is 52.1. The maximum life of marriage is thus about twenty years. At the end of it a very large number of widows re-enter industry in order to support themselves and their dependents, where they are severely handicapped by loss of strength and skill as compared with youthful rivals of their own sex. From this point of view, therefore, the value of the woman worker to industry cannot be considered as equal to that of the average man. However efficient she may become during her early years her working life is interrupted by marriage, and her return to labour is crippled by diminished capacity and heavier responsibilities.

There has always been, of course, a certain number of married women in the labour market, and that number has been greatly increased by the demand for female substitutes which has arisen during the war. Their employment has been facilitated by the establishment of day nurseries in the vicinity of large factories, where their children can be looked after during working hours, and also by the formation of Maternity Committees for the care of expectant mothers working in munition centres. But the question of the employment of married women is a complex one, in which the interests of industry are second to the superior interests of the nation as a whole. To gain a worker at the sacrifice of a mother would be from the point of view of the State as well as of the individual the worst of all possible bargains. Nothing but a high birthrate can enable this country to replace the terrible human wastage of war. Thus the mother will be in the future a more precious asset to the British nation than she ever was before. It is consequently to be hoped that when our surviving heroes return from the trenches to claim their former posts, the married women will be the first among the thousands of female substitutes to exchange the sphere of manual labour for the far more important work of home-building.

Nor should another aspect of married women's labour be ignored, and that is its effect, morally and psychologically speaking, upon her husband. The influence of the Dundee marmalade industry upon the inhabitants of that city is an apt illustration of the social danger involved in any wholesale shifting of the burden of the family's maintenance from the shoulders of the husband to the shoulders of the wife.

It is impossible to predict to what extent the possession of the Parliamentary suffrage will affect women's place in industry when the demobilisation of our armies compels an entire re-adjustment of labour conditions. But the mere fact that such a weapon has been placed in the hands of women, however ignorant they may be of its use, has already changed the attitude of the official leaders of the Labour Party towards those who now share with men not only industrial but political emancipation. A very determined effort is now being made by Mr. Arthur Henderson, and that section of organised labour which regards him as its chief, to capture the woman's vote in the general election which they believe to be imminent. In a recently published booklet designed for the instruction of the woman voter, Mr. Henderson declares that the party he represents "has evolved a policy intended to promote the common interests of both sexes" and expresses a hope that when the

bulk of enfranchised women understand it "they will recognise that separate sex organisations are fundamentally undemocratic and wholly reactionary."

Unfortunately for Mr. Henderson, the essentially political object of this manœuvre is demonstrated by the fact that some of the most important Trade Unions have coincidentally exhibited their hostility to the industrialised woman. The A.S.F., taking advantage of a technical regulation, have recently passed a resolution refusing to admit women to membership, while several other Trade Unions, which include women members and accept their contributions, have declared their intention of prohibiting the employment of women in their trade after the war under any circumstances whatever! Does the future therefore reserve for us the sorry spectacle of Labour candidates elected to Parliament through the women's vote committed on account of their position as Trade Union Leaders to sacrifice the economic interests of their feminine electors to the jealousy of the skilled workman?

It is obvious that sex antagonism in the industrial sphere would be as disastrous as it is in any other aspect of human life. But harmony will not be achieved by an economic boycott following on political exploitation. For if there is some justification for the Labour Party's fear that the surplus of women workers may be exploited by capital eager to obtain cheap labour, the danger that women in the mass may be exploited by the Labour Party for the purpose of securing advantageous conditions to the skilled workman is also within the bounds of possibility. If women are to be excluded from certain industries for which they are physically unsuited, they will have no reason to complain provided other industries for which they are specially adapted are reserved to them. Before the war men were engaged on work which could be done as well and better by women, but it is also indisputable that women are at present doing work requiring muscular strength and endurance quite beyond their normal capacity. In the conversion of those factories organised for war production to the requirements of peace it ought not to be impossible to allot to men and to women too such work, both skilled and unskilled, as each is best equipped by nature to do. But any attempt to expel women wholesale from industry would be not only unjust to the individual but disadvantageous to the State. If the co-operation of women is vital to the successful prosecution of the war, it will be equally vital to the organisation of peace.

It is improbable, moreover, that dilution, through a phenomenon of the war, will disappear with it. In the course of the

past three years the meaning of the word has changed as the women substitutes have gained experience which has made them as valuable to the employer as the men they have replaced. This circumstance explains the hostility of the craft unions to the woman worker who now threatens the monopoly of the skilled workman. Nor is the employer invariably looking forward to the day when he will have to get rid of the female dilutee in order to give his job back to the demobilised craftsman. He knows that the discharged soldiers will have to be reinstalled, but that will not necessarily mean an exit from industry to the expelled dilutees. Any attempt made by the craft unions to re-establish a male monopoly and to treat the women as blacklegs might easily create a dangerous situation during the era of reconstruction when it comes.

Nor will the fact that the N.F.W.W. and the W.L.L. have affiliated their organisations to the official Labour Party suffice to solve the problem of the future place in industry of the skilled and the semi-skilled woman. It is true that since August, 1914, the membership of these unions has considerably increased. But of the three-quarters of a million women organised in May of this year, large numbers have enrolled in the W.U. and other men's unions, which admit them on equal terms, in preference to joining their own affiliated unions. If this tendency continues it may ultimately result in the women dilutees making common cause with the semi-skilled men against the skilled craftsmen. In this case, as the policy of mixed unions is invariably directed by a committee of men—the women being merely paper members—it is not impossible that the latter may eventually find themselves involved in an industrial battle in which they stand to lose whatever be the issue.

In the long run, however, the exercise of the function, whether it be the running of a women's Trade Union or the use of the Parliamentary vote, educates. In the defence of their place in industry women must learn that their interests and the interests of men are one. The welfare of the family, and consequently the nation at large, is the basis upon which the industrial policy of the future must be built. It should include equality of opportunity both for the skilled workman and the skilled woman, though not necessarily within the limits of the same trade. The experience of war has proved, among other things, that skill is not a question of sex. Peace will, we may confidently assert, make as great a demand as war upon the energy and capacity of every citizen in the State.



## OF THE INCENTIVE TO EFFORT.

THE economic difficulties which will confront us after the war are admittedly not to be overcome by any one remedy, but whatever adjustment of our previous modes of distribution and consumption may be called for, the proper satisfaction of the ever growing needs of a vigorous and intelligent population can only be secured by a greater production per head than has hitherto been achieved. But how is this necessary basis of successful reconstruction to be secured? Improved organisation, a more extensive use of machinery, the enlargement of the scale wherever such a course offers scope for economy, the more scientific use of raw materials and the greater use of scientific principles in the whole management of industry: such measures are called for, but they are only a partial solution of the problem.

The desideratum is maximum production *per head*—the crux of the difficulty lies in the discovery of the real incentive to human effort. The wage system in its present form, and given our present general lack of economic education, would appear to have failed in this respect. Unless the trade be a sweated industry, increased wages are not accompanied or followed by increased production and more money does not mean less *ca' canny*. Successive schools of socialists have untiringly laboured the thesis that mere monetary gain does not account for the greater part of man's best endeavours. Capitalist schools, on the other hand, insist that the expectation of great reward alone calls forth the exercise of skill and ingenuity upon which the progress of science and organisation in industry depends. Equally convincing arguments on the point are adduced by both schools, and, as a matter of fact, both are right and both are wrong. They are both right in the conclusions they draw from their particular assumptions, wrong in viewing the acquisition of money itself as the mainspring of action. Mr. H. G. Wells indicates the true incentive to high endeavour and sustained effort when he tells us that "the human spirit has never quite subdued itself to the laborious and established life; it achieves its best with variety and occasional vigorous exertion under the stimulus of novelty rather than by constant toil." Or, what really amounts to much the same thing, our efforts are most concentrated when there exists an element of speculation in the end to be achieved. The maximum of effort is achieved whenever a risk, however

slight, is involved. It is impossible for a man consistently to devote his full energies to the performance of a mechanical process for a fixed wage, however high. The successful performance of such a task presumes a machine, not a creature of moods and instincts. A man's work should be his life and unless that work is capable of making some appeal to his creative, acquisitive and combative instincts, boredom and dissatisfaction arising from the non-exercise of natural impulses caused by the purely artificial nature of the main occupation of his life must result. We can no more afford to ignore nature in our industrial than in our social institutions. "*Chassez le naturel et il revient au galop.*" The successful life depends not upon the elimination of natural impulse, but upon the right direction of such impulse. And what is true of life in general is true of life in industry. Herein lies the solution that we harness the forces of nature to the machinery of production and cease the suicidal policy of ignoring irresistible forces in the determination of vital conditions of industry. The forceful, driving motive behind the actions of men is ultimately the appeal to some instinctive impulse. To ignore this in our industrial institutions is a twofold blunder, for whilst the impulse to action is diverted, the mainspring of productive effort is broken. The vital force which should have been happily and usefully expended in providing for the satisfaction of increasing needs is transmuted into the vague but irresistible dissatisfaction arising from what the psychologists term "balked disposition"—a condition which enslaves and devitalises its unfortunate victim, resolving itself finally into unhealthy craving for excitement, and in unrest, violent and destructive, or vague and voiceless, unconsciously self-destroying.

Taken in the aggregate a community of healthy men and women possesses potential energy capable, if rightly directed under our present highly organised system, of producing a supply of goods more than adequate for the needs of the nation as a whole. Invention and organisation are limitless in their possibilities. But their fertility is conditioned by and dependent on the individual effort—the factor that is being recklessly wasted and squandered for lack of a true incentive. If we are to realise in the near future the vision of a dignified working life of moderate ease and greater mental breadth, inventive genius must be concentrated now upon the discovery of a scheme of work and its remuneration which will offer to the worker such satisfaction of his natural impulses as will constitute a continuous incentive to the exercise of its best efforts.



## THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT.

ENTHUSIASTIC writers on Co-operation refer to Plato for the beginning of its history, and incidentally mention Sir Thomas More, Bacon, Campanella, Harrington, Robert Owen and a crowd of minor utopian enthusiasts. The last named, who ultimately will be recognised as one of the greatest men in English history, is constantly acknowledged in all recent Labour, Socialist, Trade Union and Co-operative literature and text-books as the father of English Socialism, the founder of co-operation and the originator of the English Trade Union and Labour movements. Much of the claim is undoubtedly true, but it is fair to say that it is less true of Co-operation in its present form than of the other three movements mentioned.

So far as Robert Owen preached Co-operation, he preached it as a system for the elimination of profit. Profit upon cost price he held to be the origin of all evil. With this in mind, an impartial examination of the history of the Co-operative movement clearly shows that the ultimate form that it took was not one that would commend itself to its alleged founder.

The early Co-operative endeavours took the form of groups of working men raising capital among themselves, finding work for themselves, and either using any profit for extensions, or else dividing it among those who provided the original capital. Few of these experiments succeeded for long. The accumulation of profit, combined with a conflict between those of communistic ideas and their more individualist colleagues, sooner or later brought about division and failure.

There are two recognised forms of Co-operation, associations of consumers intent on securing low prices and good quality in articles of common use by eliminating the profits of the trader and manufacturer, and associations of producers anxious to obtain the full value of their labour by absorbing the profits of the employer. It is the former alone that shows the principle of growth and continuity for reasons that will follow, and it is the former that is the obvious side of the Co-operative movement, the side with its thousands of branch stores in every part of the country that makes Co-operation a familiar thing in the life of the working class.

It was the device of hiring capital at a fixed rate of interest and dividing all the remaining profits as dividends to the purchasers, adopted in 1844 by the Rochdale pioneers, that stabilised and ultimately led to the great development of Store Co-opera-

tion and made the movement prosperous. When Co-operation was preached in conjunction only with high ideals, as a means of approaching Utopia, it had but a precarious existence, but combined with the idea of dividends on purchases it became immediately successful.

Anyone can join a Co-operative Society by the payment, usually, of a shilling. The first nineteen shillings of dividends on purchases is added to the first payment, the member is then presented with a pound share, and all future dividends on purchases can be drawn half yearly. To be quite fair it must be admitted that it is the appeal of dividends that attracts most people to Co-operation. Without it, it would languish and die ; and although the original idea was to abolish profits, it was the subsequent notion of obtaining and sharing them that has proved its greatest attraction. This fact is highly important and must be borne in mind when Co-operation is considered in connection with modern political movements. The Co-operative Society then, is a group of individuals who agree to purchase in association, who may ultimately own a shop or many shops and stores dealing in every commodity, and even own and build houses. The Wholesale Co-operative Society is an association of these hundreds of Stores federated for purchasing in bulk ; the wholesale side being able, owing to the extent of its activities, to own mills, docks, ships, estates, factories, and workshops. Just as the individual buys at the retail store and obtains his dividend on purchases, so the Store purchases from the Wholesale Society and obtains a dividend therefrom which becomes part of the income of the Stores and ultimately swells the dividend of the individual member. There are no recent figures on the movement ; but a reasonable estimate would give 1,300 Societies with 4,000,000 members with sales approximating £100,000,000 per annum, a Share Capital of £60,000,000, Reserve Funds of £3,000,000 and profits of nearly £14,000,000 per annum. Employees would number over 100,000 and the wage bill would run into £7,000,000 per annum. An important fact that should be borne in mind is that Co-operators only spend a portion of their income at the Co-operative Stores. On an average, less than one-third, the remaining two-thirds still going to the private trader. The dividends vary in amount in different districts. They may be as high as 3s. in the £ on purchases ; 2s. 6d. is not uncommon, but probably an average would be 1s. 6d. The ordinary housewife dealing at the Store would expect a dividend of £2 every six months. The Store is managed by a Committee elected democratically, dividing itself into sub-committees for various purposes ; there is a

quarterly or half-yearly meeting of members and everyone has a right to advise, criticise and take part in the management.

The thirteen hundred consumers' Societies, with about one hundred productive Societies, form the great majority of the members of the Co-operative Union. This is the organisation that holds the Co-operative Congress each year. Its functions are propaganda, legal assistance, and Co-operative education and defence. Of late years this Congress has discussed questions much beyond the narrow range here outlined and undoubtedly within the movement there is a strong section fighting for "fusion of forces." This move is for a joint Co-operative and Labour Board, constituted from the Co-operative Union, the Wholesale Societies, the Trade Union Congress and the Labour Party. The Board is to further the investment of Trade Union capital in Co-operative enterprise, to secure Co-operative assistance in industrial disputes, and promote common propaganda and educational work. This movement was on a vote hopelessly defeated in 1914 and 1915, but is, at the moment, steadily gaining adherents. The Congress this year decided that it should be part of its policy to run candidates for Parliament; but so far as this point of view has gained any headway, it is on the lines of running purely Co-operative candidates, quite independent of the Labour Party or any other political organisation; and, although the Labour Party consists of affiliated Trade Union Branches, Trades Councils, Socialist Societies and Co-operative Societies, for years only one of the thirteen hundred of Co-operative Societies has affiliated to the Labour Party, and the report of the Labour Party Nottingham Congress held in January of this year still shows the one ewe lamb—namely, the Tunbridge Wells Society, with a membership of two thousand six hundred. It is well known that Labour candidates for Parliament are not keen to receive the support of the local Co-operative movement; they realise that the majority of the local Co-operative members are either Liberals or Tories, attracted to the Co-operative movement because of its dividends. The local Co-operative members would not vote Labour, while the support of the organisation would immediately and irrevocably alienate the support of the small shopkeeper class, who not only have a large proportion of votes themselves in every industrial area, but are prone to use their influence in conversation with customers over the counter at election times. It may be gathered from the foregoing that at present Labour and Socialist politics have made little headway in the Co-operative movement itself, the organisation still disapproving of joint action with any outside bodies and standing for political

neutrality. The most sensational incident in recent Co-operative history was the part it played in the Dublin strike. That strike would have broken down almost immediately but for the dramatic swiftness with which the Co-operative Wholesale Society delivered in the Irish capital the food supplies ordered by the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress ; and although the Dublin strike ultimately failed, through economic causes that have no part in this article, yet, as an illustration of certain possibilities that may develop in the future, the incident made a profound impression on the Labour and Socialist movements of the world.

On the whole the war has distinctly aided the movement for Co-operation. As an organisation it has been absolutely loyal, its branch Stores refusing to add to the general panic regarding food at the beginning and doing much to prevent a rapid rise of prices. The Wholesale Federations maintained their contracts and were subsequently able to come to the aid of the Government ; taking on large contracts which it has since been stated were executed to the entire satisfaction of the authorities. It has supplied members to the Consumers' Council, set up by the Food Controller, to the Sugar and other Commissions, and has placed its rank and file members on countless local food Committees. The commercial exploitation, the action of profiteering during the early part of the war, did much to aid Co-operative propaganda and increased the general membership. Of the side issues connected with the movement a great deal could be said. There is a Men's and a Women's Co-operative Guild. These are usually social and educational centres ; organising lectures, and social functions. There are Educational Sub-Committees, and in connection with the Co-operative Congress a Central Educational Committee which not only runs classes but has organised a Students' Fellowship with an annual meeting and at least two Summer Schools. There are insurance funds, sick funds, convalescent funds, schemes by which delegates visit neighbouring branches, annual outings, and picnics with special functions for the children. The Women's Guild is easily the most important of the minor organisations, first because its membership makes it the largest purely women's organisation, outside the Labour and Trade Union movements and also because it endeavours to create a public opinion on questions of general interest to women apart from Co-operation.

The various Socialist organisations in the country have been able to exercise little control over the Co-operative movement. It is true that right up through the nineteenth century certain sections, particularly the Christian Socialist movement, had

great influence at the Annual Congress and were instrumental in persuading the Congress to pass idealistic resolutions. Like Labour Party and Trade Union Congress resolutions, they counted for very little, usually being ignored as highly inconvenient at the quarterly meetings of the Stores, where a practical policy had to be considered. Of late years individual members of the Independent Labour Party and other Socialist organisations have been elected members of Committees of Co-operative Societies. This has occasionally led to the diversion of small sums to purely political objects, but any serious move in that direction has always meant the rallying of the members with other political points of view, plus those that are keen for dividends; and the offending person has disappeared shortly afterwards by the operation of the ballot vote. It has been said recently that certain Societies have been willing to lend money at interest to assist Labour Candidates who may be slow in raising their expenses, but these Societies must be few in number and it must be conceded that the movement shows but few signs of being captured even by the aggressive sections of the Socialist movement, for reasons made clear in the foregoing pages. There can be little connection between extremist Socialism and a dividend loving Co-operative movement requiring patient and careful detail work.

Of the future of Co-operation much has been written. It has quadrupled its membership in twenty-five years and probably nearly one third of the working class is connected with it. Reasons that take the wealthy man to the great Store take the working woman to the Co-operative Society. Financially it comprises but a small fraction of the wealth of the country, its capital value being less than £100,000,000, as compared with the estimated wealth of the United Kingdom of £18,000,000,000. On the whole it makes for social stability, because it means that thousands of the working class obtain substantial sums which they invest in many directions, a favourite avenue being the purchase of a house to live in. It has distinct limitations. For while the users of a shop can and do own the shop, it would be against public advantage for the users of the railways to own the railways, or the users of the land to be given the land. The miners could not with advantage to the country own the mines, though the process might have exceptional advantages to them personally. It must, therefore, be a movement of a multitude of small things. Fundamental social changes if they are to come must come through other agencies. Part of its innate conservatism in the past has been due to the fact that the unit of the Co-operative movement has been the pre-war woman, limited in

outlook, shortsighted and prone only to consider the immediate things. The widening outlook of woman, combined with her political emancipation, may find its reflection in a more progressive Co-operative movement, but the local movement in the future as in the past has always to fear the endeavours of the shopkeeper to undersell it, while the Wholesale Societies ever realise the competition of the great manufacturer. Adventurous schemes of development are thus always ruled out. It is a movement that within the present social system can be of infinite value to the working classes, causing them to be thrifty, teaching them to be sociable, showing them the advantages of collective effort, and educating them on a side of the social system of which, but for this, they would be entirely ignorant. It need not be seriously regarded as a movement that can of itself supersede the present social system either on the side of production, distribution or ownership.



## SOME VIEWS OF THE MINORITY PRESS.

It is characteristic of this section of the Press that in the issues which have appeared during the last four weeks there has been no satisfaction expressed about the victorious turn of the tide, and no word of recognition or praise for the men who have brought about the great change in the general situation in the field. The alleged iniquities of Mr. Havelock Wilson are apparently of far more importance to the Pacifist group than the recent triumphs of the Allied Armies.

"E. D. Morel"—the prospective I.L.P. candidate for Motherwell—writing in *The U.D.C.* for August, reviews the work of his Union, and states that it has been successful in permeating all classes, and now the question of questions is "*how long before the forces in favour of negotiations are strong enough to compel the Government to stop the massacre?*" According to Morel, the reason that the German and Austrian people do not revolt is that they see that it is "their Government who make the advances and the Entente Governments who turn them down." The enemy peoples have no reason for attacking their Governments when "Baron Burian is ready to discuss everything short of abject national surrender; when Emperor Karl exposes himself to insult in his eagerness to bring peace to his people; when Count Hertling explicitly disclaims any intention of keeping Belgium, and was willing (in February last) to enter upon immediate negotiations on the basis of President Wilson's four points." Morel declares that Germany is fighting in self-defence—and that the time has arrived when Labour must cease "asking" for permission, and must insist that the International shall meet. "International Labour is the master of the Governments, not their servant."

In the September number, Morel says that the Allied intervention in Russia is "a black and shameful page," and Germany will, in his opinion, be mad if she does not take full advantage of this error. He reminds his readers that the Finns owe their liberation to Germany. Germany has revived the national entities of Finland, Courland, Poland, and the Ukraine, and the wise statesmanship of Germany will be able to conciliate all these nationalities, whereas the Allies have nothing to offer. The hatred of the Japanese and the Chinese must force "the races of European Russia" to place themselves "under the most able military leadership they can secure" (i.e., Germany). Referring to Allied intervention in

Russia, *The Call*, September 5th, says : " Is President Wilson, whose fine phrases have time out of number been in direct antagonism to his actions, President Wilson, the head of the most unscrupulous exploiting and financial class on the face of the earth, is this the man to appeal against the holders of the Russian loan scrip ? "

None of the writers in the *Minority Press* appear to be wholly satisfied with the results of the Inter-Allied Socialist Conference, and all comment—with more or less petulance—upon the influence exerted by Mr. Gompers and his Federation. They contend that the American Federation had no right to participate in an International Conference, since it was never associated with the International. Ramsay MacDonald, writing in *Forward* (September 28th), states that Mr. Gompers had not the ear of the Conference, and that he believes that the " American leaders are not in touch with the spirit of European Labour and Socialism." He complains that the Conference was so constituted that the War Party was at its maximum strength. But *Forward* is delighted with the speeches of Kneeshaw and Maxton, especially the latter's " attack on old Gompers of the ponderous mien and the fat cigar." Abuse of America is very popular just now in the *Minority Press*. *The Labour Leader* (September 26th) contains a special report of the Conference by Bruce Glasier, who is obviously in disappointed mood. " We of the I.L.P. and the B.S.P.," he writes, " together with the Russian Soviet . . . have from the outset been opposed to the holding of Inter-Allied Conferences." What the I.L.P. wants is the International in its entirety, not sections from Allied or neutral countries ; but, of course, the two real grievances are the presence of American, and the absence of German, delegates. Bruce Glasier is gratified, however, to note that " notwithstanding the bellicose ardour of the British and American pro-war groups," there was " a noticeable absence of virulent anti-German expressions." In the same issue Philip Snowden describes the Conference as an " unfortunate affair," since " it has strengthened the position of the Allied Governments and given them the fullest encouragement to continue the military prosecution of the war." He accuses Mr. Gompers of having prevented an International Conference, and denounces him and his followers as " agents of the Capitalist Governments of the Allied Countries." Mr. Snowden suggests that " steps should be taken immediately to reconstruct the Socialist International, and to present to the Socialists of the Central Powers a peace programme conceived in the interests of world democracy, and

not in the interests of imperialistic aims of Governments." If the British Labour Party cares to come into such an International, it may be admitted when it has given proof of its repentance, but neither the American Federation of Labour nor the British Trades Union Congress will be admitted.

*The Worker's Dreadnought* (September 25th) takes the same line, and states that "It would be useless to shut our eyes to the fact that this Conference has been a triumph for the reaction." This Bolshevik organ complains that the Pacifists were weak and lost their opportunities, and Miss Sylvia Pankhurst considers that "International Conferences as they exist to-day will never move until the people move them. The Revolutionary Socialist movement of the Rank and File will be holding its own International one day."

*The Nation* (September 7th), commenting on the police strike, says: "But if the police strike for a living wage and get it, who shall be denied? What wider door can be thrown open to the workmen's call? The wage-earner is master, and the guardians of property are with him, and share and profit by his methods. He holds his governors in fee, and must be invited in to take his share in the scheme of things or overthrow it. Blind is the man who does not perceive that the war has already created a new Society, which may at any moment flow into anarchy." *The Herald* (September 7th) is very well pleased with the strike of the police, but reminds them that they have not yet got complete recognition for their Union. According to *The Herald*, police and soldiers can be regarded either as human beings or as "the mere instruments of irresponsible power, and of these two ideals the Prime Minister has declared for the second." The soldiers and police will understand the difference, says *The Herald*. The workers only get what they want when they are strong enough to enforce their demands. "Passive resistance is the greatest weapon in a democracy. The stronger the weapon the less need to use it." (We wonder whether George Lansbury is a lineal descendant of the first man who said "Don't nail his ears to the pump.") The police strike has also delighted *The Dreadnought* (September 7th), which says: "Spirit of Petrograd! The London Police on strike! After that anything may happen." In the same issue Watson declares that the MacDonald meeting at Plumstead was not broken up by the patriots. "In spite of what the Press says, we held our meeting, and the opposition got infinitely more than it gave."

*The Call* (September 5th) expresses great indignation at the attempt on the life of Lenin, "our great revolutionary leader,

greater than Marat, greater than all the revolutionaries of the past—Lenin—the man for whom even the bitterest bourgeois enemy has the greatest respect. The name of the perpetrator of this outrage will go down in the history of all future ages as that of the greatest and blackest traitress to the cause of the people on record.”

*The New Statesman* (September 7th) says: “Experienced observers declare that the British wage-earning class is, so far as home issues are concerned, going to ‘swing to the left’ in more united fashion, and with great dynamic effect, than at any previous election,” but does not explain why, if this is true, *The New Statesman* is opposed to an early General Election. In *The Labour Leader* (September 12th) Snowden tells us that “the I.L.P. wields its influence in the Labour Party because of its political insight, its definite aims, and the enthusiasm of its members. Its influence on national politics would not be less if it were outside the Labour Party, but without the I.L.P. the Labour Party would soon cease to be a political force.”

*The Socialist* (August) comments on the embargo strike and its lessons. The employers like the Munitions Act, we are told, because it is a form of industrial conscription. “The idea behind the embargo is to enable the employer, as the tool of the State, to dispense with the services of a number of skilled workers.” A severe struggle was necessary to “smash the leaving certificate,” and the embargo is the old scheme “under a different name.” “The Embargo assists the boss in clearing the workshop of active rebels,” and the “dividend snatcher” can appear patriotic when “shoving the alert industrial unionist into the street.” It provides the means for victimisation. It is “the reply of the employers, ruling through the State, to the aircraft strike, which was fought upon the basis of victimisation.” The Embargo also establishes the point insisted upon by the S.L.P. that “working men are not men at all.” Under Capitalism they are “pieces of merchandise bought and sold on the market like bacon, eggs, or butter.” Under *normal* conditions the price of eggs, butter, etc., is determined by supply and demand, but under “*abnormal* war conditions these commodities are rationed.” The same occurs with the supply and price of Labour. “The embargo therefore demonstrates quite clearly that wage workers *are* commodities, are merely so many parcels, with a number, which the ruling class can shove here and push there. Let this fact sink deep into the heads of the working class. . . . To become *men* and to control their own destiny, Labour must destroy Capitalism, which reduces everything to the level of mere commodities.”

Our readers are requested to note (a) that *The Socialist* is the official organ of the British Socialist Party ; (b) that we live in the twentieth century, (c) that we have had board schools for quite a long time, (d) that paper is very expensive, and (e) that the foregoing comments on the embargo are printed and pass, presumably, for argument.



According to *Common Sense* (September 14th), " Strikes and industrial troubles are the human barometer which moves with the upward movement of the index number, and the far more horrible elongation of the casualty lists. Mr. Lloyd George's speech at Manchester gives little indication that he recognises either the logic of events or the *quiet growth of revolutionary opinion.*" " The end of Capitalism," says *The Call* (September 12th), " is imminent ; there is no rescuing it from the torrent of events which is carrying it to its doom." We are being swept towards the Social revolution, and " already we find manifestations of the new order in Russia. The first Socialist State of the world has come into existence." The Capitalist sees in this his doom, and is panic-stricken, and endeavours to crush the revolution. But he cannot succeed. " In that fact lies victory, come what may." Time is on the side of the worker, " the tide of capitalism is fast going out, leaving in its wake the wreckage of human lives and ideals ; its waters are scarlet with the blood of slaves, and its moaning echoes the despairing cries of the millions who have sunk in its reeking depths." (And so on to the accompaniment of stage thunder, coloured lights and slow music, after the approved style beloved by *The Call.*)

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

THE railway strike, following so close on the heels of the police trouble, has opened many eyes, and even the Pharaohs of Whitehall are said to be taking notice. It is now realised that the campaign which led up to the strike was inaugurated long ago, and people who have persistently refused to believe in the connection between pacifism and industrial unrest will find it difficult to explain why so many code telegrams were sent and received by prominent pacifists in South Wales during the crisis. The middle paragraph in Mr. J. H. Thomas's letter of resignation is one to ponder over, for if the Secretary of the N.U.R. doesn't know what has been going on in the railway world nobody does. "Whoever is responsible," writes Mr. Thomas, "for the recent strike, a strike as wicked as it was dangerous, are people whose policy and methods must not only be challenged, but must be fought. Otherwise we shall very soon reach a stage in this country similar to that through which Russia is now passing. Therefore, in taking this course, I do it as a challenge to such methods, and am prepared to bear all the consequences of my action." These are pregnant and courageous words. Will the Government realise their gravity and take them to heart? Will they declare war against the Bolshevik elements? And, above all, will they resist the temptation, to which they have too often succumbed in the past, of throwing a sop to Cerberus and of attempting to appease the extremists by sacrificing the loyalists? These are momentous questions on the answer to which hang the most vital consequences.



Now, if ever, is the time for taking stock of the situation, for separating the goats from the sheep and for putting a little robustness into our relations both with those who are for us and with those who are against us. We are far from advocating anything in the nature of high-handed repression, but it is no longer tolerable that officialdom should persist in refusing to call things by their names or that hypersensitive flabbiness, with its partiality for neutral tints, should continue to maintain that black is grey. Cowardice is never an estimable quality under any circumstances, but lack of courage when there is nothing to fear is gratuitous folly.



As a general rule, programmes of social reform are couched in vague terms which provide a very indefinite basis for discussion. Now and again, however, actual figures are given,

and then we begin to know where we are. The pound a day advocated by *The Herald*, and the 3s. 4d. an hour promised by Tom Mann, as present minimum standards for all workers, irrespective of output, have been commented on already in these pages. A more detailed programme has now been formulated by Mr. S. M. Holden, the parliamentary candidate adopted for Accrington by the Workers' Suffrage Federation. Mr. Holden's proposals are as follows :—£3 a week minimum wage for five working days ; £2 2s. a week for soldiers, and increased pensions ; £1 a week for soldiers' wives, and 12s. 6d. for each child ; 15s. a week for old-age pensions, commencing at 60 years of age ; 15s. a week for widows ; £1 a week maternity grant for mothers for six months before, and £1 10s. a week for 12 months after, childbirth ; equal wages for men and women ; wages paid during unemployment and holidays.



Nobody will deny the attractiveness of such a weekly budget from the point of view of the recipients, and, if the scale is a practicable one, no disinterested person who is not a dog-in-the-manger would oppose it. But—and here's the rub—it may be that the workers of Accrington are not producing sufficient goods to pay such wages, pensions and grants, in which event Mr. Holden's election address becomes not only a stupid but a very dangerous document. The remarkable feature of the whole business, however, is that nobody seems to think it worth while to do the statistical calculation which would settle the future one way or the other. Would it be unfair to assume that, in Mr. Holden's opinion, arithmetic is one of those devices invented by capitalists to enable them to exploit wage-slaves ?



"The workers are going to be restive at any changes they cannot understand and watch. Whatever reorganisation is attempted must be done in the daylight ; it must set out quite plainly in the popular Press, it must be forced upon the attention of the worker ; he must be made a party to every step in the national process."—From "*The Elements of Reconstruction*."



In these days of perplexity it is no bad thing to fall back on first principles in their simplest form and to call to mind what the thinkers of previous generations had to say about the eternal conundrum of Capital and Labour. According to Victor Hugo the economic question can be reduced to two elementary problems : 1. To produce wealth ; 2. to distribute it. The first problem is one of labour, the second one of wages.

The first problem is the employment of force, the second is the distribution of enjoyment. Public power results from the good employment of force—the good distribution of enjoyment produces individual happiness. Good distribution is not necessarily equal distribution, but it must be equitable. From these two things combined—public power without, individual happiness within—result social prosperity. Social prosperity means the man happy, the citizen free, the nation great. Communists think that they have solved the social problem. They are mistaken. Their distribution kills production. Equal partition abolishes emulation and destroys labour. It is a distribution made by the butcher who kills what he divides. To kill wealth is not to distribute it. Solve the two problems. Encourage the rich, protect the poor, suppress misery, put an end to unjust speculation upon the weak by the strong—bridle the iniquitous jealousy of him who is on the road against him who has reached his end. Adjust mathematically and fraternally wages to labour. Join gratuitous and obligatory instruction to the growth of childhood. Make science the basis of mankind. Develop the intelligence while you occupy the arm. Be at once a powerful people and a family of happy men. Democratisé property, not by abolishing it, but by universalising it in such a way that every citizen without exception may be a proprietor, an easier thing than it is believed to be. In other words, learn to produce and to distribute.



The amalgamation of three important labour organisations was celebrated at Liverpool on September 24th. The combining bodies are the Workers' Union, the Municipal Employees' Association and the National Amalgamated Union of Labour. The resultant body has a total membership of 600,000.



Mr. G. H. Roberts, M.P., Minister of Labour, informed a large gathering of Trade Unionists at Ponders End that he would shortly introduce into the House of Commons a Bill to carry out the intention of the Government to restore Trade Union Rules and Customs.



"The greatest service that can be rendered to the country at this juncture is to work for the improvement of the relationships of employers and workers." This is the opinion expressed by the Minister of Labour in an interesting "Foreword" to the first issue of the *Industrial League Journal*, and it summarises

the aim and purpose of the League itself. We have already dealt briefly with its genesis and scope (July, p. 26). "The Industrial League exists for the sole purpose of endeavouring to pave the way for a better relationship between employer and employed." The means which the founders propose to adopt for the furtherance of this end are discussed in detail in the *Journal*. The central idea of informal discussions between the workman, the employer and the onlooker constitute, we think, its claim to a separate existence as a movement supplementary to, and not different from the Joint Standing Committees, which it supports in principle. "The League is a school in which the scholars instruct each other." It believes that the real remedy for industrial strife is a full understanding of our mutual grievances, and proposes to discover these in friendly conference.



The report of the first Conference of the League constitutes an interesting record of practical results achieved by Workshop Committees. To give publicity to the experience of employers and employed on debatable questions of this nature, the correct solution of which is of such paramount importance, is a service which all who are genuinely eager to further the advancement of industry and of the industrial worker on sound lines cannot fail to welcome.



It is difficult to keep track of the multiplicity of revolutionary organisations which are springing up with such remarkable fecundity here, there and everywhere, but mention may be made of a new body called the "Workers' Socialist Federation" which, with Miss Sylvia Pankhurst at its head, is attracting some of the least desirable exponents of the class-war.



When Trotsky first came into power his trump card was anti-militarism. The logic of events has caused him to play another suit, and now he is reported as saying, "All this talk of putting an end to armies is criminal folly. We in Russia have experienced the tragic consequences of abolishing our military organisation. The abolition of armies will be impossible until the whole world is one great confederation of socialist communities, including the black and yellow races. One democratic country alone cannot afford to abolish its army. The creation of an army is our most urgent need. Every opponent of the policy of organising our army is an enemy of the people." These are long views for a Bolshevik, but we are very much afraid that Comrade Trotsky has revoked.

Comrade Fineberg, a prominent pacifist and extreme anti-militarist until he left England, has applied for permission to join a class for military instruction in Moscow in order to qualify for a commission in the Bolshevik army. *Et tu Brute!*



There appears to be some confusion in the public mind as to the precise difference between Industrial Councils and Trade Boards. Briefly stated, the proposition is that industries should be divided into three groups—viz.: (a) those in which trade organisations represent the majority of those engaged in the industry, (b) those in which the majority are not in association, and (c) those having no adequate organisation.

For group (a) National, District and Workshop Committees are to be formed; for group (b) Industrial Councils (without Government representation) will be provided; for group (c) Trade Boards will be established.

An Industrial Council will be composed of representatives of masters and men nominated by the associations and recognised by the Government as the official consultative committee on all questions in which the industry is concerned.

A Trade Board is a statutory body financed by the Government, approved by the Minister of Labour, and constituted by nomination of members through the associations. The Chairman and Deputy Chairman are to be unconnected with the trade.

Industrial Councils are to consider all matters of labour policy. Trade Boards are to protect the unorganised.



At a mass meeting of members of the N.U.R. at Birmingham a resolution was carried condemning "*the action of a minority influenced by outside bodies.*" The declaration of the Chairman that Mr. Thomas was the only man who had come out of the strike with credit was received with enthusiasm.



From the *Labour Gazette* we learn that 707,900 working days were lost in August, 1918, owing to disputes, old and new, begun, continued or ended during the month, as compared with 582,500 working days in July, 1918, and 332,700 working days in August, 1917.



During the month of August, 1918, increases to the value of £300,000 were granted in the weekly wages of some 1,700,000 workpeople. No decreases were reported. During the same month the working hours of over 10,000 people were reduced by about 42,000 hours a week.

No. XV

# NOVEMBER

MCMXVIII

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“A breath to extinguish a taper,  
bellows to kindle a blaze.”

*Sayings of Hatasu.*



# INDUSTRIAL PEACE

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# INDUSTRIAL PEACE



## THE MENACE OF BOLSHEVISM.

WHEN a contagious disease becomes epidemic in any part of the world men of science and officers of public health are wont to give the matter their very serious attention. The etiology of the outbreak is studied, quarantine is imposed on travellers, still healthy subjects liable to infection are inoculated with a prophylactic virus, already infected persons are isolated, and other preventive or remedial measures are taken in hand without delay. When, on the other hand, a disease (the potential danger of which is far more formidable) attacks, not the body corporal but the body politic, an entirely different plan is pursued by those responsible for its suppression. To begin with everybody is strenuous in denying that any such malady does in fact exist. During the succeeding stage authority adopts an attitude not dissimilar from that of the Christian Scientists, and consoles itself with the naive belief that a complaint which is officially ignored will die of non-recognition. The third stage of development is distinguished by a marked reluctance to confess to previous sins of omission and, finally, unless some providential dispensation intervenes, a situation arises in which perfunctory action is taken that is too ill-informed to be appropriate, too short-sighted to be just and too belated to be effectual. In short scepticism and ridicule are too often the antecedents of a policy inspired by panic.

The disease of Bolshevism is a specific social malady—a novel and virulent type of applied Syndicalism which, at the present time, is raging in epidemic form over half Europe. The havoc which it has wrought in Russia is common knowledge to the many, though perhaps only realised adequately by the few. The menace is spreading steadily westwards—Finland, Bulgaria, Turkey, Croatia, Hungary and Austria with their varied forms of government and their diverse types of nationality are already prostrate under the chariot wheels of this new Juggernaut. The collapse of Germany—that much advertised paragon of organisation—is largely attributable to the same cause. The germs of mischief are discernible even in Holland and in Switzerland. Are we in Britain justified in assuming that the progress of this all-compelling dæmon has been stayed at a safe distance from our shores, or are we living in a fool's paradise just as we were before the blast of Armageddon caught us, unsuspecting

and unprepared, in August 1914? This is the momentous question in comparison with which everything else shrinks to veritably insignificant proportions.

It will be said that the language which we have permitted ourselves to use in this connection is too intense for the occasion, and we agree that if the peril we speak of is non-existent our fulminations are not only exaggerated, they are ridiculous. Our justification, if any, lies in the immensity of the issues involved. Once admit the bare contingency of the peril and our case cannot be dismissed on the score of lack of definition, it cannot be condemned on the grounds of its speculative remoteness, nor ignored on account of the possible tenuity of such tangible evidence as we are able to adduce. The question which we have propounded is, however, one that can be investigated up to a point and the chances estimated, even though they cannot be weighed with immediate accuracy. Our plea, therefore, amounts to this: that, the consequences of too optimistic a miscalculation being of so potentially fatal a character, it is an act of unutterable folly to leave anything to chance, an act of sheer madness to refuse to look the situation resolutely in the face.

But first of all it is necessary that what is meant by the word Bolshevism should be understood. An able and convincing exposition of the subject by a Russian correspondent has recently appeared in the *Morning Post* (October 26th and 28th). We would strongly advise our readers to study these articles for themselves; all we can do here is to summarise some of the conclusions implied or arrived at. Bolshevism, then, is a development of Marxism, quickened and transfigured by the influence of war. "It asserts that there are in each nation two classes having antagonistic interests; the *bourgeoisie*, or the ruling class, and the proletariat, or the working class. . . . The workers, being unarmed, are always on the losing side; 'force,' that is the coercive power of the Army, of the Police, of the Law, is against them." Direct action—*e.g.*, the weapons of sabotage and the strike, with other forms of economic rebellion, are but makeshift expedients only good enough for guerilla tactics. "In time of war, Bolshevism argues, all that is changed. Life at once assumes a revolutionary aspect." The worker and the peasant become possessed of these weapons, the lack of which primarily constituted their inferiority. "It is therefore their duty, if they are true to their class, to make use of that opportunity." . . . "From these premises Bolshevism advocates the dictatorship of the proletariat. Society, in other words, must be turned totally upside

down, and the will of the workers . . . must be imposed on the hated *bourgeoisie*. The State, as it exists to-day, must be destroyed, and with it must go overboard Law and all the political institutions of the nation."

There are, of course, endless gradations among Bolsheviks—not all approve of physical violence—they propose, however, to dispossess the capitalists, to take control of industry, the land, the mines, railways, posts and telegraphs, running them for the sole and exclusive benefit of the workers. Frankly the programme is nothing short of robbery under arms, but there need be no resort to violence unless the quondam ruling class resists its doom.

Passing from the consideration of the nature of the disease to the examination of its symptoms we find that it has a subtle intoxication of its own and insinuates itself almost unnoticed amongst the workers whom it distracts "by impossible yet captivating promises." It exerts sympathetic action even at a great distance from the centre of disturbance. "Its infiltration at first may not be easy to detect." It adapts itself to local conditions with surprising facility owing to the subtle appeal which, under the guise of retributive justice, it makes to the latent acquisitive and self-assertive instincts of mankind, those "volcanic forces" which, in the words of an American writer, "lie smouldering in all ignorant masses."

Such, in general terms, being the drift of the Bolshevik movement emanating in the first instance from the teachings of Karl Marx, and put into practice by Lenin and Trotsky, we reach the stage at which we can begin to enquire how far the menace of Bolshevism threatens our own country.

The Russian, whose views we have summarised, concludes by saying, "At present in England the Bolshevik movement, except for few exceptions, is conducted underground; it will not be long before it raises its head." Does this statement represent the truth? Does it interpret the signs of the times aright? It behoves us as a nation to find answers to these questions, and to make quite sure that the answers represent the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Let us therefore marshal as dispassionately as we may a selection out of the large number of available facts and known tendencies so that those of our readers who hitherto have not studied the subject may be able to form their own opinion on a matter which concerns them in so vital a degree.

1. Indubitably the doctrine of Karl Marx has a considerable vogue in this country. Although actual translations of his works may only be read by the few, his maxims are more widely

known and believed in than those of any other writer, native or foreign, on Socialism and political economy. The number of his disciples is steadily being augmented (and their sentiments embittered the while) through the agency of Social Science classes run by such organisations as the B.S.P. and the Plebs League. The class war is fostered by scores of missionaries, hundreds of lectures and thousands, not to say millions, of pamphlets. A self-described rebel Press consisting of some dozens of newspapers continually impresses upon its clientele the duty of stimulating class-consciousness, and a passionate approval of the tenets of Bolshevism stalks naked and unashamed through the columns of such publications as, for example, *The Dreadnought*, *The Socialist* and *The Call*. In these circles the coming Revolution is the main topic of conversation and every development of Bolshevism in Russia or elsewhere is studied with burning interest and its progress hailed with the liveliest satisfaction.

2. Notwithstanding the significant fact that during the last two or three years many strikes deliberately anti-national in their inception have occurred in industries essential to the successful prosecution of the war, whilst a truce has been maintained in trades which are not so indispensable, it must be remembered that both the frequency and the prolongation of these strikes have been kept within bounds by a feeling of loyalty directed not towards the State, but towards the soldiers at the front. With the end of the war this restraining influence will be removed and circumstances may arise to induce the returned soldiers to throw their influence (counting two on a division) into the other scale, with results which are not difficult to foresee. In this connection it is important to note that in those districts where Bolshevism is most strongly developed there is an exceptionally keen contest for the control of organisations which cater for discharged and demobilised soldiers. Another factor which has prevented the more extended growth of the strike habit has been the almost invariable readiness of the Government to accede to the demands of the strikers and to pay the required ransom. This, too, is a factor which cannot continue to operate indefinitely. Even amongst workers of moderate views and conservative tendencies the idea of a sudden and dramatic change for the better in the conditions of life when peace comes is entertained and cherished, yet unavoidable circumstances may postpone their realisation—with untoward results. Whilst so far as the rebel element is concerned no secret is made of their determination to cause all the trouble they can as soon as the war is over.

8. In addition to the foregoing home-grown tendencies which make for the dissemination of anarchical syndicalism there are other extraneous influences which of a certainty may be counted upon to lose no opportunity of spreading Bolshevism in this country. The Sinn Fein faction that engineered the insurrection in Dublin, and those disloyal Irishmen who subsequently used their restored freedom to range themselves with our enemies and intrigue with Germany will not be restrained by any scruples if they can see their way to injure Great Britain. They are good haters and they know how to make the most of the privileged position they hold by virtue of their citizenship within the Empire.

Again, when the enemy alien problem can no longer be dealt with by the temporary expedient represented by barbed wire, one of two things must happen. There must either be repatriation on a comprehensive scale, or the country will be flooded, at a critical period, with aliens who have a grudge against us. Even if they are all sent back to Germany in the first instance, it will be impossible to prevent the majority from returning after a short spell of absence. In these internment camps, so we are credibly informed, societies pledged to Bolshevism have already been formed. Such societies, posing as legitimate Trade Union branches (*e.g.*, the Trade Union of Waiters (Ganymede Society), the Trade Union of Transport Workers, the Metallurgical Society, and so forth), hold regular meetings once or twice a week at which the political situation is discussed from the international and the Bolshevik point of view. It may be assumed, perhaps, that the necessity for the maintenance of industrial peace in the land of their adoption is not a popular theme with these debaters. In this connection some of our readers will remember an incident to which we called attention some months ago and in which certain Rank and File leaders in the London district and the spokesman of an interned German colony were the central figures.

4. One result of the war will be the removal of many of the old barriers which caused the British nation to remain a close and insular corporation amongst the peoples of Europe. Our new-found knowledge of geography, our increased familiarity with foreign languages, the coming prospect of a League of Nations and the future participation of the Labour Party in foreign affairs will all tend to bring us into a closer relation with our Continental neighbours than was possible during any previous period of our history. In many respects this enlarged outlook will be greatly to our advantage—but not altogether so, for it will facilitate the designs of those who

are maliciously disposed towards us. And it is well that we should realise beforehand that we shall have bitter enemies for many years to come. The hatred of Germany for her most redoubtable adversary, that rock against which all her schemes of aggrandisement were shattered, will not be allayed in a generation. Foiled and disgraced in her attempt to dominate the world by force of arms, powerless at sea, and countered on land, she will inevitably seek for other and less direct means of wreaking her vengeance. Wherein, then, lies her only hope of revenge? The answer is not far to seek—she must bend her energies to the task of corrupting Britain as she has corrupted Russia, knowing full well that a nation which is divided against itself is an easy prey to its rivals in the arts of peace no less than during the throes of war.

Nor will our only foreign enemies hail from Germany. One of *Æsop's* fables describes how the fox, having lost his tail in a trap, summoned the other animals to a conference and tried to persuade them that tails had gone quite out of fashion. If we remember aright, he was laughed at for his pains; but, be that as it may, the fact remains that it is a certainty that Russian and other busybodies who have made a mess of their own internal affairs will not rest until they have tried to persuade us to follow their bad example.

5. Finally, it must be remembered that any breakdown in the machinery of reconstruction, any delay in providing housing accommodation, any mismanagement of the scheme for demobilisation, any failure to satisfy the legitimate claims of Labour in connection with the restitution of Trade Union rights and privileges—any one of these intricate problems mishandled, will give rise to a feeling of irritation which will play right into the hands of the Bolsheviks. At the close of the war the restrictions enforced by the Defence of the Realm Act will have to be removed without delay. Everybody will be free to go where he likes and say and write what he has a mind to. Unless we are mistaken, the fraternity of agitators are looking forward to a succession of triumphant field days. Let us hope that they will be disappointed. But something more than hope is required if we are to succeed in keeping our ship of State on an even keel. There must be no relaxation of effort after the war. Every man who loves his country, every man even who values his own skin, must take time by the forelock and devote all his energies to grappling with a situation which is as difficult as any that nation was ever called upon to face. We have survived the whirlwind, let us take heed lest we fail to escape the flood.

## UNEMPLOYMENT.

THE magnitude of the evil of unemployment has long rendered it a persistent cause for uneasiness and a constant subject of investigation by leaders of political and economic thought ; but that same magnitude, the radical nature of the changes called for, the sacrifices involved, the risks entailed, the fear of unforeseen and incalculable results, and the doubt whether any measure of success could be ultimately obtained, has kept the work of elimination within an extraordinarily narrow range of timid and circumscribed experiment. Before the war we had accustomed ourselves to contemplate, with such equanimity as we could, a state of industry which normally involved an average of four per cent. unemployed able-bodied workers. Throughout the period of the war, after the country had recovered from the dislocation of the first few months, unemployment has been considerably less than one per cent.—has, in fact, ceased to exist as an urgent problem. The question that arises from the contemplation of these two facts is : can we adapt the war factors which have practically eliminated unemployment to the service of normal life, can we utilise the principle now we have seen it at work ?

Unemployment is a vague term covering a number of evils demanding a variety of separate cures, and if we are to avoid the appearance of attempting to offer a single panacea for a number of widely different complaints we must briefly define the particular type of ill we are considering and endeavour to eliminate the rest. Unemployment is the inability of an able-bodied man to obtain suitable work in a given place. This definition rules out the vast army of unemployables, whose problem, though undoubtedly largely the result of the industrial system, or lack of system, is now an evil which must be eradicated by the State as a whole. The factors creating the derelicts of society are of a complex social order. Industry has contributed its quota and is impeded in its progress by the heavy burden of its creation, but industry alone is powerless to remedy the established evil. The under-employed—that vast body of workers engaged in occupations of a seasonal nature necessitating, under present conditions, weeks or months of idleness as a normal factor in every year—come within the definition, but not within our present scope, because the unemployment arises from a cause with which we cannot now deal. Its cure probably lies partly in the dovetailing of different occupations. But we are dealing solely with such unemployment as is caused by the mal-adjustment of the forces

of demand and supply, by the inadequate management of factors within human control.

During the war a constant and increasing demand has steadily absorbed the supply of labour, and good wages have ensured an effective demand for the products of labour. There are two questions involved here, the second of which we will merely note as an interesting theory which has been advanced as a possible cause of unemployment—the theory of under-consumption. Labour possesses that unique quality that it forms both its own supply and its own demand. Labour is the principal producer and consumer, and by its consumption constitutes the demand for more labour. Unless the production of labour confers upon labour the power to consume a reasonable proportion of the product, the effective demand for goods, and therefore for labour, diminishes. Large production is entirely dependent upon equally large consumption, and if one-third (pre-war estimate) of the population of this country never earn sufficient to procure them even their fill of physical necessities, their restricted effective demand for the product of labour must react upon the demand for labour itself and help to create and maintain the ranks of the unemployed. Good wages well spent mean a steady demand for the products of a wide variety of industries. The more varied the demands—or the higher the standard of living of the whole population of the country—the more widespread and the steadier the prosperity of industry in general. And it must be remembered that a higher standard of living supposes not the satisfaction of an increase of wants, but the ability to nurture increased capacity.

Coming now to the larger question involved in the conception of unemployment as the result of mal-adjustment, we are faced with that portion of the problem of the workless man which is solely the creation of the industrial system, for which industry alone can be held responsible, and which industry itself must cure or provide for in its system. The organisation of large-scale industry, involving as it does production in anticipation of demand, is inseparable from a certain amount of fluctuation in supply and demand. The most careful calculations as to the capacity of a future market are always liable to be upset by the advent of some unforeseen and unforeseeable circumstance outside the control of man. The failure of the harvests of one country may curtail the effective demand for the manufactures of another; the death of a sovereign just as the coloured goods of a new season are ready for the market will render unproductive the labour and capital engaged in their

production over a previous period of many months. The lack of organisation of industry—the misdirected, wasteful efforts of blind competition, the incompetence of thousands who recklessly engage in production which never finds a market good enough to reimburse the producer for his uneconomic, ill-conceived expenditure of capital and human effort—produces the same hiatus : goods are over-produced in one direction and under-produced in another, prices of existing stocks are adjusted to effective demand irrespective of the value of the labour invested in their production. Further production of the kind ceasing, therefore, to be a commercial proposition, labour is temporarily dislocated, its power of consumption, and therefore the general demand for other labour, is reduced, and there follow the usual action and reaction resulting in general depression and widespread unemployment. In both cases—the fluctuations caused by “acts of God” and those due to the mismanagement arising from the haphazard, ignorant methods widely prevailing in the industrial world—the suffering caused to labour by the mal-adjustment of highly sensitive interdependent forces is part of the price paid for the increased productivity made possible by the subdivision of labour and production in anticipation of demand, and the prevention or alleviation of the suffering is, therefore, not only a legitimate charge on the industry concerned, but an essential consideration in the economic organisation of industry. The majority of industries are organised on the basis of a surplus of labour. In other words, in order that full advantage may be taken of the prosperous periods of a trade, a certain percentage of men able to perform the particular work in hand must be workless in average times. Granted that this is necessary if we are to hold our own in the competition for the world’s markets, it is surely obvious that if the surplus of labour is an essential factor in industrial prosperity the industry concerned should devise a scheme of employment and payment which will suffice to support every fit member of the industry all the year round. And such a scheme constitutes not merely the duty of industry to the workers on whom its vitality depends, but it forms really an essential part of its own efficiency and health. If the savage of former days was able to maintain himself and family in full health by the simple labour of his hands, it is inconceivable that with the assistance of our vast organisation and the almost magic power over nature that invention has bestowed upon us an able-bodied man is not capable of performing work sufficiently productive to provide for his physical needs. If the industry utilising a man’s services, and supporting its own life

thereby, cannot by its organisation render his labour sufficiently productive to afford him this minimum the whole system is unsound and cannot ultimately progress. Not only does it fail to meet its obligations to the individual—an anti-social condition under which no State can prosper and grow—but the industry itself consumes its own life-blood. Its labour supply steadily deteriorates in quality and diminishes in quantity. The labourer, stinted of the necessities of healthy existence, ceases to be efficient, is unable to contribute his proper share to production, and eventually becomes a burden on the State, and incidentally on industry, consuming more than he can produce and creating a new generation of unemployables forming an ever-increasing burden on the ever-diminishing productive powers of industry.

The normal conditions of industry are inseparable from a certain elasticity of demand; it is not in the interests of maximum economic production to employ the same quantity of labour all the year round. The evil and the remedy lie in the treatment of the fluctuating surplus. Industry must recognise that it is something more than an aggregate of units organised within a system. It partakes of the nature of an organism rather than of an organisation, and disease in any of its parts slowly saps the vitality of the whole. To disregard all responsibility for the continued welfare of the partially employed workers of an industry is the worst possible policy for national efficiency, and therefore for industrial efficiency. The wealth of a nation is directly proportionate to the numbers of its healthy and efficient citizens. Without labour wealth cannot be produced. To rob it of its power to consume is to restrict the demand for labour and capital and to impoverish the quality of the labour itself. Anything which tends to reduce the capacity of labour to produce or to consume productively hinders the expansion of trade and the prosperity of the country. The vitality of a State is inseparable from its men and women. No elaborate "after-the-war" trade policy will help us to maintain our position so effectually as the possession of a nation of vigorous workers. Let every worker participate in the advantages of invention to such an extent as will render him healthy and contented; his productive power will solve the rest of the problem. A slight readjustment of distribution, involving perhaps immediate sacrifice to the employing class, but ultimate reward, and a new system of remuneration, these seem to be the points for the special consideration of industry itself if it is to assume its share of the burden of the creation of a prosperous State.

## A BASIS FOR RECONCILIATION. II.

THE nation of capitalist workers is an ideal whose advantages would be admitted by most people who have the welfare of society at heart, but there may be a disposition to regard it as quite unattainable and therefore not a subject for serious discussion. We have already admitted that it cannot be easily or quickly realised, but, granted that it is highly desirable, we should not assume that it is impossible of attainment without a very careful examination of the obstacles that stand in its way.

The chief obstacle is undoubtedly moral rather than material. Without claiming any general moral superiority for the capitalist classes, we must recognise that the ability to postpone present satisfactions to provide for future needs is imperfectly developed in our society, and must be fully developed before a nation of capitalists is possible. To a large section of our population it would be a moral impossibility to keep hands off any sum of money that was at their disposal. Saving and investing, especially the latter, are utterly foreign to their habits. Before we blame them for this we should enquire what facilities for saving and investing have been available. If we except the friendly societies and like institutions, including trade unions, whose function is mainly that of insurance, we shall find that almost the only medium for the investment of small sums has been the Post Office Savings Bank. This institution, though justly popular as a safe repository for savings, is hardly to be regarded as a medium for investment. The interest is insignificant in amount, and, being added to the principal and not paid over to the owner, it is rarely treated or even regarded as income.

Two further influences have operated powerfully to check the formation of the latent habit of saving and investing—the trend of recent social legislation and the active discouragement of saving by the Socialist bodies. It is undesirable at the present time to reopen pre-war controversies, and there is no desire to question the benevolent intentions of our social reformers, but it can scarcely be gainsaid that the tendency of the legislation of the past 10 or 16 years has been to encourage reliance on State-given benefits rather than on the fruits of voluntary provident foresight. Old-age pensions, insurance against sickness, accident and unemployment are good things in themselves, but their provision by the State, even on an adequate scale, taken in conjunction with the continued decline

in real wages, has had the result of depriving the workers both of the means and the motive for individual and voluntary saving, their independence has been sapped, and the breach between the capitalist and non-capitalist classes has been widened.

The active discouragement of saving is a perfectly logical action on the part of revolutionary Socialists. For the furtherance of their propaganda it is important to heighten the contrast between the comfortable independent capitalist and the dependent discontented non-capitalist. Improvidence is a weakness of the British character, and our Socialists have not been slow to take advantage of this weakness by inculcating improvidence as a virtue. They have recognised the hopelessness of preaching the class war to a self-reliant contented people, and in making any effort to bring about such a social condition their opposition must be counted on, but their power should not be exaggerated. The masses keenly desire prosperity and security, and they are not likely to assent to the destruction of society for the sake of problematical benefits to be salvaged out of chaos if they can see their way clearly to the attainment of their aims by peaceful methods. Moreover, the voice of the revolutionary leaders has no longer a definite policy to put forward. Socialism is discredited. Syndicalism, diametrically opposed to it, is purely a destructive policy. The Rank and File Movement must affect the fighting efficiency of the forces of labour as it affected the fighting efficiency of the Russian Army. It is a destructive policy without a definite aim, destructive chiefly of that machinery for collective bargaining which Labour has been painfully building up for a century. The revolutionary forces will only become dangerous when the mass of the people has lost its sanity.

Having enumerated the principal obstacles to the building up of a society of capitalist workers, let us examine the possibilities, the forces and tendencies which would aid us, and the practical steps which must be taken if we would attain our aim. And first we see that as a direct consequence of the war some of the most serious obstacles have already been removed. It is no longer difficult to find safe and highly lucrative investments for the smallest sums. War Saving Certificates were adopted as a means to a definite end, the raising of money for the war from the people's savings, and the limitation of unnecessary expenditure during the war. The means adopted may have been the most convenient under the circumstances, but from a social point of view and for the purpose we are now discussing, the means are most defective, in that the investment yields

no income : the investor is encouraged to withdraw the whole of the accumulated interest with the capital on maturity, and there can be no doubt that, under the arrangement now in force, the bulk of the money will be so withdrawn and spent, possibly in unnecessary extravagance. A great opportunity for true social reform has been missed. The workers have been taught to invest, but they have been given neither the experience nor the prospect of an income from investment. This mistake should at once be rectified by giving facilities for the conversion of the loan into one of a more permanent character giving a regular yield of income.

Here let us clearly recognise that if the State is to assist in the realisation of the ideal we have set before us—and the assistance of the State is essential—it will be necessary to alter our whole conception of the proper attitude of the State in social matters, to cast aside the abhorrent blend of Socialism and political bribery which has characterised the so-called Social Reform of the past decade, whereby the regimented working classes are forced to accept uniform rations of State-made benefits, for which they have never asked, but which the superior persons in charge consider good for them, benefits which the working classes are (falsely) taught to regard as extracted from the unwilling pockets of the hated capitalist, and which are doled out with something more than a hinted expectation of political support in return for the vicarious generosity of their benevolent rulers.

The spirit of "social reform" as we have known it could scarcely be more aptly illustrated than by a leaflet that was sent to the electors of the Stretford Division of Manchester, a picture of a workman obsequiously touching his cap, and below it the legend: "Five shillings a week! Thank you, Sir! I'll vote for you this time!"

This spirit must be changed, and four years ago the change might have seemed impossible, but much water has run under the bridges, Socialism and Prussianism are at a discount, and we may hope for better things. The State must help, and with no niggard hand, but it must put away the Socialist maxim, "To each according to his needs," and substitute the social maxim, "To each according to his efforts." The new social legislation must pass the test that should be applied to all legislation: "Does it help a man to do wrong or to do right, does it make it easier for him to neglect his duties or to fulfil them?"



## CORRUPT WELT-POLITIK.

### The Peaceful Penetration of France by Germany Before the War. IV.

ALTHOUGH the unconscious collaboration of the French officials with their foes was to some extent a natural product of the fallacious theory originally propounded by the German Karl Marx that capital is international and that it does not matter whence it comes, nevertheless one will always reproach the French Government for not having encouraged the investment of French money in French enterprises, at home or in the Colonies. Every effort was, on the contrary, made to convince the small capitalist, the *petit bourgeois*, that his savings were safer in foreign investments guaranteed by States such as Russia, Germany, or Austria, than in the industrial enterprises of his own country. But while the exportation of French money was facilitated by all manner of means, highly placed personages in the official world were equally prepared to give full opportunities to foreign capital, and especially to German capital, desirous of taking a share in the economic development of France. According to Mr. Weiss, director of the mines department in the Ministry of Public Works, the French Government was always willing to favour a French enterprise, but, other things being equal, if a foreign enterprise presented full guarantees, the State had every reason to welcome it. It was, as M. Weiss once stated officially, even its duty to do so. This extraordinary policy was all the more agreeable to some French politicians because there existed—and I am afraid there still exists—a political school which deemed it expedient to establish with Germany commercial and industrial ties in order to bring about a *rapprochement* in the political domain. M. Caillaux was the spokesman of that party.

Thus the Germans found little difficulty in starting their campaign of penetration in the mining regions, and it was only due to the patriotic activity of some farsceing and honest politicians that, when war broke out, the invaders were denounced publicly in the French Chambers, with the result that their dangerous activity was partially stopped. But a great deal of harm had been done already.

For reasons enumerated in a former article, the Germans concentrated on getting hold of the ore supplies of France. They were greatly helped in this adventure by an old law dating from 1810 which provided that when the State grants a concession, this concession is *ipso facto* freed from all charges, dues and previous rights. Knowing the French law better

than the French themselves, a German syndicate would approach a landowner, make an agreement with him for the payment of royalties on the exploitation of mines supposed to exist on some part of his estate, and proceed at once with the prospecting, preliminary works, etc. The invaders then obtained from the State the necessary concession for the working of the mines, and when the real owner of the property claimed his share of the profits according to agreement, he was referred to the 1810 law. But as the dupes used to make violent protestations at this treatment and occasionally take legal action to remedy it, an eminent radical socialist deputy, M. Augagneur, brought in a bill which proposed to transfer to the State the full proprietorship of the sub-soil of France. By one stroke of the pen all the rights and privileges formerly granted to prospectors and to those who had taken the trouble to discover the mineral wealth of the country were to be annulled. The State was to remain the sole dispenser of all the ore or coal deposits to whoever happened for a good or a bad reason to be in favour with it, or rather, with the little tyrants who in our modern democracies have taken the place of the responsible heads of affairs, and who possess absolute power without responsibility. It is needless to expatiate on the opportunities which such a measure would have given to M. Caillaux and to his friends had it passed into law, and had they been empowered to apply it according to the whims and fancies of their ever-changing views on foreign politics. But although this nefarious bill was defeated, the Germans, under the old statutes of a hundred years of age, managed to take possession of some of the most important mines of Normandy and of Brittany.

It will be sufficient to quote three of the principal companies which they created in order to exploit the sub-soil of the country they were preparing to invade by force of arms any day. The *Société Minière et Métallurgique du Calvados*; the *Société Française des Mines de Fer*, and the *Société des Mines et Carrières de Flamanville (Manche)* were the main instruments designed by Krupp to extract from the West of France a part of those iron ores which were to be returned so lavishly to the French nation in the shape of shells and other projectiles during the first months of the war.

The board of the first company was made up of very nearly the same gentlemen who were to be found on the board of the third company. They had the same address : 6, Rue Blanche, Paris, and Messrs. Solacroup, Horten and Rabes were all powerful in both. In the last one, a member of the Thyssen family was added. The first syndicate, founded in 1901, prospered rapidly and established in the Calvados near Potigny, Perrières

and St. Germain le Vasson a big centre, methodically organised like all things German, with a school where the language of the Fatherland was taught with the full approbation of the French authorities. The whole region was being slowly transformed into a German colony for the avowed purpose of providing Essen with as much French ore as possible.

As for the Société Française des Mines de Fer, it was camouflaged under the Dutch flag, the most important shareholder being a Dutchman, M. de Poorter, though he proclaimed in the French Press his complete commercial independence, boasted of his French shareholders and denied that he had any German shareholders. He could not deny, however, that the larger part of his yearly production had been bought for ten years by Thyssen and his group. His comment in replying to an accusation published in the *Action Française* was that the reason why the Germans were his best customers was simply because they paid the best price for these ores. Business is business. M. de Poorter added that he could see no difference between the exportation of iron and exportation of wines or *articles de luxe*. This simple-minded Dutchman could not see any difference between a barrel of Bordeaux claret and the barrel of a Krupp gun which one day would be directed against France! In fact M. de Poorter loved his adopted country to such an extent that, in order to facilitate the exploitation of his mines of Bourberouge, he wanted to proceed at once to the reconstruction of the Port of Granville so that great quantities of ore could be exported in neutral or German bottoms to Germany *via* Holland. Had the necessary authorization been granted, the Bourberouge mines would have been able to turn out 400,000 tons a year, and that whole production would have been monopolised by the firms of Krupp and Thyssen. M. de Poorter was a big ship-owner. He took no real interest in the technical side of his mining enterprises, some of which, like his Jurques mines, were so badly equipped that it was evident the proprietors had only one intention: to extract as cheaply and as quickly as possible all the ore available and to ship it without delay to Germany, regardless of the future of the ore deposits.

As for the Société des Mines de Flamanville, there was no disguising the share taken in their exploitation by August Thyssen, Councillor of the Kaiser and one of the most powerful magnates of industrial Germany. I may add that the plant was as German as the greater part of the staff, the locomotives of Wolff of Magdebourg, the narrow gauge railways of Lanz of Mannheim, the trucks of Orenstein and Koppel were used at Flamanville as in the great centres of German industrial activity in Germany. Even the coal used in these mines came

from Westphalia to Rotterdam by the Rhine, and was shipped on board Dutch vessels belonging to firms like Hammersteins of Rotterdam, whose name may sound Dutch in Holland but has certainly a very Teutonic sound outside neutral countries. This coal ultimately reached the port of Dielette, which was already being thoroughly Germanised for the benefit of our German invaders.

It is hardly necessary to proceed with this painful narrative of the blunders made by the blind and over-confident officials who carried out the instructions of politicians about whom the less said the better. But, all the same, it may prove a useful lesson to the Allies for the reconstruction period after the war, if it leads them to mistrust the financial combines which, on the surface, appear to be controlled by one of the Allied Powers while in reality the dominating influence is entirely German. In this way a rather naïve Frenchman, M. Le Chatelier, who thought it would be very clever to make use of a certain amount of German money in a French enterprise, was hoodwinked into organising the iron foundries and steel works of Caen, with the help of M. Thyssen and the 40 per cent. of capital brought in by German shareholders.

The object of this company was not only to bleed France of her mineral riches, but to refine them on the spot before their exportation to the Fatherland. Besides, therefore, the German financiers who sat on the board, a whole army of workmen, foremen and engineers were imported from Germany for this purpose. It is true that in order to lull the suspicions of the French directors, a French type of machinery was to be installed at Caen. But in compensation for this concession the Hauts Fournaux and Aciéries de Caen had to take shares in a German company founded to work the coal mines of Westphalia, in the proportion of eleven to thirty.

Among the projects of the company, the creation of a railway on French soil and the re-building of the canal from Caen to the sea were important items. In one word, all that part of Normandy was being transformed into a German industrial and mining centre for the benefit of Krupp and of Thyssen. Canals were improved, railways built, ports enlarged in order that the mineral wealth of one of the richest provinces of France should be quickly exploited for the intensive preparation for war in the munition centres of Germany. What comments are necessary in presence of such facts ! The pacific penetration of Germany, at least in France, was complete on the eve of the war, and only a miracle frustrated our enemies from reaping the full advantage of their own astuteness and our incredible simplicity.

## PAYMENT BY RESULTS.

SINCE October, 1917, several articles on this topic have appeared in **INDUSTRIAL PEACE**. These articles discussed in some detail the merits and demerits of various schemes and methods and indicated certain difficulties and dangers. Throughout these articles good sense, good will, moderation, trust and patience were urged on both parties as the best pledge of amiable settlements. There is, ultimately, no other pledge at all. On the other hand, the mere appeal to these moral bases of success is vain if they are practically non-existent, or if they are neutralised by other moods of an unfriendly or critical sort. In many cases the very basal conditions of success have yet to be created, conditions of general scope, before any detailed scheme of payment by results can be discussed.

At the risk of iteration it may be remarked that the advantages of payment by results over plain time rates are chiefly these : Output is increased and cheapened. Thus in the long run the consumer gains. Wages rise and profits, too, while labour receives the moral recognition implied in its reward being based on the volume of work, which is normally a fair measure of manufacturing success, and is the source from which high wages and high profits must alike be paid. But vast numbers of workpeople would laugh to scorn the suggestion that payment by results puts their remuneration on a better moral basis. They consider payment by results, in the selfish hands of many employers, little else than a means of exploitation and sweating. They will not admit the power of payment by results to unite employer and employed in a convergent interest or to reconcile them as men. They assert, on the contrary, that it is more likely to set them by the ears, and, further, to divide the workmen among and against themselves. This adverse view, which is strongly held, more in some trades and less in others, has undoubted justification. In the past employers have often cut rates unjustly. What they did never lost in the telling. In a matter of this sort a few striking instances suffice to instil a nervous and resentful dread which no arguments and no assurances of the ordinary sorts can expel from the minds of workpeople.

But suppose that the desire, suspected in employers, of cutting rates could be neutralised—no matter how—the enemies of payment by results would not on that account

lay down their arms. The reason for this is generally misunderstood. In the eyes of workpeople an employer's honesty and benevolence are not in themselves a sufficient guarantee for his scheme of payment by results. Payment by time is old-established, simple and easily understood. The invention of sound schemes of the other sort requires original thought and scientific theory. In working them vigilance, forethought, elasticity and adaptation are necessary. The conditions of production vary greatly from industry to industry. The simplest and easiest case is where output varies with the skill and the energy of the workpeople, and is practically unaffected by other factors. At the opposite pole are those cases in which, no matter what efforts the workpeople make, output is liable to suffer seriously owing to factors which the workpeople, and even their employers, cannot control. Thus some forms of production are seriously dependent on the weather. Again, certain kinds of plant are so liable to breakdown, certain processes are so liable to interruption or failure, that it would be absurd to base a day's or a week's earnings on output. Or the supply of raw material, of fuel, of power, or the season of the year, may operate adversely. You may reply that the severest ups and downs may be eliminated by taking as basis a long enough unit of time. True; but what guarantee have the workpeople that this has been done, or, indeed, that the whole problem, which calls for careful thinking and planning, has in fact been thought out scientifically? It is seldom realised how much *expertise* is needed to formulate and to watch over systems of payment by results. But—to carry the argument on—what is to be said about those cases in which a very long unit time is necessary as the basis for normalising the figures of production? Experience shows that, if payment by results is to be a success, the incentive offered must be more or less immediate, and the calculations and the payments of bonus must be frequent and prompt. Otherwise the scheme fails, labour taking its time in a condition that can scarcely be distinguished from an enhanced day rate. The more vicissitudinous trades are not thinking about payment by results at all. They desire a normalised rate, an "insured wage," so to speak, which will save them from distress and unemployment in depressed times. There is a very real connection between payment by results and the problems of "short time," "rota," "standing off," etc. This connection makes the difficult cases peculiarly perplexing. The workmen will confess that they have not thought out or brought together these problems. They know that their employers are equally

unready. Hence their obstinate refusal to make the change from time rates to piece work, of whatever kind, even by way of experiment. In these extreme cases, in which the disturbing factors and the complications are at a maximum, the conclusion follows that no method of payment by results will answer, or will answer so well as a good "Christmas box" (and Christmas is not the only season of the Christian year!)—that is to say, the problem becomes one of wages insurance against certain risks.

Between the extreme cases in which, on one hand, nothing but labour matters, and, on the other, labour is at the mercy of every accident, there lies a long and diversified range of production which has been very imperfectly explored for the purposes of payment by results. Its proper exploration is nothing less than a form of science. The employers do not possess this science. Even if they did, it is doubtful if the workpeople would take their word for it. While any friend of industry can preach goodwill and patience, none but an expert can help with the crux of this problem. Two cases may be cited in illustration of the deeper need for expert help. In an article in the September No. of INDUSTRIAL PEACE it was suggested that the "embargo" agitation had its root in part in the significant differentiation of earnings which is now proceeding in the engineering trades. The adoption of payment by results under favouring conditions as to plant, organisation, supply of raw material, continuous and uniform orders, etc., is enabling some workpeople to earn very high wages. The highest wages not infrequently go with the cheapest and best production. Labour argues from case to case with mixed feelings and with some heartburning, doubtful of the expediency of the new disparities, despite the attraction of high earnings, but hopeful of reducing the disparities as the more backward firms copy the methods of the more advanced or give up the struggle. In this mood labour—skilled labour—was impatient of the risk it believed it ran under the "Embargo" of losing the better and the more active part of its market. The specific "Embargo" trouble is past. But the present transition to payment by results in engineering entails and will continue to entail serious risks of labour trouble. These risks can be countered in one way only—viz., by the methodical elucidation of the conditions of payment by results as one among the elements of good organisation, and by putting the result of the analyses at the service of the industries. A suggestion as to how this may be done will be made later.

The other case, based partly on inference, partly on anticipa-

tion, is that of the recent campaign of aircraft wood-workers against payment by results. The essence of this trouble is perhaps not obvious. The wood-workers are essentially makers of furniture and builders of houses. Of the two trades the former is the steadier. In the latter especially piece-work has always been unpopular ; nor is this unreasonable. The building trade is both seasonal and speculative. In some districts and for long periods it has presented, thanks to its alternate booms and slumps, all the features of the extreme case where labour sighs for an "insured" wage and an occasional "Christmas box." If in the past the building trade may have seemed ill-conditioned, remember that this may partly be because its conditions are bad. Consider the immediate future of this trade. From aircraft the work-people will change over to house-building. There is no town in England but is planning to build its tens, or hundreds, or thousands of cottages as soon as peace makes it possible to begin. For the sake of economy and speed much of this work should be standardised, and, if this were done, piece-work should be the rule in production. But the wood-working trades now on aircraft and historically hostile to payment by results are naturally averse to establishing a piece-work precedent against themselves on the eve of transferring to house-building. Yet it is in the interest of everyone, and especially of the working-class population, which is so badly housed at present, that the new cottages should not be delayed and should not be the dearer through the prejudices of the wood-workers. On the other hand, the wood-workers have a solid case. You cannot fairly ask them to undergo, without adequate guarantees, the risks which they think inseparable from payment by results. They doubt the intentions of their employers. While there are "employers and employers," some at least, perhaps the speculative jerry-builders who have given so many of our English towns their *cachet*, have justified the men's attitude. The men doubt still more the ability of most of their employers to frame scientific schemes which will meet all the requirements of the case. If, as is likely, much of the building is done by the municipalities, the acquiescence of labour in payment by results may be easier to secure. But even the municipalities, relatively disinterested as they are, and model employers must bring the needful thought and science to bear on the problem. At present they do not possess it. Whence is enlightenment to come ?

If you have realised what has been said above, you will be prepared for the conclusion that appears to follow inevitably.

Experts are not popular, least of all Government experts. But desperate ills justify desperateness in the remedies. There exist in this matter so much rancour and so much antagonism between the parties, there seems so little chance of the development of scientific method if these parties are left to themselves, that the suggestion of State study and State help is unavoidable and natural.

Here is a question which, on its two sides of mutual feeling and of scientific method, makes demands on the parties which they appear unlikely or unable to satisfy. The proposals of the employers for payment by results are only scouted by the workmen, while meantime production drags, to the disadvantage of the nation. It is surely no extravagance to ask whether the help of the State—not control, observe, or management—given through a competent department of experts working in close contact with the trade organisations, both the employers' and the workmen's, might not bring many of these problems to solution.

The problems are probably temporary. State help of the sort here suggested would not saddle the nation with a new perpetual change. The present is a transition time. In the broad transition from day rates to payment by results industry needs help, moral help and technical help, that only the State can lend. This help need arouse no individualist's fears. When the master builders and the joiners have once had it effectively, they can afterwards carry on by themselves. The whole question is probably one for this generation only. But it is among the most pressing industrial problems of this generation.



## SOME VIEWS OF THE MINORITY PRESS

THE recent issues of the Minority Press have naturally been much occupied with peace proposals, and the general opinion appears to be that, whereas Germany is prepared to accept President Wilson's conditions absolutely, the Allies have never done so, and it is doubtful if they will ever accept them "as unreservedly as they have been accepted by the German Government" (*Labour Leader*, October 17th). Mr. Philip Snowden fears that the Allies may reject the German offer in order to continue the war until the enemy is humiliated and until the "devastation which the invasion of Belgium and France has wrought" is repeated by the march to Berlin. He says it becomes increasingly clear that President Wilson does not know his own mind. "Professional rhetoric is not a substitute for statesmanship." (*Labour Leader*, October 3rd.) In a later issue Mr. Snowden asserts that if our Jingoists should force their views upon the Allied Governments all hope of a just peace and "a victory for moral principles" must be abandoned.

*The Herald* (October 12th) asks what kind of war it is we are waging. If we are out to win in "the material sense" we must press on regardless of cost of lives, etc.; but we must remember when shrieking for victory what victory will cost, and ask "Is it worth it?" Germany, says the writer, has accepted Wilson's proposals, and as to Germany not keeping its word—"Well, of course, no Government keeps its word, in either international matters or domestic." Germany acquiesces in disarmament and in the League of Nations, and Labour must act now and demand—"as the French Socialists have demanded, that this great hope of the world's future shall not be contemptuously tossed aside."

Robert Williams, of the Transport Workers' Union, writing in this issue of the *Herald*, says that whereas the Reichstag does at least speak for the German people, the British people have not even got a Reichstag, but are "in the hands of a mischievous Press."

He concludes by saying that supporters of the Government are buying up papers one after another to pollute public opinion and to make it appear "that the people whose opinions are supposed to be voiced by the Press are demanding a dictated peace more humiliating to Germany than the Brest-Litovsk Peace was to Russia."

*Common Sense* (October 19th) repeats what all the Pacifist papers say with regard to the sincerity of the German peace

proposals, and its great fear is that the Allies will reject the offer.

*The Call* (October 7th) suggests that the question at issue in the mind of the British Government is whether it is safe to continue the war until Germany is beaten "to a frazzle" and the map of the world can be rearranged in the interests of the British Empire "with indemnities and many other good things," or whether this prolongation of the war would precipitate a revolution in Germany and so destroy the "sacred capitalist order in Germany and elsewhere." *The Call* asks, "Will the working class arouse themselves from their passivity while there is yet time? *A peace without a Revolution means a Capitalist Peace with the enslavement of the working class.*"

The Pacifist papers are much impressed by the reforms in the Reichstag, and compare the German frame of mind with the British, much to the detriment of the latter.

*The Labour Leader* (October 3rd and October 15th) formulates the case as follows: "The German Socialists have joined the Government . . . solely for the purpose of making peace." The British Labour Party, on the other hand, have supported our own Government in the prosecution of the war, and Mr. Snowden thinks that "in view of the records of the British Labour Ministers during the war it is gross impertinence on the part of Mr. Barnes to sneer at the German Socialists," whose "record from the point of view of peace and socialism is like sunlight unto darkness" compared with that of Mr. Barnes and his colleagues, who, for four years, have been ready to do any "dirty work their Tory masters bid them do." "The new (German) Government has been constructed on far more democratic methods than those to which Mr. Lloyd George owes his present position . . ."—it can "speak for the German people with as much authority as President Wilson can represent the American people who elected him to keep them out of the war."

In the *Herald* (October 12th) H. M. Brailsford writes on "New Germany," and is convinced of the whole-heartedness of the constitutional changes in Germany: "In the hour of defeat Prussian Militarism has given way before the German people." The new men in the German Government are good men with Pacifist and progressive views. Germany has given up all her conquests and accepted the terms "we have made our own."

*The Bradford Pioneer* (October 25th) says that Germany's proposal to alter the Constitution of the Empire brings her into line with the United States and places her, democratically, ahead of our own country.

*Common Sense* (October 5th) appeals for moderation in peace terms, and asserts that it requires a very rare moral courage to conclude a successful war with a moderate peace. The writer points out that "though the much advertised clean peace will, of course, be impossible," we cannot violently overthrow the German and Austrian Governments. He expresses his dislike of the Allied Intervention in Russia, and says that "to judge from the history of the war our own Government much prefers the tyranny of the Czar to the democracy of the Bolsheviks with their popular Soviets."

The Pacifists are disappointed with the National Liberal Conference, and Philip Snowden (*Labour Leader*, October 3rd) expresses the opinion that "four years of war, a national debt of ten thousand millions, the loss of a million British lives, the exposure of Allied diplomacy, have taught Liberalism nothing . . . the Liberals to-day are without leadership, without principles, without anchorage." The refusal of the Conference to adopt peace proposals is a source of great irritation to Mr. Snowden, who considers that Mr. Lloyd George may now "revert to the most extreme Jingoism, he may repeat the criminal act of the Versailles Conference."

*The Labour Leader* is much incensed by the Allied terms to Bulgaria, and hopes that after this we shall "for decency's sake" hear "no more about the Brest-Litovsk and Roumanian treaties as instances of the kind of thing the Allies would never do even under the necessity of war." In this same issue Mr. J. H. Hudson (Labour Candidate for Eccles) asks the Government, "What, save blood and tears, has your war given to the sweating, toiling workers of England?" He accuses the Government of bribing the Labour leaders with lucrative and influential positions in order to make it "impossible for Labour to exculpate itself from the blood-guilt of the war." He considers that if absolute exemption were granted to C.O.'s the Government would either have to "release soldiers from their shameful work or else remove part of the shameful work by converting the war from a mere orgie of blood-profits and aggrandisement into something with a just and reasonable aim—something, therefore, capable of discussion round a peace table." He concludes by saying that death in battle is not the worst thing to be feared from joining the Army, since armies were ever the forcing-beds of vice and the source of "moral and spiritual corruption."

In *The Herald* (October 12th) Robert Dell writes on the Italian Socialist Party, and says that "All three sections are opposed to Italian intervention in the war . . . and always

have been." He expresses great satisfaction that the Italian Socialist Deputies throughout the war have voted against all war credits, and he quotes Turati's resolution at the National Congress, which lays down that "war in modern times is essentially a phenomenon brought about by the collusion of capitalists and national Imperialisms, that it aggravates the servitude and sacrifices of all the proletariats, and that its certain and radical suppression can only be achieved by the future substitution for the modern Capitalist States of the International Federation of the People freed from all oppression, and by the abolition of armaments and militarism."

Dell avers that anti-Parliamentarism is spreading rapidly among the young socialists and Trade Unionists, and there is also a distinct tendency towards a modified syndicalism. This reaction and this tendency, he says, are "by no means so inconsistent with the principles of Karl Marx as is commonly supposed."

*The Call* (October 17th) quoting the reporter of Jean Longuet's paper, "Populaire," at the Congress of the French Socialist Party, when the delegates cheered "the Soviet Republic," says, "I thought of Lenin, of Trotsky, of Telitcherine—I thought of all those valiant heroes who, down there, indifferent to the universal execrations heaped upon them, have, for the first time in the world's history, realised the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. And I said to myself that this applause of their brothers in France was, for them, the commencement of Justice."

Almeý St. John Adcock, writing in this issue, propounds the theory that the Capitalists are making use of the State to manage the workers. Every effort will be made, through State action, to make the worker comfortable and contented—which is a beautiful programme, with one deficiency—it comes too late. "Camouflage and Comfort" are too late "to preserve a tottering capitalism," and Mr. Lloyd George and his kind have only then to take "a hasty departure." "They may plan and scheme and camouflage to their hearts' content, but the great harvest is not for them, and it is unsafe to sit on a volcano."

R. C. Wallhead, writing in the *Labour Leader* (October 24th) on "Peace and Russia," says that since the Allies, including America, would far rather smash socialism than kill militarism, they do not want peace yet, because peace with Germany would deprive them of an excuse to interfere with the Bolsheviks in Russia. He threatens, however, that if the workers of Britain "are in earnest to save Russia," then "*they will also find the way to save themselves.*"

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

The Ministry of Munitions has recently issued a Memorandum on the subject of Welfare Supervision of Boy Labour. Few questions so vital to the national well-being have been neglected more systematically than that of the boy in industry. As a necessary unit of considerable importance in the economy of the labour department of the works, the problem of how to make the boy realise his work as a part of a whole, the completeness of which depends upon his willing co-operation, should engage the attention of the employer who is merely seeking efficiency in his enterprise, and should secure and justify the expenditure of some effort towards such a realisation. But a much greater issue is involved. It may be a trite saying that the boy is father of the man, but trite sayings frequently receive less serious attention than they deserve. It is no exaggeration to say that the health and prosperity of the nation is conditioned by the industrial and social habits formed by the boy in his fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth years. The educational influences of the years between five and thirteen or fourteen do count for something, but, under our present educational system, and because of the extreme youth of the child when he is removed from such influences, they are necessarily mere fragmentary and unstable beginnings which are all too easily swept away.

The memorandum contains many interesting reflections on the special needs of the boy in industry, and is worthy of the attention of all who employ boy labour, whether to a large or small extent. The use of the services of a special supervisor may not be possible or justifiable to the majority of small employers, but the consideration of the right means of securing the best service of the boy to-day while simultaneously creating the best type of citizen for the future should be an indispensable part of the management of every enterprise employing boy labour.



The Syndicalist leaders are not unmindful of the value of early education. Recently the boys employed at a factory in Lancashire were invited to attend a meeting at which the objects of the Rank and File movement were to be ventilated. It was explained that after the war there would be a big fight between Capital and Labour, and that it was essential that the boys should understand the nature of the dispute and become class-conscious. It was decided that likely pupils should be selected and sent to a conference at Manchester

All expenses will be paid and they are to listen to what is said by the leaders at the meeting, and on their return they are to convey to their workmates the latest news from the front.



The Final Report of the Ministry of Reconstruction on Relations between Employers and Employed adds little to the recommendations already made in its previous reports. The feature that arrests our attention is a note signed by J. R. Clynes, J. A. Hobson, A. Susan Lawrence, J. J. Mallon and Mona Wilson, limiting their endorsement of the recommendations made. This note states that "while recognising that the more amicable relations thus established (by the formation of Industrial Councils or Trade Boards) between Labour and Capital will afford an atmosphere generally favourable to industrial peace and progress, we desire to express our view that a complete identity of interest between Capital and Labour cannot be thus effected, and that such machinery cannot be expected to furnish a settlement for the more serious conflicts of interest involved in the working of an economic system primarily governed and directed by motives of private profit."



Two important assumptions are here involved. An economic system primarily governed and directed by motives of private profit excludes all possibility of complete identity of interest between Labour and Capital. Serious conflicts of interest must arise and the suggested Industrial Councils and Trade Boards cannot adequately deal with them. The acceptance of the existence of a perpetual conflict of interests between two of the essential parties in a State as inevitable would be an admission of the complete failure of civilisation as embodied in statecraft. Minor friction there must always be in all corporate dealings so long as men are human, but the ultimate unity of the interests of all its members is surely a function inseparable from the *raison d'être* of the State. The problem to be solved presents itself in two alternative forms. Is the motive of private profit essentially the controlling factor in the successful prosecution of industry? In a system of production for private profit is it impossible to secure identity of interest to Labour and Capital?



W. C. Anderson, M.P., has been officially appointed by the I.L.P. to look after the interests of discharged soldiers. As the only thing military about Mr. Anderson is his age, and as his war record is of the strictly non-committal variety, he will not be hampered in his dealings with discharged soldiers by

any regimental traditions or Army red tape. Notwithstanding these advantages, Mr. Anderson may yet have a difficult task. It is a popular error to assume that the habit of military discipline necessarily persists after the return of the young soldier to civil life. The lessons of history point rather in an opposite direction and examples of reaction against discipline are not altogether unchronicled.



We must confess to having been somewhat flabbergasted at the jury's verdict in the I.L.P. libel case against the Editor of the *Ilkeston Pioneer*. The defendant formulated a definite charge accusing the I.L.P. of issuing a dishonest balance sheet and of accepting German gold for propaganda purposes, and the jury gave a verdict which was tantamount to saying these statements were not libellous. For our part, much as we disapprove of the I.L.P. and all their works, we have never believed them capable of accepting money from any source obviously bearing the enemy taint. If any German money has in fact found its way into this country, we may be sure that it has been disguised with sufficient cleverness to hide its source from honest and reasonably cautious men. Messrs. Henderson, Ramsay Macdonald, and everybody else connected with the I.L.P., cannot be feeling very comfortable whilst this verdict stands, and we are a little curious as to what steps the leaders will take to free their party from such an invidious position.



At the meeting in the Albert Hall on Sunday, November 3rd, Robert Williams, in what the *Herald* calls "a pure and simple revolutionary speech," said that the Government must be told that "unless Labour got its way a Soviet Government must replace it," and that "the one way to bring about a stoppage of the war between the Governments was to hasten the war between the classes." . . . "God speed the day when there will be a notice "to let" on Buckingham Palace. Long live the Socialist Republic," were other characteristic phrases in his address. Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, speaking in response to loud calls from the audience, heartily supported these sentiments. Mr. George Lansbury thought fit to remind his hearers that "you do not make revolutions by shouting in the Albert Hall, you do not make revolutions by cheering other people who go to prison while you yourselves stay outside." This high priest of the gospel of passive resistance and exponent of elastic Christianity ended with a hint as to how the foundation of a Soviet Government for Britain should be laid.

The debate in the House of Commons on the treatment of our prisoners of war in Germany is very painful reading, and that for more reasons than one. When the final-balance is struck, when future generations apportion praise and blame among the belligerents of the great war, there will be nothing which will weigh so heavily against Germany, nothing that will ever eradicate the stigma of her iniquity in torturing defenceless prisoners. Unless Britain, stricken by some temporary access of madness at the eleventh hour, suddenly deserts her honourable traditions, nothing will redound to our credit more than our record for humanity. No sane man who takes long views can doubt what the verdict of history will be on this matter, and the most inveterate, the most vindictive hater of Germany will be able to console himself with the reflection that unborn generations of Germans will succeed to this shameful inheritance. These things being so, it is almost incredible that cheers should be heard in the House of Commons when a Member of Parliament suggested that the people of this country ought to be brave enough to say, "we will take the Germans we have here and for every man you kill in Germany we will kill one German here." It is charitable to suppose that the honourable member, still smarting under his experiences in Germany, was suffering from some mental aberration when he made such a monstrous suggestion. Encouraged presumably by the cheers we have referred to, this Member of Parliament expanded his argument by saying: "So long as these Germans are cruel and kill thousands of our men in Germany, I maintain that justice demands that precisely the same treatment should be meted out to Germans here." Punishment for the guilty is eminently desirable—vengeance is understandable and to be excused as a human weakness, but that cruelty should be ranked with justice and extolled as a virtue is unheard of and deplorable.



The *Labour Gazette* records that 831,300 working days were lost in September, 1918, owing to disputes, old and new, begun, continued or ended during the month, as compared with 707,900 days in August, 1918, and 615,100 in September, 1917,



"It is important to save Democracy—but it is still more important to make Democracy worth saving."—*Upton Sinclair*.



With regard to the concerted attack made on Lord Milner in Parliament and in the Press, following upon the much discussed interview published by *The Evening Standard*, we have but two

comments to make. Firstly, that the Secretary of State for War, with full access to his military advisers, is more likely to know what he is talking about than his civilian critics; and, secondly, that of the leaders of this attack two, at least, have consistently tried to embarrass the Government in their conduct of the war; whilst a third is generally credited with a disinclination to tolerate the rivalry of strong men at the helm. The specific complaint formulated by the *Daily Mail* that our French Allies were disconcerted by Lord Milner's attitude is neatly and comprehensively sat upon by the *Echo de Paris* (November 10th).



Speaking at a meeting of the Church Socialist League, the Rev. P. E. Widdington advocated more revolutionary action on the part of the members of his society. It appears that the reverend gentleman has been visiting munition centres, including Coventry, and there propagating a new variant of the gospel of Christian charity. From his speech we gathered that the Shop Stewards are performing some kind of spiritual function in the Labour Movement by working in opposition to Trade Union officials. He condemned Christian people for joining Reconstruction Committees, on the ground that the present social system is too rotten to be reconstructed, but must be destroyed. He also suggested that it is incompatible with Christian principles to support an Empire, and said that the early Christians were persecuted not for their theological doctrines but because their faith made them anti-State and led them to oppose Imperialism. After adding that the same condition confronts us to-day and that Christians ought not to support the present industrial and political system, he concluded with the text, "Now is the time for action."



What with starvation, cholera, and machine-gun practice in the streets, casualties amongst the triumphant proletariat in Russia must be rivalling those on the battlefield. Moreover, the death-rate under Bolshevik mis-rule is being speeded up by what might be called artificial methods, eight hundred persons having been executed recently by order of the Special Committee to oppose counter-revolution. There is no accounting for tastes, and William Gallacher, of Glasgow (ex-deportee), assured his audience at Sheffield a week or two ago that, whilst the British workers had been striking for such trifles as wages and war bonus, the workers of Russia had got "a thousand times more benefits."

No. XVI

# DECEMBER

MCMXVIII

—

“We have to create a better Britain.”

*The King.*



# INDUSTRIAL PEACE

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# INDUSTRIAL PEACE



## SWORD AND OLIVE BRANCH.

ONE of the penalties that the evergrowing complexity of modern life inflicts upon us is the tendency which causes a nation to become the passive and apparently disinterested spectator of its own fortunes, whilst the protagonists of the extremist parties take possession of the arena like gladiators hired for the fray. These fight their battles with weapons which the passive majority do not approve of, and win victories or sustain defeats that are not desired by anybody except the leaders of the narrow faction which happens to be in the ascendant for the moment. Should the original situation undergo material change, should the whole basis on which issue was first joined, suddenly disappear, nevertheless the struggle must go on for no better reason than because the cause is subordinated to the love of fighting for fighting's sake.

This domination exercised by militant minorities, having nothing to commend its continuance (especially when, as so often happens, such minorities are led by cranks), we may well and seasonably ask whether it is beyond the scope of human ingenuity to devise some scheme by the exercise of which the will of the sober-minded majority in the nation can be made to prevail when, as at present, all-important crises are impending? Are people really content to sit with hands folded and allow weighty decisions which run counter to their wishes to be taken and acted upon? Is national lethargy incurable, or must we conclude that in trying to hearken to a multiplicity of counsellors Reason has lost her way in a maze of uncertainty? Whether there is any comprehensive answer to these questions and, if so, whatever it may be, of this we are confident, that no democracy can thrive or be anything except a delusion and a snare so long as it shirks responsibility for demanding what it wants, and whilst it evades the duty of enforcing what it believes to be right. The surest way of inviting contempt is to show fear in face of a threat, the straightest way to well-earned respect is to stand no nonsense. If this nation is to be a democracy in fact as well as in name it can, and must, have the courage of its opinions; but if it is a timid oligarchy, masquerading in democratic garb and afraid of its own shadow, it will only have itself to blame when inevitable catastrophe overwhelms the State and all its works.

Never had a nation better cause for self-reliance. At no time in our long history has our future been so potentially secure as at this moment. There is no external danger ahead, and formidable as is the domestic peril, of a surety it can be averted, provided only that we refuse resolutely to pander to the incredible follies of minority groups whose numerical inferiority is in direct ratio to the extravagance of their demands. Our armies have encountered and survived the ordeal by battle with a fortitude unmatched in human annals, they have achieved a triumph such as the most sanguine amongst us hardly dared hoped for, but at the cost of sacrifices which are almost beyond comprehension. Yet there are some who are not ashamed to exploit those very sacrifices if haply they may rob us thereby of the fruits of our victory. We have escaped starvation by the skin of our teeth, thanks to the timely revival of agriculture, to the help of America, to the almost superhuman vigilance of the Navy and to the amazing pluck of our merchant seamen. "If blood be the price of admiralty, Lord God we ha' paid in full!" Yet there are some whose venom obscures all promptings of gratitude and who prefer "Die Rothe Fahne" to "Old Glory," and who love the Red Flag better than the Red Ensign. That such men should exist is a curious anomaly, but that they should be tolerated by any considerable section of their fellow-countrymen is a disgrace.

If it is asked in what fashion the disapproval of the nation can be visited upon these backsliders, the fact may be noted that some of the worst offenders have had the effrontery to offer themselves as Parliamentary candidates at the General Election. Let the voters take full advantage of this opportunity for compelling these apostles of anti-nationalism to recant or confess. In the constituencies which they may delight to dishonour there will be no lack of fair promises, no dearth of idealistic professions, and happy-thought merchants will be busily engaged in accommodating their wares to what they conceive to be the local popular taste; but the electors will betray the national trust and defeat their own interests if they allow themselves to be deceived by such ancient devices—at all events let everybody take care to go to the polling booth with his eyes open and not vote for Jacob when the balance of his real sympathies are for Esau. There should be no abstentions when there is a chance of casting a vote against a Bolshevik—no considerations of party loyalty or party spite should weigh for an instant in the scale against the consideration of the necessity for keeping these men out of public life.

After fifty-one months of war with its retinue of destruction,

bereavement and threatened famine the whole world craves for peace—and he is indeed a glutton for strife who willingly would lend himself to a conspiracy to embroil us in a new conflict even more disastrous than that precipitated by the insane ambitions of the Hapsburgs and the Hohenzollerns. Yet there is a pestilent minority in this country which, whilst adjuring us to love all Germans and Hottentots, does not scruple to preach the Class War and to strive by precept, example, and every kind of dishonest trickery, to implant fratricidal hatred in the hearts of men of the same race, who have but yesterday survived a common peril, whose ultimate interests are best served by co-operation and who, in disproof of the false premises on which the doctrine of the inevitableness of class antagonism is based, have lived side by side in harmony for many generations.

In any quarrel the motives of the aggressor are the more open to suspicion, and in the conflict with which we are threatened those who brandish the sword and boast, like the pinchbeck Kaisers that they resemble so closely, are confronted only by those who proffer olive branches. In making this statement we are not evading the question by attempting to prejudice contentious issues, nor do we fall into the error of imagining that all the reactionaries are on one side ; but we do assert, without fear of contradiction, that if the civil peace is broken the breach will be due, not to any absence of the spirit of conciliation on the part of the many, but to the calculated aggression and churlishness of the few. The challenge to battle is loud and insistent, the response is couched in terms of good-will and promised restitution.

This is not the place to examine in detail the directions in which the spirit of conciliation has been manifested during the last few years—the theme has already been enlarged upon continuously in these pages—but whether the subject under consideration be human opportunity, housing, education, hygiene, unemployment, sex equality, hours of labour, rate of wages or industrial conditions generally, the tendency is always the same, always in the direction of the utmost amelioration that can possibly be secured within the limitations imposed by those economic laws which cannot be broken without inviting disaster. The ball has started rolling in the right direction—it is acquiring impetus and if it can surmount the barriers erected by ignorance and prejudice it must reach its appointed goal.

The past is haunted by spectres of men, women and children sacrificed to ignorance, prejudice and callous selfishness under

the old industrial system. It is admitted, it is deplored, and its repetition must be rendered impossible. Let the dead bury their dead, but for the future let the living approach their new-found crusade of reconstruction in that spirit of mutual helpfulness which makes for progress, not in that spirit of malevolence which must involve all in a common ruin of violence and decay. Can any sane person doubt the answer that would be shouted in unison by an overpowering majority of British citizens if they could be called upon to give their decision on the clear and straight issue for or against a negotiated peace in the fields of industry and social reform?

The King and his Ministers, the most responsible leaders of industry, both those who speak for capital and those who represent Trade Unionism, the Press and the Public, all, in short, who count for anything, have declared with one voice for a better Britain to be regenerated on constitutional lines. On the other hand, a disgruntled minority, blinded by self-conceit, poisoned by spleen, or entangled and misled by foreign intrigue, which rejects every advance with a sour visage, and accepts every concession with an ill grace, seems determined on involving the Empire in unspeakable disaster rather than abate one iota of their subversive pretensions. Shall such an unhealthy congerie prevail against the national will? Not until insanity usurps the throne of Reason.

## THE MOTHER OF INVENTION.

If we exclude those short-sighted observers who see nothing except through the fogs of self-interest or prejudice, every modern social thinker has come to realise the truth of the oft-repeated dictum that the only key which can open the door to progressive and continuous prosperity is increased production. And by increased production must be understood not merely greater output, but greater output per unit of effort, achieved through better organisation, more inventiveness, increased application of improved machinery, greater economy in, and more scientific use of, our raw materials. The realisation of our future national programme depends ultimately upon our ability to extract a greater amount of utility from a given quantity of raw material and of labour, and the solution of this problem belongs pre-eminently to the field of the inventive genius of the day.

The most important factor in life is movement. The most important factor in commerce and industrial life generally is transportation. The most important factor in transportation is cost. Reduce this cost and commerce increases, and as commerce increases mankind reaps the benefit.

The question of transportation is undoubtedly one of the most pressing needs of the civilised world. Especially is it the problem of the day in this country, for, as the Prime Minister has said, "with quick, cheap transportation you can regenerate England in a way you cannot do by any other means." Let us examine, therefore, the salient features of this problem of how to secure and utilise the quickest and cheapest forms of transportation.

Except for very short distances and for purely local application in a limited sense, where time is of minor importance, or reduction of expense paramount, making the use of sailing ships or horse-drawn barges permissible, mechanical propulsion has no serious rival. The quickest form of transportation is by air, but from the very nature of the medium in which it takes place it can never be looked upon as anything but a luxury, and, so far as "bulk" transportation from a commercial point of view is concerned, it may be ruled out of court. There remains, therefore, water-borne and earth-borne mechanical transport, and, be it remembered, land and sea transport almost invariably go hand in hand.

Mechanical transport is dependent upon motive power, and

this, with the exception of electrically propelled vehicles, is in its turn dependent upon combustion, which can develop sufficient force to overcome inertia and produce movement. The use of motive power generated electrically depends upon proximity to waterfalls or power stations, and, therefore, is purely local compared to ocean transport.

Except in a few relatively unimportant cases, combustion can most cheaply be accomplished by burning carbon and hydrogen in excess of oxygen. Oxygen costs nothing, as it constitutes one-fifth of the air by bulk, and, in combination with other elements, accounts for nearly half of the weight of the solid earth. Carbon and hydrogen, however, are not so abundant, and though the former is a constituent of every organic body, there are only a few such bodies in which it is presented in a sufficiently plentiful and convenient form to render it suitable for use as a producer of motive power. The principal bodies containing carbon and hydrogen are coal and oil. Of the former, the quantities available are enormous, and many of the largest "proved" coal fields, such as those in China, are, so to say, not yet "scratched." The threatened exhaustion of the supplies of this country, however, is beginning to cause anxiety, for although there still remain many "proved" coal areas in these islands which have not so far been worked to any appreciable extent, yet it is certain that there is a limit to our supplies, and when that limit has been reached, the industrial and commercial life of this country must, to all intents and purposes, cease—unless some hitherto untapped indigenous source of power become available.

Of oil we have only the scanty yield of the Scottish shale fields, and so great is the demand for carbon and hydrogen in this form that hundreds of millions of gallons are imported into this country every year. The wealth of a country depends largely upon its exports of indigenous products, and at a time like the present, when the war has to be paid for at the earliest possible moment and the interest on loans found, it is almost prodigal waste to continue importing into this country these vast quantities of oil when we actually have a means ready to our hands, which will not only obviate the necessity of sending money, or money's worth, out of the country, but which will at the same time practically double the life of our coalfields.

The world's supply of oil is limited in a sense which does not apply to the reserve of coal, and our experience will be like that of Mother Hubbard if we think we can go on importing petroleum on the old scale. In fact, it may be that unless within the next four or five years new oil fields are opened up,

the supplies of this fuel may prove totally inadequate to meet the demand, and we in this country either have to pay enormous prices for oil or go without it.

The most economic way of using oil for motive purposes is its use in internal combustion engines, and these can be divided broadly into those using light and heavy oils respectively. A large number of transport vehicles use light oils, but the number of internal combustion engines being manufactured throughout the world is constantly increasing, and this is not accompanied by an increase in the amount of petroleum available, or in sight, from which petrol to drive the internal combustion engines is made. Consequently, though there will now be a release of petrol owing to the reduction of requirements for war purposes, the relief will be only temporary.

It is essential, therefore, to look for new sources of power. The cheapest and safest is coal, which, if properly applied, can beat not only petrol, but also heavy oil for Diesel engines, owing to its comparatively low cost. Even before the war the shortage of petrol was very marked, as statistics show that the total annual supply of gasolene (petrol) in 1913 in the United States, estimated at 1,500 million gallons, only sufficed to run the total number of internal combustion engines then existing in that country for a total of three hundred and thirty-three hours, or less than one hour per day throughout the year. Since then the number of internal combustion engines has more than doubled. In Great Britain in 1913 the annual consumption of petrol was reckoned at 100,000,000 gallons, whereas in 1912 there were nearly 200,000 motor vehicles, of which at least 100,000 must have been in use, quite apart from stationary and marine internal combustion engines, etc. This would only have provided about one hour's running per day for each engine, the average power of each vehicle being reckoned at 20 h.p. When one comes to examine the question of motor power for ships, the advantages of a cheap fuel become even more apparent. Without labouring the argument, it is evident, therefore, that, as the whole future of commercial success is dependent to a very large extent on cheap transportation, the cheapest form of motive power must be looked for.

For many years experimenters and inventors have been endeavouring to evolve a form of water gas producer and scrubber which will be satisfactory as regards weight, efficiency, and simplicity, as this is, without doubt, for use in internal combustion engines the cheapest power yet discovered, other than water power near the falls, as the fuel used therein consists merely of water and coal either in the form of coke,

or a non-coking coal. We are glad to learn that success is now in sight, and that there has been invented recently a very efficient, light, and simple form of water gas producer-plant, which, fitted to an ordinary motor transport lorry, has been "tried out" successfully, without any alteration whatsoever to the engine or to the chassis design. It is claimed that extraordinary results as regards efficiency and reliability have been obtained, and that, taking the price of petrol at a shilling per gallon, the cost per ton-mile works out at one-thirtieth the price of petrol, and one-tenth the price of Diesel oil, taking the latter at ninety shillings per ton. (Such low prices for petrol, etc., are hardly likely to be seen again.) It is said that for a 40 h.p. engine the weight of the whole apparatus will be under 200 lb., which, compared to the total weight of the loaded chassis, say, 6 tons, seems almost negligible.

As there appears to be no reason to doubt these figures, the promise of a revolution of far-reaching importance in the cost of transport and motive power seems to be within practicable range, especially as it may be assumed that the same principle can be applied to all steam boilers (ashore and afloat) and furnace work generally, with a saving of about 40 per cent. of the coal consumption, with the added advantage of doing away with manual stoking, cleaning of flues, and with a complete absence of smoke from almost every factory chimney throughout the land. This absence of smoke would of itself confer such an obvious hygienic benefit on the community as to justify the legal enforcement of the use of this new method, and, taking into consideration the reduction of coal consumption, saving of freights, etc., this latest advance in the more economic use of coal may truly be said to mark an epoch.

Anything that tends to lengthen the life of our coal fields is a national asset of prime importance, but of infinitely greater moment is the promise, which any immediate improvement in transportation holds out, of the first realisable step towards the social regeneration of Britain. It looks as if our present necessity is wringing another secret, and a rich one, from Mother Nature, who, with a strange combination of generosity and parsimony has endowed man with the faculty of invention so that he may the better raid her bountiful, but closely guarded, treasure house.



## APPRENTICESHIP.

### The Trawling Industry.

THE whole subject of apprenticeship, almost everyone will agree, is of the utmost importance for the future of our national industries. At present, perhaps, the attitude of the public mind is rather one of vague anxiety, of a dutiful desire to see right done, than of clear knowledge or purpose. The public is not to blame. For while the new Education Act contains provisions which must affect the conditions under which young people of both sexes will receive their early craft training, the various crafts, on their side, have scarcely begun to formulate their views of what training should involve. Mr. Herbert Fisher has put forward certain general ideas; but the specific adaptations or modifications of these ideas for the various industries lag behind, chiefly because the leaders of these industries have not given their minds to the problems of training. It is just this omission that gives Mr. Fisher's scheme for the extension of the years of education the appearance of standing a little in the air. In this same fact the reactionary critic finds his opportunity. It is easy to attack a new bold scheme for the education of youth in its teens if the dovetailing of school work with craft training has not been made convincingly clear. And as apprenticeship is not one problem but many, as many, indeed, as there are crafts in which training is of moment and practicable, the critic's opportunity is of the most tempting sort.

While many other trades, preoccupied with war work, have not yet faced their post-war problems, the trawling industry has already adopted a policy. Some elements of its policy are of much more than special and private interest. They are to be found in the report of the proceedings at the annual general meeting of the National Sea Fisheries' Protection Association in July last. They include a demand for a Ministry of Fisheries as a means of promoting, by the aid of science and organisation, certain of the general interests of the trade, interests so general and so weighty as to be of national concern. The chief of these interests are (1) marine exploration; (2) the opening of home markets, which is, practically, a question of railway facilities; and (3) the training of fishermen. Here is a trade that asks, in these days of bureaucracy, for yet another ministry. This trade has been disorganised and diminished by the war more than most. Its men and its vessels have been taken

into the Navy, while its distributing system and even its connection have well nigh disappeared. Such a trade might not unreasonably look for special State help in reconstructing itself. Yet its demands of the State are peculiarly interesting as emphasising just those functions which the State ought to perform at any time for this or any industry. There are in every industry certain scientific or quasi-scientific tasks, affecting organisation, exploration, information, experimentation, and in general co-operation in the widest sense towards common objects, which are not likely to be properly carried out, if at all, without the help of the State. Functions of this sort may be undertaken by the State without exciting the old antagonisms of Free Trade and Protection. Let the State limit its intervention to unpartizan matters, favouring no class or interest against another, neither labour nor capital, neither consumer nor producer; let it distinguish carefully between its scientific and its fiscal functions, and its help will be welcomed by all parties and before long will be indispensable.

For ensuring the proper training of fishermen the State has a peculiar responsibility, since both men and boys are an immediate reserve of the Navy. It is needless to expatiate here on what they have done, especially as minesweepers, in every sea controlled by the navies of the Allies. They may be called on to do the same again. In the meantime it is worth while to try, so far as training can effect it, to make them better fishermen in every point of their craft, and to give their craft a better standing and a better standard. The craft, indeed, has made great progress in the past generation, and the new emphasis on training and the standard of *personnel* is but a symptom of that progress. Outside the ports from which the fisheries are conducted there is little realisation of the life that is led at the deep sea fisheries. The fish-eating public scarcely thinks of fish as the symbol of a life of adventure. Modern invention, especially the use of steam vessels and the consequent easier access to distant grounds, has taken away nothing from the glamour and the romance of sea life. It has added enormously to its safety. And it has expanded its profits far beyond the suspicions of landmen. A clever trawl captain or herring-skipper can reach, fairly early in life, a position, as regards responsibility and pay, which he could only aspire to in the mercantile marine after long years of subordinate and ill-paid service, and which the vicissitudes of the sea deny to many.

Regarding the past of apprenticeship there is little to say. Some of the trawling companies have been accustomed to

take apprentices, though without providing specifically for their training. The boys have picked up what they could in the course of work. Just before the war a technical school for fishermen was built and fully equipped at Hull, only to close its doors. The plans which the association has now put forward are more ambitious. Its proposals are in two parts, the first, with which the State is the more concerned, covering the first two years, from 14 to 16, of the proposed apprenticeship period of five years, and the second covering the remaining three years. For two years the boys would live in a training ship at some fishery centre. Their ordinary education would be continued, while craft training, for instance, in net mending, splicing, etc., would be provided, and also instruction in navigation. The Association considers that training ships should be established at half a score of the more important shipping ports—*e.g.*, Grimsby, Hull, Aberdeen, Fleetwood, etc. Collaterally with life on the training ship the boys should have the opportunity of going to sea on training trawlers, of which it is suggested that there should be six at Grimsby and smaller numbers at the other ports, according to their importance. During this period, the Association thinks, the expenses of training should be borne by the State, and there is something to be said for placing the emphasis on State responsibility at this point. But it is probable that the working of the training trawler would provide a substantial balance towards the other expenses of training, and in this event a moderate grant from the State should suffice. The local bodies proposed to take charge of training would consist of representatives of the Government department concerned, the Board of Trade, Board of Education and Admiralty, and of the industry. After two years in the training ship the boys would be drafted to fishing trawlers in the ordinary way, and until they concluded their terms at nineteen they would be subject to strict conditions of pay, uniform, saving, membership of the Royal Naval Reserve, and residence ashore between trips. During the last three sea-going years of the apprenticeship the government would be relieved both of responsibility and control. A necessary safeguard is that during the first three months on the training ship boys would be regarded as on probation.

Such in outline is the scheme of the trade. Its aim to raise the level of discipline, efficiency and character in the *personnel* is one that will command general sympathy. The methods and detail suggested are attractive, while the State can scarcely refuse such a rôle as the trade offers it.

## THE ORIGIN AND FALLACIES OF EXTREMIST PROPAGANDA.

THE conception of the ultimate form that Society may take, which dominates the political and social belief of the extremist section of the working class to-day, arose in almost every case in the minds of thinkers in the aristocratic, professional and mercantile classes of European society.

Saint-Simon, the founder of French Socialism, belonged to a younger branch of the family of the celebrated Duke of that name. Fourier, was the descendant of a wealthy draper ; while Louis Blanc was the son of an Inspector-General of Finance. In Germany history gives precisely similar results. Ferdinand Lasalle was a member of the prosperous German merchant class. Rodbertus was a Prussian landowner and lawyer ; while that great outstanding figure, Karl Marx, was the direct descendant of a long line of Jewish rabbis ; and his life-long friend, Engels, was a manufacturer. The founder of modern English Socialism, Robert Owen, was, at the early age of nineteen, a wealthy Manchester mill owner.

There is nothing new under the sun, and if one cares to study the old books by these celebrated men and see how carefully they went into every possible detail, and endeavoured to evolve not only a new social science, but new ethical ideas and even the outlines of new religions, it will be discovered that the theories of all the modern schools of progressive thought, from the Labour Party to the various Socialistic sections, including even the Guild Socialists and the Neo-Marxians, have their origin and foundations in some detailed scheme or some suggestive phrase that could be found in the works of these people.

After a period, when Robert Owen may be said to have elaborated the views which ultimately fructified as the school of English Socialism, propaganda based on economic doctrines almost entirely disappeared in this country.

The Chartist Movement, although produced by the disgraceful industrial conditions which existed in 1815, was essentially a political movement ; the exponents believing that the realisation of the six points in their Charter would produce a modern Utopia. The six points were : Universal suffrage, vote by ballot, annual parliaments, electoral districts, abolishment of property qualification for Members of Par-

liament, payment of Parliamentary representatives. Almost the whole of this programme has now been realised, and it would be an optimistic person who felt that an idealistic State had been brought much nearer by their realisation. The Chartist Movement reached its height and became extremely violent in 1838, afterwards dying down for a while until 1848, when it was proposed to deliver to the House of Commons a monster petition escorted by a deputation of twenty thousand working men. The Government of the day put up a very strong fight, 200,000 special constables were enrolled to maintain order. Chartism collapsed, and, as a result of the improvement of industrial conditions which slowly followed, never reappeared.

The Socialist propaganda in Great Britain from this time onward fell largely into the hands of the Christian Socialists, such as Kingsley, Ludlow, and Maurice. Their labours in insisting on the ethical and spiritual principles as the true bonds of society, in promoting associations, and in diffusing a knowledge of co-operation, were largely beneficial.

Trade Unionism began to raise its head at the same time under exceptional difficulties. A Trades Union was for many years an illegal association. It was not until 1871 that recognition was granted, and the employers also took care about this period to become federated. Mutual antagonism was preached in the industrial field, but without doctrinaire or economic theories, as a foundation. For these the extremists had to wait until the works and the teaching of Engels and Marx became well known. The class hatred of this time was based on personal experience, supplemented by the stories of a century of the worst forms of industrial oppression, passed down through family history.

Utopian Socialism has no followers in modern times. Holding that social transformations must develop from within the great civilised communities, whatever the modern Socialist may wish, he expresses no desire to gather together a few comrades and experiment in an organised, self-contained settlement. Almost all the active modern Socialist societies have the following as their fundamental thesis: The capitalist mode of production is based upon the divorce of the majority of the people from the instruments of production. Society is thus divided into two opposite classes—the capitalist and his sleeping partners, and the working class, possessing nothing but their labour power. This social division widens with every advance in machinery; and, while capital steadily accumulates into fewer hands, there is a constantly growing insecurity of liveli-

hood for the majority of the wage earners, and a steady physical and mental deterioration among the poverty stricken of the population. Then develops the class war! The workers are supposed to recognise that nothing short of the expropriation of the capitalist class, and the ownership by the community of the means of production, distribution and exchange can put an end to these abject economic conditions. The class war becomes conscious, and aims at the overthrow of the capitalist system. Capitalist classes hold and use the power of the State to safeguard their position and beat off any attack, and thus must the struggle continue until the capitalist system is overthrown. This summary is taken from the original "Object" of the Social Democratic Federation, now the British Socialist Party.

The manifesto of another British organisation states: "In the industrial field to-day there is an irrepressible conflict between the propertyless producer and the propertied non-producer. The economic forces working through the development of capitalist society demand the formation of a revolutionary Socialist party."

The constitution of the Russian Soviet Federation "considers it to be its fundamental duty to abolish all exploitation of one set of human beings by another, and the division of society into classes, to summarily suppress all exploiters, to establish a Socialist organisation of society, and the victory of Socialism in all countries. Then follow clauses ordering the abolition of private property in land, which is handed to the workers without compensation to the previous private owners; the annexing of mines, water, livestock, fixtures, and model estates by the State; the handing over of all industries to the control of the workers; the nationalisation of all banks; the repudiation of all national debts; the introduction of universal compulsion to work; the disarming of the propertied classes, and the arming of the workers." The operation of these principles explains the position of Russia to-day.

Such statements, of which there are many more, are logical deductions from the teaching of Lasalle, Marx and Engels and others of the Continental school. Marx enunciated the materialist conception of history, holding that "the method of producing the material livelihood determines the social, political, and intellectual life of men in general." That the entire legal and political structure of society, religion and philosophy are to be explained in accordance with the economic basis. It therefore follows that if the economic basis of society can be changed, the religious, political, and intellectual life of the nation must also be changed.

The theories outlined—first, of the fundamental antagonism in society; secondly, that the basic principles of modern society are entirely wrong; and thirdly, that the sequel must be a series of inevitable conflicts leading to the ultimate overthrow of society in its present form—are entirely Continental in their origin. They were brought to England by Marx, adopted by the Social Democratic Federation in 1883, and with various degrees of intensity have been preached as the doctrine of the class war by most Socialist organisations ever since. The *Industrial Workers of the World* press this belief to its logical conclusions, and the *Rank and File Movement* that has been actively developed during the war aims to make it impossible for modern industry to be carried on, presuming that the present owners will give up in disgust and leave the workers in possession. It hopes to merge all “into the great industrial Union of the Working Class.” The one mighty hope, the only hope, lies in a virile, thinking, courageous, working class organised as a class to fight and win.

There is hardly space in this article to outline the “fundamental fallacies” of the so-called “fundamental antagonism,” yet in the near future, in spite of the lesson of Russia, it will be necessary to refute them, not in a flippant or superficial way, but by sheer hard logical reasoning and argument.

The writer has never accepted the materialistic conception of history, seeing no reason why the method of wealth production should determine the religious, social, and political life of a nation, but holding that the religious and ethical beliefs could equally well determine the “methods of wealth production,” and that political conceptions, if dominant enough, could substantially modify them, as the legislative enactments of the last few years have shown.

Marx stresses to an overwhelming extent the importance of manual labour, and largely ignores the power of initiation and management which, falling to the capitalist, gives him the most difficult and important part of the work of production. The capitalist, too, as the only person that accumulated capital, made modern civilisation possible. Otherwise primitive methods must have obtained for all time. The energy and inventiveness of the early capitalists were the essential factors in determining the existence of the economic era, and they were an indispensable condition to the breaking of the bonds of the old feudal order. In his theory of surplus value obtained from unpaid labour, Marx fell into serious contradiction with himself as historian and philosopher; while all his prophecies regarding the future development of capital, the development

of the proletariat, the disappearance of the middle class, and the final social cataclysm, have been refuted by the lapse of time.

The greatest injury that the social theories of Marx and his followers have caused to modern society is that the deep belief in the possibilities of human nature, the keen sense of right, the noble conception of all human beings which redeemed the extravagances of the early Utopian Socialists have been destroyed. The new school of Socialism preaches hatred, division and strife. Meanness, instead of idealism, is the distinguishing note. The appeal is always to self-interest, nothing else finally counts. Leaders arise in the shops and make promises as to what can be obtained ; a similar spirit dominates the Trade Union leaders in their conception of collective bargaining, and it curses the modern politician all his days. It places its faith absolutely in the class-conscious selfishness of the masses, whom, it is presumed, will be able to take possession of industry and organise society, and it is heedless of the psychological fact that this self-same class-conscious selfishness will reduce the new Society to a crowd of warring sections, which, far from closing the struggle, will merely accentuate it in a new form.

The great need to-day is to initiate practical social reforms, to refute by steady propaganda fallacious economic doctrines, to reassert and emphasise the nobler conceptions of human relationships embodied in the great literature of the world, and to unite into one organisation the best elements in every section of society in an endeavour to utilise the opportunities of the future for social betterment in its widest sense.

Doctrinaire Socialism emanating from Continental intellectuals is alien to the temperament of the average Englishman. If he desires to consider a new conception of society, then he can do no better than study the works of Sir Thomas More, Robert Owen, Kingsley, Maurice, Shaftesbury, and the modern school that gathered round the earlier Fabian movement. In the works emanating from the English school he will find a higher ethical conception, a nobler vision, a wider view, and a more genuine appreciation of the full possibilities of human nature than could ever come from those whose basic philosophy was the crudest materialism.



## HOUSING.

**BEFORE** the exacting demands of continued warfare compelled us, in sheer self-defence, to study afresh the true values of the relative forces of our Empire and to make every effort to adapt our system to their unimpeded, healthy growth, there was a tendency to regard the so-called "social problems" of our time as something outside and distinct from the business man's "economic" world. The problems were well-known and frankly recognised as existing, and their solution vaguely desired, but having voted for his representatives in Parliament and on his local council, the average man conceived the claims of citizenship fulfilled and settled down to the business of production with its, to him, single test of success—profits.

Our heightened realisation that economics, politics and sociology cannot be treated as separate and independent forces, but are integral parts of a whole, each dependent on the soundness of the other for its continued success, brings, amongst other long-standing problems, the question of HOUSING into a new prominence and on to a new plane of housing. In a recently issued pamphlet\* on the subject, a Committee of the Ministry of Reconstruction states the present problem as consisting in :

(a) A shortage of houses amounting to between 300,000 and 400,000 for England and Wales. This is quite apart from any further shortage which would be created by the closing of slum houses.

(b) A large number of defective and insanitary houses which are unfit for human beings to live in.

(c) In many towns slum areas consisting of crowded and narrow courts and streets.

What is the real significance of these facts ? Why and how has the problem assumed such proportions ? What hope is there now of dealing with it more successfully than in the past ?

To arrive at a real estimate of what existing inadequate housing conditions mean to everyone of us, let us first determine the relation between industry and housing. It is one of the industrial maxims of to-day that success in the competition for international markets depends upon efficiency in every detail. A country can only hold its share by employing such economical methods as will ensure maximum production of exchangeable goods in return for minimum effort or expenditure. The factors of success here, then, will be efficient organisa-

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\* Reconstruction Problems 2. Housing in England and Wales. Ministry of Reconstruction.

tion, efficient machinery, efficient labour. And it must be noted and realised that the first two, however efficient in themselves, can only produce maximum results when used in conjunction with the most efficient labour. Two machines of equal power and accuracy will be of unequal value to, say, the German and the British, if the German and the British labour manipulating them are not of equal efficiency. The prosperity of the State depends upon our commercial prosperity ; and commercial prosperity depends finally upon the efficiency of the individuals composing the State. The toll exacted from industry in general by inadequate and insanitary housing may be roughly gauged by the following categorical enumeration of facts which space alone prevents us from supporting with their authoritative sources.

In 1911 ten per cent. of the population of this country were living in overcrowded conditions (*i.e.*, more than two adults or four children per room, including living room).

A recent commission of inquiry into the things most damaging to health and life concluded that the primary factor is the quantity of fresh air available.

It is acknowledged by Public Health Authorities that one of the greatest drains on the manhood and resources of the nation is made by phthisis and tuberculous diseases. One of the main predisposing conditions of infection by this disease is overcrowding—insufficient air and light.

In 1914 the Infant Mortality statistics for Bradford showed a mortality rate of 62 per 1,000 in the three best wards of the city, as compared with a rate of 179 per 1,000 in the three worst, where overcrowding and slum conditions prevail. Anæmia, rickets, tuberculosis, and a lowered power of resistance generally characterise the “fittest” who survive in such areas.

In 1917, 75 per cent. of the working classes of Bradford were ascertained to be living in back-to-back houses. The number of deaths from pulmonary diseases and the diseases of young children are 50 per cent. higher in back-to-back houses than in through dwellings.

To adduce more evidence of the connection between housing and physical deterioration would be easy, but superfluous. It is Nature's universal law that all living things tend to adapt themselves to their environment, and, quite apart from the individual suffering inflicted upon something like one-tenth of the total population of the country, we have to face the significance of the undeniable fact that the combined forces of dirt, squalor, ugliness, congestion, lack of air, sunshine and decent privacy of the poorer working class districts are calculated

to crush the most indomitable spirit and produce a type of being spiritless and unresponsive, of poor physique and low mentality, capable only of maintaining bare subsistence, and consuming in the long run more than he can contribute to the State.

The answer to the question as to why the problem has assumed such proportions is, briefly stated, that the adequate housing of the working classes is not, as the private individual understands it, a business proposition. It has, nevertheless, been left almost entirely to the care of individual enterprise. Poverty must undoubtedly be admitted as one of the immediate causes when we take a short view of the problem, but poverty is itself primarily an effect—not a cause—of some fault in organisation, and much disentangling of cause and effect in housing and poverty must be accomplished before we can be content to admit that poverty is a fundamental cause of bad housing. In the absence of definite town planning, or any sort of guarantee as to the future development of an area, house building is of an unduly speculative nature. The return to capital is slow, frequently long delayed, and in any event spread over many years, during which industries rise and fall in local areas, frequently adversely affecting the value of investment. Two powerful obstacles, therefore, at present militate against the adequate housing of the working class. At least one-tenth of the population do not earn sufficient regular wages to procure for themselves minimum accommodation for healthy physical and mental development. The demand for houses is erratic and extremely uncertain; supply, therefore, lags lamentably behind and is only forthcoming when the demand is so established as to be hopelessly in excess.

If we admit these facts it is obvious that the housing of the working class is essentially the business of the State, functioning through the medium of the municipality. It is the duty and the right of the local group to plan ahead the lines upon which its area can be successfully developed from the point of view both of industry and public health. A coherent scheme minimises risk, curtails waste, and can eliminate slums and overcrowding without ultimately incurring loss to the individual or the State. These facts have long been obvious; the new considerations we wish to emphasise are, in the first place, the real importance of the question as an integral part of the industrial problem, and the vital need for the active co-operation of every citizen in the housing schemes now being brought forward. And, in the second place, the special conditions added to the problem by the war.

If the war has served to further aggravate an already crucial question, it has also brought in its train a partial solution of the problem. In the Ministry Pamphlet already referred to, it is pointed out that on the conclusion of peace the speed with which the troops can be mobilised will depend, amongst other things, on the ability of the country to make good some part of the deficiency of 400,000 houses, and on the employment available for the men returning to civil life. Having gone carefully into the question, the Committee are of opinion that if comprehensive schemes are now drawn up, building material can be made available, and work found in connection with house building and town planning for over 1,000,000 men. Beyond all doubt, the need for a proper housing scheme is urgent; the country will ultimately be thereby the richer in man-power and productive capacity; the returning soldier has a right—which it should be our first duty and privilege substantially to acknowledge—to a separate and decent house for himself and wife, and the inevitable hiatus caused by the coming industrial and military demobilisation can be considerably reduced. Details of the work of special committees appointed in connection with the various questions involved, such as the means of raising the necessary capital, the extent of the assistance to be given by the State, the type of house suitable to different local requirements, methods of cheapening construction, the provision of materials, the question of increased rural housing to meet the development of agriculture, acquisition of land, revision of existing legislation and provision for new by-laws, etc., etc., are all dealt with in the Ministry pamphlet, which we recommend to our readers as both interesting and of vital importance to one and all. What we would stress here is that the success of the whole work must depend largely on the active co-operation of the people generally. There is really, in a sense, little new in the proposals made. The necessary legislation has been with us since the passing of the Housing & Town Planning Act, 1919, but, except in a very few cases, and then in very inadequate measure, little or no use has been made of the extensive powers provided. The really new element now called for, and which alone can solve the problem and rid us of one serious impediment to the attainment of sound national prosperity, is the realisation by the employing class of the meaning that the problem really has for *them*. Parliaments and town councils are merely the points at which the individual citizens concentrate their common efforts; they can accomplish nothing unless they have the will and support and combined force of the community.

## A BASIS FOR RECONCILIATION.

To exemplify the manner in which the State, acting in the new spirit indicated in last month's article on the subject, would grapple with social problems, let us take one that has been mishandled in the past—that of Old Age Pensions.

Recent legislation in connection with pensions has contributed not a little to the perpetuation of poverty by teaching the poor to look forward to starving on a miserable pittance *on condition* that they neglect to make adequate provision for their own old age. Acting in the new spirit, the State would grant facilities for investment of small sums at high rates of interest—eight or ten per cent., rising to twenty per cent. or more, when the investor reached the age of 60, and remaining at that level for his lifetime. The investment could not be withdrawn, but it could be bequeathed without deduction. By limiting the amount of individual investments on these terms, and by more effectual means which could be devised, the wealthier classes would be prevented from participating. The result would be not an old age pension, but a life pension increasing in old age—a nucleus of invested capital which could be added to and passed from father to son. If some such scheme had been adopted when the Pensions Act was passed, we should now be well on our way to realising our society of capitalist workers, even though the pensions had been fixed on such a scale that the cost to the State had been no more than has been actually incurred, and there is no reason why the scale should have been so restricted. The present demoralising system cannot be withdrawn, but it could be gradually converted into one of the kind suggested.

Some allusion has been made to State borrowings, and it has been suggested that there is scarcely any length to which the State might not go in the payment of interest on individual loans of strictly limited amount for the encouragement of nucleus investments. In the main the State will, of course, borrow on the lowest possible terms, which, however, are likely to remain in the neighbourhood of 5 per cent. The capitalist worker, having acquired an appetite for independent income, will invest in the ordinary State loans and in industrial securities giving a higher yield; but it may be hoped that the State will not neglect to afford facilities for one form of investment peculiarly well adapted to attract the small investor.

The prejudice which is felt in many quarters against Premium Bonds appears to rest on ethical considerations of a confused and mistaken character. Betting is an evil. A State lottery encourages betting, and is therefore itself an evil—so runs the argument.

That betting over indulged in is an evil of enormous magnitude cannot be gainsaid. But suppose a racing man ceased to put his money on horses and put it in life insurance instead, would not the purists applaud? Life insurance is a form of betting which is socially beneficial as betting on horses is socially destructive. In betting on horses a man may lose all if he goes on long enough. In betting on life insurance he cannot lose his capital, but he can only win a prize on one unpleasant condition—that of dying quickly. In betting in Premium Bonds a man cannot lose his capital; he secures a certain income, and he may win a substantial prize, without dying. It is socially beneficial, and therefore not immoral.

With interest at the rate now ruling the State could pay 4 per cent. interest and allocate 1 per cent. for prizes ranging from £100 to £1,000.

Along with the encouragement of investment would naturally go the encouragement of inheritance of investments. It is unnecessary to discuss the question whether it is more sound economically for a State to live on its capital than for an individual. Whatever may be said on the general principles underlying the Death Duties, it is unlikely that future Chancellors will feel able to relinquish a form of taxation which has the merit of bringing large sums into the coffers of the State with little trouble of collection. There are, however, strong reasons against penalising the inheritance of small estates. No duties should be levied on legacies or bequests of less than £1,000.

Enough has now been said to indicate the kind of State action by which the society of independent self-respecting capitalist workers could be promoted. The fundamental principle underlying all such action would be the encouragement of voluntary effort, with an entire absence of Prussianism, dragooning or coercion.

The realisation of such a state of society depends not only on the will to save and the habit of investing, but on the possession by the masses of a margin of income beyond the necessities of existence. There are some, perhaps there always will be some, who have no such margin, but this should not be regarded as an obstacle. It would be foolish to set aside a desirable ideal because it cannot be realised completely and

at once. Let the habit of investing once be formed by those who have the means, however small, and the investments will tend to grow, automatically almost ; they will be handed down to succeeding generations, and an increasing proportion of the people will become possessed of independent means without effort on their part. They will merely add to the nucleus as their circumstances permit.

It is not easy to form any accurate estimate of the actual saving power of the British people. Pre-war conditions will never return, present conditions are wholly abnormal, and future conditions are unknown. It is, however, safe to assume that the condition of the working population will be more favourable in the future than in the past. There is a strong determination on the part of all classes, and especially on the part of the workers themselves, that this shall be so. The war has given a wonderful stimulus to production, a mental stimulus even more than a quickening of mechanical processes, and it has brought to large classes of workers the actual realisation of a standard of living which they have never before experienced and will not easily relinquish.

We may assume that the investing power of the people will be greater as time goes on. How great it was can be dimly apprehended if we consider the enormous expenditure on drink, rising latterly to nearly 200 millions a year, and approximately equal to the whole revenue of the State. This expenditure is not a measure of the investing power of the people ; it is merely an indication of the vastness of the surplus which was available even before the war, for purposes of social betterment under the direction of wise statesmanship and healthy public opinion. The first step is the most important, and it rests with our social reformers, with our politicians, and most of all with the people themselves to decide whether this step shall be taken. We are at the parting of the ways, and it is for us to choose now whether the England of the future shall be a nation of State-aided, State-regulated slaves, or a nation of self-respecting, self-reliant citizens.



## SOME VIEWS OF THE MINORITY PRESS.

THE reception given to the Armistice by the Minority Press is typical of the irreconcilable attitude of its supporters, and the following extracts, chosen almost at random, need little comment. "The collapse of the Central Powers is not due to a military decision," says Mr. Snowden, who poses as an authority on all German questions. This deliberately ungenerous misreading of the military situation is emphasised by *The Workers' Dreadnought* (November 16th), which tells us that "the noisy crowds that rushed out to make holiday, cheering and flag-waving when the news came that the armistice had been signed, failed to realise that this thing they were celebrating was no military victory, but the fruits of the Russian Revolution, which has evoked a workers' revolution also in Germany." And *Common Sense* (November 16th) bids us remember, while acclaiming Lloyd George as chief contriver of victory, that "but for him the war might have been ended two years ago on terms much less humiliating to Germany. In that case the Bolsheviks would probably never have obtained control of Russia, there might have been no break up of Austria, and there might have been no deposition of the German Kaiser. On the other hand, a million more of the British race who are dead or crippled would have been alive and well, nor should we have incurred 4,000 millions of a war debt." *The Call* (November 14th) protests against the "shameful terms" imposed upon the German people by the armistice of the Allies. "It is the duty of British Labour to make it clear that it is no party to this disgraceful act of injustice." Through the medium of *The Herald*, Brailsford deprecates the armistice terms, they are too crushing, and we seem to have lost "even the memory of Christian teaching," to "say nothing of chivalry." He suggests that Milner and Lansdowne would handle Germany gently so as to avoid provoking Bolshevism, but others want to see the ruin of the war completed by eliminating Germany "from the European balance as completely as Russia." Labour must therefore watch the situation "lest it repeat in Germany its failure to stand by the Russian Revolution." In the same organ Miss Sylvia Pankhurst protests that the armistice terms agree in many points with the Allied Secret Treaties, and are entirely offensive. "With your armies and navies occupying the ports of a people struggling to establish a new civilisation,

seize their ships, stop their commerce, take possession of their railways and factories, and then send relief to feed them ! There is the programme."

The situation in Russia and Germany is watched with intense interest. H. N. Brailsford is greatly impressed by the social revolution in Germany, and suggests that the revolutions taking place on the Continent will not be limited "to removing Kings to set up plutocracy in their place." In spite of the adoption of Soviets in Germany, Brailsford does not anticipate any "immediate departure from the traditional Western forms of democracy." There is, he thinks, no prospect of the German people following the course of the Russian people. He is rather disgusted with our failure to appreciate the change of heart and of Government in Germany. Mr. Lloyd George in his Guildhall speech did not say one word "of welcome to the new order in Germany." Nay, he actually "exulted in his habitual vulgarity over the fallen rulers of Germany," and then declared that "he regards the people as equally guilty." But then "our programme in Russia" reveals the depths of our guilt ; we are trying to crush the revolution.

*The Nation* (November 16th) fears that the extremists in Germany may get the upper hand, and helpfully suggests that it is the duty of the Allies to prevent any Bolshevist development. This can be done, it avers, by making the peace terms as light as possible for the Socialist Republic of Germany. "The extreme socialists are already using the argument that the only way to escape the intolerable life which the payment of a huge indemnity will involve for the working classes is to follow the Bolshevist example." This Republic could not pay more than an indemnity to Belgium for restoration. "This it will do with a good will, even though the task be superhuman." Only a nominal sum must be asked towards the restoration of other countries.

*The New Age* and *The Herald* do not think that Bolshevism will make much headway in Germany, but "it will grow in proportion as German Socialists are made to feel that a Socialist Germany is going to be treated by the rest of the world very much as Russia has been treated." The Allies—not excepting even President Wilson—have not yet given "a word of unqualified welcome to the new Socialist Government."

*The Call* (November 14th) addresses a stirring appeal to British workers to stand by the Bolshevists of the Continent. "The Revolution in Russia, in Austria, and in Germany, has shown that the ruling class, seem they never so strong, crumble like dust when once the workers and peasants will it. Rulers

and masters can do nothing against the determination of the peoples. We of the British Socialist Party call on you to be true to your class and remember your historical mission. Let the cry go forth and ring throughout the length and breadth of these isles : *The immediate evacuation of Russian territory ! No intervention against Revolution anywhere !* The enemies of the Soviets of workers and peasants in Russia and on the Continent are your enemies. The emancipation of the working class of Russia and on the Continent will eventually spell your own emancipation at home. Long live the Socialist Republic ! ” The same journal, in its issue of November 22nd, tells us that “ Germany is going to be a Socialist Republic, just as Russia has become, and Bolshevism in its practical applications will celebrate another triumph.”

*The Labour Leader* records the greeting of the French Socialist Party to the German Socialists, and gives its approval to the terms of the following resolution passed by the Party : “ In the belief that some of the armistice conditions justify the suspicion that the Allied Governments intend to extend their criminal military intervention against Revolutionary Russia on a wider scale, the Party declares that it will appeal to all the forces of the French proletariat to prevent the Socialism that is springing up in Russia as well as in Germany and Austria from being crushed by coalition of foreign capitalists.”

Questioning the accuracy of our own version of British policy in Russia, and exhibiting, incidentally, a strong tendency—not uncommon in the Minority Press—to place implicit trust in the veracity of the other side, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald (*Forward*, October 26th) states that “ whatever be the true facts about Russia, this is clear. The Bolshevik Government, whatever may be its errors and crimes, has falsified all prophecies about its duration and its strength ; the British have become unpopular from being but a few months ago most popular, and, on resumption of peace, will be regarded by the masses of active Russians in a hostile way. We have thrown away our chances of having Russia as our friend, thanks almost exclusively to the kind of person and influence which have commanded the ear of our Foreign Office.”

*The Call* (November 7th) protests against Allied intervention in Russia, and asks why official Labour is dumb. “ The mass of the Russian people are behind the Soviets, or they could not exist in a time of Revolution for a day.” Russian territory must be immediately evacuated. “ The hour of the emancipation of the working classes everywhere has almost struck ! Do not let it be said that it was the apathy, if not the hostility,

of the workers of Britain that delayed the complete triumph of the workers of the world."

As regards the conduct of home affairs, the cessation of hostilities having been achieved, the next matter of immediate importance is to secure freedom of action by the repeal of D.O.R.A., and a full force of active workers by the liberation of all political prisoners. *The Call* (November 7th) adjures the workers to force the release of John McLean (Bolshevik Consul for Glasgow). What the "workers in Russia and Germany can do to-day, workers in Britain can do to-morrow, and workers throughout the world can do the day after to-morrow."

This revolutionary attitude is particularly strong in *The Call* (November 21st), which discusses the situation here in an article headed, "Now for the Enemy at Home." This enemy is the British capitalist. "The war ends in a hurricane of revolution;" the tide has now turned, and "the future is with International Socialism." While these vast changes are taking place in Europe, "our governing class" are again attempting "to beguile the workers," and are offering them "a pill for an earthquake." *The Call* warns the workers that the Coalition is the union of all the capitalist parties against the working class. But "the time is gone for the fatuities of Mr. Lloyd George and the motley band he leads against the working class . . . the time is come for the workers of Great Britain to get a strangle-hold on Capitalism." There can be no peace yet, and the workers of Britain must "rise in accord with those of other lands." They will, "in the coming titanic struggle with the enemy at home . . . drive from the field all the forces of militarism and predatory capitalism represented by the Coalition."

*The Labour Leader* (November 14th) offers the capitalist the alternative of getting "off the back of Labour with good grace, as they probably will do in Germany," or being "flung off with perhaps rather more than the necessary degree of violence." Labour "will always quarrel with the owners of capital about the distribution of that wealth, because Labour knows now, if it never knew before, that the total wealth rightly belongs to Labour, and not a drop of it to capitalism, and capital rightly belongs to the workers." . . . "But capitalism has played its part. I hope it will remove itself from the stage without the prompter having to call in the chucker out. That is what I hope. What I expect is another story."



## FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

PARTY politics being a game which consists very largely in crediting your own side with a monopoly of all the virtues whilst denying to your opponents even the remnants of common decency, is one which we have no mind to take a hand in. In our estimate it is a matter of but secondary importance whether a Liberal, a Conservative or a Labour man succeeds in persuading any given electorate that he is the fittest and most proper person to represent that body in parliament, provided that he runs straight and doesn't try to sneak in under false pretences. We may approve of this policy and deprecate that, we may legitimately exert what influence we can to bring about the results we desire, but unless the whole principle of constitutional democracy is to be sent incontinently to the bottom—"spurlos versenkt"—we must submit to the verdict given at the polls and abide by it until an opportunity arises for its reversal on appeal. Nobody is justified in acting the part of the highwayman who cries "Hands up" whilst he covers you with his pistol—and nobody is entitled to declare for a policy of "Heads I win, Tails you lose."



It is perhaps too much to look for universal assent to any axiom, even in the field of elementary ethics, and we fear that we must count Mr. Arthur Henderson amongst those who hold to the contrary opinion. His views on this subject, as explained to the electors of South East Ham, are worth noting. "If," said he, "Labour representation failed in the coming contest, with the spirit prevailing on the Continent—the spirit which had spread through Russia and elsewhere—let them be very careful that in this country, because the people failed to get the political expression which they believed might work out their social and economic salvation, the infection was not so great that they would be driven to other means." The same threat has been repeated in different words by Mr. Henderson's scholarly lieutenant, Mr. Sidney Webb, who declared, in the course of a lecture, that Democracy was being made a sham and the electors cheated out of their right to decide between one policy and another. He added that, in view of the revolution that was thundering just outside our doors, that was a very dangerous game to play.



Now what is the game to which Mr. Sidney Webb refers? By whom and by what means are the electors being cheated?

What avoidable obstacle is being placed by the Government in the way of any citizen to debar him from voting for the candidate who most nearly represents his point of view? Is there anything—except the fear of failure—to prevent nominees of the Labour Party from wooing every constituency in the kingdom? We trow not. But there *is* a game, quite an astute one, and this is how it is played. A date having been fixed for the General Election, all those who hope to detach votes from the Coalition exclaim with one voice that the said date has been selected with the deliberate intention of gaining a dishonest advantage over honourable opponents. Mr. Henderson says the election might have been postponed six, eight or twelve months. Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that the Prime Minister had announced that no appeal should be made to the country until June, 1919—what would Mr. Henderson and Mr. Sidney Webb have had to say to that? Little imagination is necessary to picture the heroic outburst of indignant protest which, emanating from precisely the same quarters, would have assailed our ears. What epithets would be coined to describe the monstrous depravity of a “kept” government which dared to flout democracy by clinging to the spoils of office without a mandate, thereby treating “The Representation of the People Act” as a scrap of waste paper and disfranchising the noble women who had at last established their right to vote?

Does anybody suppose that this “pretty little game of hypocrisy” would be any less attractive to its designers if the election had been postponed until the later date suggested by Mr. Henderson?



Of course, there is the difficulty about the votes of soldiers and sailors serving abroad—and everybody is agreed that every possible effort should be made to provide the necessary facilities. If there is any breakdown in the arrangements it is the Coalition which will suffer—and we may expect, therefore, that an artificial fog of suspicion will be engineered by the malcontents with the object of inducing abstention on the part of the naval and military voters.



If we could eliminate the factors of self-interest and partisan scheming, few men or women of independent judgment would deny that the passing of the Franchise Act has made a prompt appeal to the country imperative. Eight years have passed since the last General Election—the life of the present parliament has been extended far beyond its statutory limit, the premier-

ship of Mr. Lloyd George has never been endorsed by the vote of the electorate, and nobody can do more than guess at the probable result of the coming contest. Only one thing is certain—viz., that the Government which has the responsibility of sustaining British interests at the Peace Conference ought to have behind it the most comprehensive and the most recent guarantees of support that it can possibly obtain. Otherwise it might find itself in the intolerable position of being unable to achieve a settlement which would be ratified by its immediate successor in office. Never in the history of the British Parliament has there been greater need of an authoritative mandate for a specific purpose than at this moment. If Labour can obtain a working majority at the Election, a Labour Government must handle the peace negotiations. If the Coalition succeeds at the polls the onus of the Conference must fall on Mr. Lloyd George and his colleagues.



With the electioneering manifesto of the Labour Party we are largely in accord, but it is one thing to issue an attractive programme, quite another kettle of fish to give practical effect to idealistic conceptions. To advocate freedom and justice for Ireland is fatally easy, but to satisfy Irish claims, if not impossible, has so far defeated human ingenuity. For every man in Ireland who wants justice there are two who are determined to nurse a grievance, and if anybody thinks that any measure of Home Rule, good, bad or indifferent, is going to cut the Gordian knot his optimism is a hundred per cent. overproof. Many people are exercised in their minds as to the most appropriate punishment that could be meted out to the Kaiser—but nobody has been unkind enough to suggest that he should be the first President of the Irish Republic.



To arrive at a just estimate of the significance of the Labour Manifesto, it must be remembered that projections of the cruder kind, those hall marks of irresponsibility, are apt to get knocked off in the process of converting an idea into a Bill and a Bill into an Act of Parliament. Taking everything into consideration, if we are surprised it is at the moderation of the manifesto. Assuredly some restraining influence must have been at work or certain signatories would never have attached their names to a document which declares for a programme which is to develop democratic principles by constitutional means. The manifesto will always remain something of a literary curiosity as an example of what can

be done in the way of compromise. The man who could induce Robert Williams, James Maxton and J. W. Kneeshaw to come to heel sufficiently to signify their assent to a declaration of policy approved by J. R. Clynes is indeed an artist at his job.



Not without a pang will Englishmen relinquish their traditional privileges of first choosing their own government and then of roundly abusing it. Whilst no exception to the second part of this general rule is to be looked for on the present occasion, the question of choosing wisely is now more important than ever before. Despite all the stage thunder that will be manipulated to drown the small voice of common sense, the problem—when we get down to bedrock—resolves itself into the simplest of issues. At this crisis the nation requires a government which fulfills the following conditions. Firstly, it must be representative of as many of the political groups in this country as can be induced to coalesce for the purpose of seeking strength in unity. Secondly, it must be acceptable to the Dominions, who, without stint, have given of their best in the hour of the Empire's greatest need. Thirdly, it must engage the sympathy of our Allies, who have shared with us the perils and the triumphs of Armageddon. Fourthly, it must command the respect of the world at large—enemy nations no less than neutral peoples. Fifthly, it must be such that can give us the inestimable boon of internal peace after the stress of external war. And, lastly, in all solemnity, it must not betray the sacred cause for which hard on a million of our fellow countrymen have paid forfeit with their lives.

Such being the essentials and the minimum requirements of the nation, the electors have to make their free and independent choice between (a) the party associated with the name of Mr. Ramsay Macdonald; (b) the party which follows Mr. Asquith, and (c) the Coalition which supports Mr. Lloyd George.

The ballot is secret—the verdict rests on the knees of the gods. Let every man and every woman follow the dictates of conscience and vote without fear or favour, as reason may decide.



Patriots unite! You have everything to lose, even your honour. You have a duty to perform!



On the headstone over the dishonoured grave of partisan politics in 1918 let it be written: "*Hic jacet ignobile cadaver,*" and at the foot, "*Le jeu est fait—Rien ne va plus.*"

No. XVII

# JANUARY

MCMXIX

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“It is easier to make war than  
to make peace.”



# INDUSTRIAL PEACE

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# INDUSTRIAL PEACE

## THE MODERN MRS. PARTINGTON.

IF, as we must admit to be the case, it is still a long cry from the ideal conception of industrial peace to its practical realisation, signs are manifest that public attention is at least awakening to the fact that the subject is one of paramount and immediate importance not only to employers and trade unionists, but to the nation at large. The reward of pioneer work is the demonstrable proof of its original necessity, and when what was once a voice in the wilderness becomes a chorus in the market place, the first milestone on the road from design to achievement has been reached. When, some two years ago, the proposal to edit a journal devoted to advocating the cause of peace in industry was first mooted, little approval and no encouragement was forthcoming. In some quarters the project was derided as waste of time and money, in others it was even regarded as dangerous. Think of it. At a time when propaganda directed towards the creation of the cult of class-warfare was already in full swing, short-sighted and timid officialdom positively shied at the bare mention of publicity as the obvious solvent of industrial unrest.

Mrs. Partington brandished her mop and would brook no rivals. She alone could stem the rising tide. And her method? Simplicity itself: (a) Card Index, (b) Confidential Jacket, (c) Official Secrets Act. And so the Pharaohs of Whitehall continued to sit on the safety valve and proceeded to excommunicate anybody who spoke above a whisper. Fair weather reports, epigrammatically contrived, were released for public consumption—barometrical depressions were uncharted or hidden away in private files.

Time passed, and the inexorable logic of events demonstrated the futility of pills as a remedy for earthquakes. But the pill merchants remained at their posts, the Pharaohs hardened their hearts. Suddenly the foreseen and inevitable sequel occurred. Some hundreds of thousands of engineers came out on strike in defiance of the Munitions of War Act, in opposition to the advice of their Trade Union Executives, and regardless of every appeal to the claims of patriotism. How many hundreds of thousands took this step is still an official secret. The *Labour Gazette* is silent on the subject and the Ministry of Munitions won't tell. Something had to be done. The system had not quite come up to the expectations of its adherents. Some wholly abortive

steps were taken. A number of warrants for the arrest of leading agitators were issued and duly executed. Mock heroic proceedings, with the Attorney-General in full legal canonicals, wasted the time of the magistrate at Bow Street, in which court of law Mr. W. C. Anderson, M.P., entertained the audience with an exhibition of the gesture commonly referred to as "Thumbs up." The Government was fooled into accepting a compromise based on an undertaking given by the defendants not to repeat their offence—an undertaking which has been contemptuously and ostentatiously disregarded—and the proceedings terminated with a hearty rendering of the "Red Flag."

But a pathetic belief in the efficacy of the mop still survived. Eight panels of commissioners set to work to investigate the causes of industrial unrest and with one voice issued reports which ignored the prime focus of excitation and which were nicely calculated to lull the public into a false sense of security. How long this game of hide and seek would have continued if both sides had been content to prolong it we will not stop to inquire. It is sufficient to observe that when one set of individuals advertise their sentiments by proclaiming them from the housetops, and when another set, sitting in watertight compartments of their own devising, assert the contrary without being able to produce any tangible evidence in support of their thesis, the advent of public enlightenment is only a matter of time. Whether when that time arrives it will not be too late is another question. Let it not be imagined, however, that the mop has gone out of fashion. Mrs. Partington is a very strenuous old lady. Undismayed by her failure in one direction, she essays with a persistence worthy of a better cause to carry her mop to victory in some other field. You can't argue with her—she must have it her own way, and the one thing she will not tolerate is unofficial interference. Blind to the signs of the times, but still obsessed by the affectation of omniscience, she treasures every little secret that she can hide away in the folds of her voluminous garments, and continues to burke any form of inquiry that may lead to a revelation of the truth. Nor are her obstructive tactics confined to the province of secretiveness. She is also the high-priestess of the gospel of funk. If she perceives two dangers, she invariably takes infinite pains to embrace the greater whilst running away from the lesser. Actuated by an overpowering instinct of self-preservation and seeking her personal safety above every other consideration, she sacrifices herself and her friends in the vain endeavour to conciliate her enemies.

The modern Mrs. Partington is not an individual, she is the embodiment of a spirit that has been called "the prevailing fashion of a nervous secrecy." She is, in short, a fraud, a nuisance, and a menace.

And what of the future? Is the same type of careless and casual optimism which refused to admit the possibility of this country being involved in a European war, and which neglected to take appropriate steps for the defence of our national interests in the event of such a contingency—is this same spirit of negation and inaction to continue to prevail in the face of the greater and even more obvious dangers which the spread of class warfare and other forms of internal dissension threaten to precipitate in the near future? Or may we venture to hope that the whole situation will be analysed in a scientific spirit of inquiry, and that statesmanlike measures will be taken in hand betimes to minimise, if it is impossible altogether to avoid, the calamities which must ensue if present tendencies are allowed to arrive at their logical conclusion?

The determination of the revolutionary leaders in Russia, Germany, and elsewhere to entangle the whole world in the Bolshevik net is insistent and undeniable. This continental effort is endorsed and supported by a passionate and well-organised minority in Britain. What is being done to counteract the pernicious activities of these people? Will any public man with sufficient authority give a lead, or are we again to be betrayed by the quibbling sophistries of Mrs. Partington? Time will show, but there is no time to be lost.

# "INDUSTRIAL PEACE."

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## SOME RECENT PRESS APPRECIATIONS.

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MR. FREDERIC HARRISON *writes* :

" . . . It is, in my judgment, far the best informed, far the most independent and clear-sighted of any organ, newspaper or review that deals with the vast and burning problems of Industrial Peace and Industrial Unrest. . . . I do not hesitate to say that *Industrial Peace* is an honest, independent organ of genuine enquiry and open publicity. I have studied carefully during the year past the first two volumes, and I find in them a mine of invaluable information and clear judgment. The writers and directors are personally unknown to me; but I can give my word to readers that they are trustworthy students of actual facts, and have no capitalist purse behind them or trade interest to serve. Those who to-day care to learn more about labour than they find in the daily press should mark, learn and inwardly digest what they read in *Industrial Peace*. . . . Few people have any idea how much of Bolshevism to-day is latent in Labour organs. Their ideas may be enlarged if they will read *Industrial Peace*—not for its own estimates, but for the subterranean forces of which it quotes the words and gives the avowed purposes and hopes. Will our *intelligentsia* ignore all this, as the Russian did until the crash? . . . I assert with confidence that the "Retrospect and Prospect," in the September number, is at once the most lucid, the best instructed and the most impartial explanation of industrial unrest that I know. I am convinced by every word of it; and I only wish that our Government officials and Trade Unionists would take it to heart."—*The Fortnightly Review*.

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"Its aim is to promote harmony and co-operation among the parties concerned in industry by throwing light on industrial facts and tendencies, about which the public is often misled and still oftener ignorant, in spite of impartial enquiry and sympathy . . . Those in Oxford, and they are not a few, who have an outlook on the industrial and economic worlds will find a good deal to reward them in *Industrial Peace*."—*The Oxford Magazine*.

"Industry in its present stage of development presents difficult problems, for which nothing but the interchange of thought, experience and research can offer a satisfactory solution. *Industrial Peace* will occur to all who know it as the best type of organ for this end."—*The Employer*.

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"What is the purpose? It is to arrest the strife between labour and capital before it begins, or end it where it has already begun. Is it favourable to capital or to labour? It is as fair as fair can be. Assuredly the workman has his say in it. There is ample knowledge of his needs, and a most sincere sympathy with them. But there is no belief in the methods used by many to gain their legitimate ends; there is no belief in the war of class against class. And to all syndicalists and the like there is open and determined antagonism. Every movement in the struggle between master and man is watched and the points of it noted. This alone makes *Industrial Peace* almost a necessity. And there is hope and faith as well as up-to-date knowledge."—*The Expository Times*.

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"... Contains a mass of information on labour questions under war conditions and many valuable suggestions for bringing about the co-operation of labour, management and finance. We think it should be in the hands of all interested in either social or industrial matters, in politics or in the management of large numbers of men."—*The Publishers' Circular*.

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"The authors approach the whole matter of industrial relations in a liberal spirit. If they write from the view-point of capital, they make many more concessions to the other side, show a greater appreciation of the human aspect of the problem, and, it may be added, a greater knowledge of the organisation of groupings of Labour problems than is usual, and this is all to the good. . . ."—*The Organiser*.

## DEMOBILISATION.

### From the Soldier's Point of View.

THE whole question of demobilisation is so full of pitfalls for the unwary that the public would be well advised to walk circumspectly, and be chary of rushing upon the very dangerous ground of uninformed criticism. Recent events have given rise to widespread appreciation of danger on the part of the general public ; nor is this to be wondered at, for if discipline cannot be maintained in the army the difficulties of demobilisation, already so complicated, may well become insoluble.

However genuine their grievances and however moderate their demeanour, the refusal by soldiers to obey embarkation orders, aggravated by the accompaniment of picketing to enforce the ruling of the malcontents, is nothing less than a military strike, and a military strike is the antithesis of all army discipline. Look at it which way you will, the position is sufficiently grave to demand the most scrupulous reticence from everybody who believes in national stability and who has at heart the welfare of our soldiers. This being so, we are at a loss to understand the attitude of that section of the press which is conducting a campaign of hostile criticism directed against those responsible for carrying out the demobilisation policy of the Government. A leading article in a daily paper, headed "Brainless Demobilisation," is a fair example of the type of carping attack which, in our opinion, is calculated to achieve an infinity of harm without any counterbalancing advantage. To suggest that no foresight has been used to anticipate the problems that must accompany the approach of peace is to display inexcusable ignorance of the arrangements which have been elaborated to meet this long-prepared-for emergency ; to visit the blame for every contretemps on the heads of the directors of demobilisation is to lose all due sense of proportion, let alone considerations of common fairness, and to attempt to destroy public confidence in the efficiency of the duly appointed and only available authority for dealing with demobilisation is to throw oil on the already glowing embers of discontent.

A dispassionate review of the main facts of the situation must convince any impartial observer who is blessed with the faculty of common sense and armed with an intelligent appreciation of the rules of arithmetic that the inherent difficulties which surround and permeate the whole problem of demobilisation are so immense that no scheme, within the capacity of human resource, could possibly be evolved that would escape the horns

of every dilemma which mutually opposed interests are bound to create.

Some of the salient facts which are answerable for this impasse may be selected and summarised with advantage. An army, which first and last has comprised some seven million men, took over four years to raise. The adjustment between military needs and industrial requirements presented extraordinary difficulties, and was only rendered possible by the combined influence of two factors—one being unbounded enthusiasm of all classes for the prosecution of the war, the other being the almost automatic process which, operating over a long period of time, selected the young before the middle-aged, the single before the married, the dilutable before the indispensable, the volunteer before the conscript, and so on. This process was expedited by the fact that the capacity of absorption, as developed by the army machine, was practically unlimited. Demobilisation reverses the whole of this process, and not only has the dispersal of the men to be carried out in a fraction of the time occupied by their collection, but the capacity of industry to absorb those who are released from the colours is a variable and a limited quantity. No matter how elastic or how far-sighted the scheme of demobilisation may be, the unfortunate crux remains that the number of men clamouring for immediate release will always be in excess of the number that can be spared from the army or for whom instant transport is available, whilst at the same time industry will alternate between emptiness and repletion. Nor does the difficulty end here. The interests of the army and the demands of trade, the claims of justice and the appeals to sentiment, will frequently and necessarily be in conflict with each other.

Over and above these unavoidable causes of friction and the resulting soreness, we must allow for a percentage of error, into which the best organised human machine must occasionally relapse, in spite of every reasonable effort to achieve perfection. We are reminded of an old parable that illustrates the formidable array which may be reached by the visible representation of a small percentage taken over a sufficiently large total. It is said that assuming only 1 per cent. of the population of Greater London to consist of bald-headed males who squint, it would be theoretically possible, provided an adequate reward was offered, to assemble a crowd in Hyde Park of more than twenty thousand such individuals and, by ocular demonstration, to persuade a visitor from another planet that all Londoners suffered from the above-mentioned afflictions. The parable is far-fetched, no doubt, but it contains more than the proverbial

grain of truth, and we shall do well to remember, when we hear reports of thousands of victims of alleged stupidity and demonstrable injustice, that, after all, the percentage of such cases may be really infinitesimal. Not for a moment do we suggest that infinite care ought not to be taken to eliminate every preventible cause of error, but we do plead for the cultivation of a sense of proportion in these matters, and insist upon the necessity for self-restraint in criticising the work of men who alone can have any adequate conception of the enormous complications of the task to which they are committed. The fundamental basis of the situation is that the Government is doing its best both to satisfy the natural desire of the soldiers to return to their homes at the earliest possible opportunity, and to meet the maximum demands of industry so far as the minimum requirements of the military position justify unrestricted demobilisation.

We venture to call attention, however, to one aspect of the case, the full importance of which we have good reason to believe has escaped the notice of the authorities. We refer to the universal sentiment which pervades the army in favour of a scheme of demobilisation which will satisfy the personal sense of what is equitable as between one soldier and another. The solidarity of the army on this point is founded on an ineradicable tradition in the service, which is hypersensitive to an extent that the civilian would hardly believe possible, in resenting anything that smacks of favouritism. This sentiment is apt to override every other consideration and, in the politics of the barrack room, comes a long way in front of any mere industrial question.

According to *The Manchester Guardian*, one of the main grievances of the Folkestone strikers is said to have been that "many of the older men, fathers of families and men who had seen considerable service, were being sent back to France while younger men of less service . . . were being demobilised." Here we have one phase of the sentiment to which we have referred. Before long other manifestations of the same feeling are certain to crop up unless the greatest tact and sympathy are employed in realising and meeting the innate sense of justice which pervades the army. No man in the world is more amenable to reason than the British soldier, if properly handled. Listen to his point of view, explain to him your own difficulties, appeal to his good sense, and he will respond with the best grace in the world; but attempt to ignore his traditional bias of military sentiment, treat him as a pawn, and he will prove himself a champion obstructionist against whom no disciplinary measures can prevail.

## VICTIMISATION AS A FINE ART.

ANY considerable familiarity with public movements soon effaces the belief, so dear to the novice, that certain moral characteristics and ideals are the monopoly of any one class, the prerogative of any one type of organisation; but, trite though the reminder may seem, it is advisable nevertheless to repeat that the ingrained habit of drawing an imaginary line across the social system and of assuming that above such a line thrive all the virtues, whilst beneath it seethe all the vices—or the other way round—is to portray society as it never has been in the past and as it never can be in the future. Yet there are employers whose attitude towards Trade Unionists, and Labour leaders whose antagonism to employers, is constructed, apparently, on some such premises. The era in which we live is pre-eminently one of change—the standards of yesterday are the byewords of to-day and the standards of to-day will be hopelessly out of date to-morrow. Small wonder, therefore, that reactionaries and extremists abound in our midst, for it is not in human nature to adjust itself automatically to the meridian of zero.

It is not so very long ago since Trade Unions were illegal associations, since men were deported to Botany Bay for the crime of combination, when union funds were not entitled to legal protection and when the movement could only exist disguised under aliases. These and other disabilities have been swept away with the approval of nine men out of every ten, but there remains a small percentage imbued with the same spirit and dominated by the same motives which were responsible for such a state of affairs. On the other hand there are those who, if they had their way, would destroy all that is good in Trade Unionism and establish a new tyranny which, whilst penalising posterity, would fail to hold, even if it should succeed in grasping, the elusive chimera of present gain. Amongst this company of wreckers there is no dearth of demagogues, to whose jaundiced vision every capitalist is an ogre, every concession a trick, every moderate a blackleg, every molehill a mountain.

*"Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis."* No longer can the overmasterful employer involve the aid of the Hulks to rid himself of a troublesome fellow, the balance of public opinion, which used to be on his side, is now against him and he

has to go warily lest he find himself out of the frying-pan and into the fire. But he is not altogether defenceless, and the method which is favoured by the short-sighted fraternity goes by the name of "victimisation." This word has become one of the most hard-worked labels of our time and its application, now justly interpreted, now tortured out of all resemblance to its legitimate meaning, is bandied to and fro and springs to the tongue of everybody who does not get exactly what he wants at the moment he wants it.

In this paper we propose to examine some aspects of this question of victimisation in the hope of elucidating its proper significance and removing some of the misconceptions by which it is overlaid and obscured.

First let us take the case of the professional agitator to whom employment in a workshop is only a means to an end. This type of man is not content to wait for legitimate grievances, his job is to stir up trouble and to persuade his mates to injure the boss by every means in their power. Such is the avowed aim of the I.W.W. and kindred societies, and the prestige of such a firebrand is in direct proportion to the success which attends his efforts at strike-making. The extent to which this policy is pursued by the forward spirits of the Rank and File Movement may be illustrated by an incident which is reported to have occurred in a manufacturing centre during the war. The selection of shop stewards for a munition factory being under discussion, it was resolved to nominate certain members of the local football team, the qualifications of these particular men for the post being a quarrelsome disposition calculated to aggravate the foremen, and a popular notoriety which was relied upon to command a following in the workshops. Now what can an employer do to eradicate such irritating thorns from his flesh. Why should he hire a man to injure his trade? Why should he pay away good wages for a minus quantity? Such a course of action is neither business, equity nor common sense. If, however, he dismisses a shop steward on the declared ground that the man is an agitator, the cry of victimisation is raised and the employer, now between the devil and the deep, has to reinstate the mischief-maker, or see his works closed down during a strike which, in all probability, will end in his ultimate capitulation or continue indefinitely. Faced with such a dilemma, there is only one course open to an employer, and small blame to him if he takes advantage of any pretext to rid himself of an intolerable incubus at the first opportunity. If he belongs to a federation of employers he goes further and blacklists his late tormentor in order to save his colleagues

from a similar experience. But again the word " victimisation " passes from mouth to mouth and the strike fever runs through the land.

Students of recent strikes will have noticed the remarkable unanimity with which the organisers have concentrated on the formulated demand for " no victimisation " as one of the prime antecedent conditions of a settlement involving a return to work. The experienced agitator takes no unnecessary risks. After he has given full vent to his hectoring proclivities, after he has done all the damage of which he is capable—whether he has won or whether he has lost—no sooner is " time " called than he thinks of the future and insists on the insertion of a clause in the armistice terms which will save his immediate skin and enable him to consolidate his position so as to be advantageously placed for the next attack.

So much for one side of the shield, let us now turn to the other. In all factories throughout the country there exist keen spirits who are actuated by a desire to improve their status and to organise their fellows. These men have no intention of keeping their mouths shut—they feel that they have a mission and they mean to fulfil it ; they are not necessarily out for trouble, but they will not submit to anything that, to their way of thinking, constitutes an injustice. They are also imbued with a strong belief in the catholicity of Labour interests and are sticklers for the letter of the law in all things that pertain to the ritual and the practice of Trade Unionism. If the employer is a wise man who knows his job and keeps in touch with the spirit prevailing in his workshops ; if, at all times, he is prepared to meet his men and discuss matters on a mutual basis of reasonable compromise ; if the working conditions in his factory are as good as he can make them, he has nothing to fear from the type of agitator whose temperamental idiosyncrasies we have just outlined. If the employer is in any doubt as to the true character of the individual he has to deal with, the best thing he can do is to reserve his judgment, exercise patience, display a wise tolerance and leave the sequel to the good sense of the community. No people are sharper than working men in recognising the symptoms which distinguish the false prophet who is out for self-aggrandisement, the seeker after notoriety who cuts no ice ; and a quiet chat with a few senior men and, if necessary, the calling together of a works meeting to discuss the matter, will generally result in the painless extinction of the disturbing element.

If, on the other hand, the employer is a superior sort of person, obsessed with his own importance, ill-mannered and

indifferent to everything except his balance sheet, things take on a very different complexion, especially when working conditions are such that just cause for dissatisfaction and complaint is rife throughout the factory. Under these circumstances so-called agitators spring up like mushrooms in a darkened forcing-house. A spirit of discontent breeds indifferent workmanship and an atmosphere of irritation encourages "ca' canny" restriction of output, bad timekeeping and every other evil that mismanaged industry is heir to. Blind to his own shortcomings, the angry employer tries to fix the blame on any shoulders but his own, and he soon arrives at the conclusion that all would be well if he could get rid of the pestilential influence of critical busybodies such as shop stewards and the like. Not very sure of his ground, and afraid to state his case openly, he has recourse to victimisation—this time the genuine article—and, under the pretext of shop discipline, sets traps to trip up likely candidates for the order of the boot. He knows it is not in human nature to be perfect and so he can afford to wait. The alleged agitator may be late in the morning, may be given to gossiping in working hours, may be seen distributing literature or what not. If the man whose card has been marked for dismissal is smart enough, by care and circumspection, to avoid these elementary pitfalls, more ingenious measures can be brought into operation.

Factory rules which are tacitly ignored so far as the majority of the staff are concerned can be strictly applied in his case—some foreman, conscious of the real desire of his employer, will supervise the work of this particular *bête noir* in a spirit of rigid exactitude and presently, after a succession of pin-pricks, a cumulative series of naggings, the man loses his temper, says things which in calmer moments he would have avoided and is dismissed in consequence.

The troubles of the victimised man are often only beginning when he leaves the gate of the works from which he has been fired. Other employers, who are not acquainted with the true facts of the case, are disinclined to engage a man with a bad name and so he is turned down again and again. The weary search for employment may continue until his rent is in arrears and his tools in the pawnshop. Such, with variations, is the story of hundreds of men who have been metamorphosed from keen critics of workshop conditions into vitriolic enemies of the whole system of industrialism. But enough said—we have drawn the picture of a particularly unpleasant type of employer. That such men exist is unhappily too true. We hope and believe, however, that the species is gradually

becoming extinct and that industry will soon be rid of one of its greatest handicaps.

But it is not sufficient to eliminate the individually bad employer, there is room for improvement even in establishments controlled by Government. The history of the last twenty years contains not a few examples of bureaucratic victimisation. There is, for example, the classic experience of the Postal Trade Union officials, who were desirous of obtaining a Parliamentary Committee of Enquiry into the conditions of the Post Office staff. Acting upon the instructions of their Executive, these officials wrote to all Members of Parliament asking them to support their demand for such an enquiry, and were dismissed from the public service merely for the offence of signing their names to this appeal. Eventually the postal employees got their enquiry; but the victimised men were never reinstated. They became paid officials of their Union and succeeded in building it up into a powerful and virile organisation.

In reading newspaper accounts of strikes one is often struck by the apparent triviality of the ostensible cause. Such and such a man is dismissed under circumstances which suggest that he was manifestly in the wrong, and one is tempted to wonder why thousands of his mates should take the matter sufficiently to heart to inconvenience themselves to the extent of going out on strike for his reinstatement. The explanation may be that the whole story was not disclosed at the enquiry—the particular dismissal which brought about the strike might be negligible and even defensible if it were an isolated incident, but might amount to a serious case of victimisation if it was in fact the last of a series of similar events, the cumulative effect of which had persuaded the men that ulterior motives had been at work. We will reserve for a future article the question of another type of victimisation which is prevalent, not amongst employers, but within the charmed circle of Trade Unionism.

## MONEY—AND WHAT IT MEANS.

THE practical, matter-of-fact British citizen who believes only what he sees and is guided by the light of his own personal experience, is under the impression that the process of doubling the wage he receives *for a given amount of work* will necessarily double his wealth. The man with ten pounds in his pocket cannot be argued out of the firm conviction that he can obtain twice as many of the things that he wants as he could if he had only five pounds to spend. Dispute with him this apparently self-evident proposition, and he can immediately put you in the wrong by proving the force of his contention at the nearest shop. In reality, of course, such an experiment, applied to an individual case, is inconclusive and misleading. Experimental proof of the lack of purchasing power of mere money without the necessary complement of real wealth, can only be demonstrated on a national scale. The fact that, in England to-day, the possession of coin means the power to obtain such equivalent value of goods or services as may be coveted, has obscured the truth that the possession of money would avail us nothing if the goods and services for which it exchanges were not forthcoming. Isolated on a desert island, the millionaire with his pocket full of sovereigns and his portmanteau bulging with the scrip of all the securities in Threadneedle Street, is obviously poorer in point of fact than the shipwrecked mariner with a strong knife and a serviceable knowledge of handiwork. If, as at the present time, the total supply of milk available in this country is roughly one half-pint per person, no all-round increase of money will turn it into a pint. More cows, not more money—in short, greater production—will alone give us more milk.

The whole scheme of civilised life centres round the exchange of goods and services, and because it is difficult to effect a direct exchange of one commodity for another, money is employed to simplify the operation. As it would involve, say, the tailor, in endless negotiation were he compelled to exchange a fancy waistcoat for a given quantity of milk, butter, bread, meat, beer, heat, light and the hundred and one other commodities he requires, money—a form of machinery, as it were—is introduced to expedite the exchange.

Theoretically, the fact that money is *the medium* of exchange is understood by the majority, but in practice we concern ourselves only with trying to get the extra five pounds, and are content to assume that the goods we want will certainly be forthcoming in exchange for our money.

Money, however, is not the only, nor indeed the principal,

medium of exchange. The great bulk of our buying and selling—or of our exchange—is effected by means of credit. The State issues a limited amount of coin and Treasury notes to facilitate the transaction of the everyday affairs of life; the wholesale transactions between trade and trade and country and country are carried out by the aid of *credit*—or promises to pay at a future date. When the English corn-merchant buys five thousand pounds' worth of wheat from America, he doesn't export the equivalent value in coin. He sends the American merchant a bill of exchange, which is virtually a promise to pay at a future date. The corn merchant places the bill with his bankers, who get into touch with a customer who wants to buy, say, five thousand pounds' worth of Manchester goods from England. The bill is forwarded to the Manchester firm in return for the goods. The two countries have exchanged commodities without the use of money, solely on the strength of the promise to pay. No country has anything like sufficient gold to finance all its trade and must resort to credit. Our comfort and well-being, our ability to obtain even the bare necessities of life, depend upon *exchange*, and the main instrument of exchange is *credit*. And credit is a delicate, elusive instrument dependent on faith in the ability and intention of the trader to redeem his promise. This guarantee of good faith is effected through the banks of the respective traders. The bill is drawn, not on the individual, but on a bank, and it is obvious that the credit which one country enjoys in relation to another is ultimately dependent on the stability of the nation as a whole—the pivot, that is to say, on which the enjoyment of wealth depends is *national stability*.

When the exchange value of the currency of any modern State goes down, the first result is that the cost of living goes up. If British credit had not been able to stabilise the relative value of the shilling as compared with the dollar, the cost of living, high as it is, would have been from 25 to 30 per cent. higher. When the cost of living increases it is invariably the poorer members of the community who are the first to suffer and the last to recover.

The diagrammatic representation of the foreign Exchange history of a given standard of money in four of the Great Powers affected by the war demonstrates the paramount importance of credit, or national stability, on the wealth of a country. Taking ten pounds—*i.e.*, two hundred shillings—as our standard, we find that in April 1915, after the first disorganisation caused by the shock of war had had time to subside, 200 Shillings were equal to 48 Dollars, 235 Marks or 115 Roubles.

|                | Shillings | Dollars | Marks | Roubles |
|----------------|-----------|---------|-------|---------|
| April,<br>1915 | 200       | 48      | 235   | 115     |

After the retreat of the Russian Army in December 1916, the rouble fell nearly 40 per cent., but the Mark also decreased in value, which argues that neither the Russian defeat nor the German victory were entirely responsible for a currency depression which, to some extent, was common to both countries. At this time, it may be observed, the Shilling was only fractionally depressed in relation to the Dollar.

|               | Shillings | Dollars | Marks | Roubles |
|---------------|-----------|---------|-------|---------|
| Dec.,<br>1916 | 200       | 47½     | 272   | 160     |

The first Russian Revolution (Kerensky's régime) had very little effect on the value of the Rouble, which had experienced by February, 1917, a further fall of less than four per cent., whilst during the same period the Mark had depreciated some five per cent. Meanwhile the Shilling and the Dollar underwent no change.

|               | Shillings | Dollars | Marks | Roubles |
|---------------|-----------|---------|-------|---------|
| Feb.,<br>1917 | 200       | 47½     | 286   | 166     |

For the next few months the Rouble remained approximately steady. When, however, the chaos of the Bolshevik régime threatened to destroy Russian credit the value of the Rouble fell with startling rapidity, until in February, 1918, this coin, which used to be worth two shillings of our money, only fetched sixpence halfpenny in the open market.

|               | Shillings | Dollars | Marks | Roubles |
|---------------|-----------|---------|-------|---------|
| Feb.,<br>1918 | 200       | 47½     | 248   | 370     |

On the other hand, when the military fortunes of the Allies were at their lowest ebb, that is to say, when Amiens and the Channel Ports were in danger, the Dollar and the Shilling remained stable, and the German successes were only indicated on the Exchange by a rise of two per cent. in the value of the Mark.

|                | Shillings | Dollars | Marks | Roubles |
|----------------|-----------|---------|-------|---------|
| April,<br>1918 | 200       | 47½     | 243   | 372½    |

After the total defeat of Germany the Mark depreciated to a very considerable extent, but its fall was far less than that which had already overtaken the Rouble—which at the date of the armistice had shrunk to a quarter of its original value.

|                  | Shillings | Dollars | Marks | Roubles |
|------------------|-----------|---------|-------|---------|
| 11 Nov.,<br>1918 | 200       | 47½     | 357   | 450     |

At the present time,—viz., January, 1919—whilst the relation between the Shilling and the Dollar remains stable the Mark continues to lose ground and the value of the Rouble is such an uncertain quantity that the words “No Market” are used on the Stock Exchange to describe it.

|               | Shillings | Dollars | Marks | Roubles   |
|---------------|-----------|---------|-------|-----------|
| Jan.,<br>1919 | 200       | 47½     | 395   | NO MARKET |

From these diagrams it will be seen that whilst military defeat may shake the credit of a country, yet so long as the people support their recognised form of Government and maintain their industries, a well-organised State does not forfeit its claim to the faith of other nations. On the other hand, it will be perceived that internal disorder and the dislocation of industry destroy credit and are the forerunners of poverty, bankruptcy and national suicide.

## POVERTY AND WEALTH.

THE Prime Minister stated recently that in examining recruiting statistics he was appalled to find a much higher percentage of physical unfits in this country than in France, Germany or in any other great belligerent country. "It is not through poverty," he commented. "We are the richest country under the sun. It is not through poverty but through mismanagement. The wealthiest country in the world, hundreds of thousands in their prime, with broken physique because they were underfed, ill-housed, overworked, perhaps many poisoned with excessive alcoholic drinking to which they were driven by squalor."

Truly a most baffling paradox! What is the explanation of this prevalence of great wealth surrounded and undermined by all the sequelæ of poverty? Can we find the explanation in our misconception of the meaning of wealth, in our failure to perceive the true significance of poverty?

How, we ask ourselves, can a State be "the richest under the sun" while an undue proportion of its members—the essential parts of the whole—suffer want? "It is not through poverty, but through mismanagement." Already we have an important clue. Mismanagement, not lack of wealth, is recognised as a cause of poverty. Poverty is recognised as an effect of a known and controllable factor; not as an inevitable condition inherent in the laws of nature and ranking as a prime cause of the prevalence of human misery. If, as a wide definition of poverty, we understand lacking the means of adequate livelihood, we must at once admit that individual poverty, at any rate before the war, was all too common in this country. But the country as a whole is wealthy. Somehow or other we mismanage and squander our wealth so badly that roughly one in three of us is compelled at some period of life to lack the means of adequate livelihood.

Poverty is a comparative term dependent on the physical environment and on the standard of living to which the inhabitants of a country have adapted themselves, and we define it broadly as lacking the means of such livelihood as the environment necessitates. And what is wealth? In the widest economic sense, wealth is everything that satisfies men's wants. The economist computes the wealth of a country by estimating the total amount of exchangeable goods produced and services rendered over a given period. By exchangeable is understood possessing a market value, and therefore capable of being reckoned in terms of money. Now wealth, as defined, is an absolute term used to denote material and useful things. Colloquially the term is used to indicate not merely the thing itself, however, but an abundant quantity of useful things.

In the Premier's phrase it is perhaps used even more comprehensively and means not only the abundance itself, but the capacity for producing an abundance equivalent to universal wealth within the State. Used, as it so constantly is, however, to denote a state of welfare which excludes the condition of poverty, it will be seen that wealth is not one thing but two. That if wealth consists primarily in goods—or production—the value of these as a means for the satisfaction of men's wants is wholly dependent on distribution—or management. Wealth, then, is neither output nor management; it is essentially the product of the two.

But poverty is not the converse of the same fact. A state of poverty may result from actual lack of power to produce the minimum necessary for adequate subsistence, or it may be the result solely of mismanagement. And if we accept the Prime Minister's indictment—as we certainly shall if we trouble to think the matter out far enough—an enquiry into the cause of poverty in this country is an investigation of the results of mismanagement.

Students of the problem of poverty are wont to approach the subject through the manifestations of the disease. Drunkenness, improvidence, physical debility, feeble-mindedness and the inefficiency of the casual worker. Now these conditions are not so much the cause of poverty as the essence of the thing itself. The existence of the individual who has nothing to offer to the State, who is for one reason or another incapable of supporting himself adequately to the end of his life is the manifestation of poverty. The causes of his disability are the causes of poverty, and the problem of his abolition from society is the discovery and removal of the causes which bring it about. And these, in one word, are MISMANAGEMENT. And efficient management is the cure.

The endeavour to determine the causes of poverty, then, resolves itself into the enumeration of the various forms of mismanagement in our social and industrial systems. These fall, naturally, into two groups: mismanaged methods of production and mismanaged methods of distribution. Blind, hitherto, to the very obvious fact that the efficiency of the individual worker is the real measure of continued economic supremacy, we have erroneously supposed it to be in the interests of industry, and possibly of the individual, to allow men, women and children to work under conditions the most conducive to physical exhaustion and to the contraction and spread of disease. "Dangerous" industries have been to some extent regulated and women and children largely excluded. Nevertheless, the vagueness of the Factory Act is still such that

the worker is permitted by law, and forced by circumstance, to work under conditions of heat, light, ventilation and sanitation, and for such hours and at such tension as have been proved to induce specific diseases, such as anæmia, phthisis, heart-disease, lead-poisoning, eye, throat and nose complaints, complete sterility in women, a heightened infant mortality or an impaired second generation. The children of many of our people begin ten hours' daily work in the fatiguing atmosphere of mill or workshop at the immature age of thirteen or fourteen years. Expectant mothers are permitted to stand ten hours at the loom or at the ironing table, or to sit at the treadle machine up to the day of the birth of the child, when the law compels them to desist for one month. The evil moral and physical effects of the present method of remuneration, coupled with the organisation of industry on a system which necessitates a certain amount of unemployment, need only be mentioned to be recognised as an important factor in the creation of the "poverty" type. The resultant perpetual or periodic semi-starvation not only of the man but of the mother of the future generation and of the children during the critical years of life, and the deterioration of character likely to result from insecurity and irregularity of the conditions of life can but speed up the creation of the C3 man.

Cases of poverty arising from an ill-managed distribution of wealth are equally easily demonstrated. Setting aside the vexed question of the division of wealth as between Labour and Capital, excluding the more involved question of the deleterious effects of too unequal a distribution of wealth on the total production and on the character and serviceability of the goods and services in the country, let us consider the expenditure of the wealth which, whether in the direct form of wages, or in the form of state and municipal service, actually accrues to Labour. Take housing and sanitation. Despite the wide permissive powers of the Housing and Town Planning Act, 1909, the working classes of England are largely housed in dwellings crowded into the centre of our large cities, in an atmosphere heavy with the smoke and poisonous dust of the vast works overshadowing them; built regardless of the suitability or healthiness of the site; designed in long rows—back-to-back in thousands of cases, with only a narrow road between the endless rows. Too small to admit of healthy family life, too crowded together to admit of a sufficiency of sunlight and air, and with a lack of adequate sanitary accommodation such as no middle-class man or woman would tolerate for a day. The people themselves are powerless to determine what sort of accommodation they will have for that

considerable proportion of their income which is devoted to the payment of rent. They cannot build their own houses and the total housing accommodation is too restricted to permit of their refusing even the most insanitary. The deleterious effect of our past mismanagement—or total lack of management—of housing on the health and on the character of the nation is convincingly apparent to even the superficial student of conditions first-hand.

In the sphere of education the same mismanagement recurs. The State controls the manner in which the child shall pass the years between the age of five and fourteen, but little or no help is afforded the boy or girl of learning the essentials conducive to the most economical and healthy ways of living, and of the begetting and care of children. In his comparative study on industrial life in England, Germany and America, Shadwell concludes that the general standard of physical fitness is higher in Germany than in England. That the cost of living is lower in England, that food is cheaper, but a relatively larger amount spent on food here owing to the fact that, other essentials being cheaper, a larger proportion of the total income is released for this purpose. The hours of labour are shorter, the wages are higher, the cost of living lower, and yet the physical condition of the average English worker is lower than that of the average German. And the reason, Mr. Shadwell says, is to be found in the domestic habits of the people. "The habits of the people! Here lies the real reason why the German working classes with lower wages, longer hours and higher costs of living, yet maintain a superior standard of physique." Now habits are not innate national characteristics, they are acquired tendencies to given modes of action, which are inculcated by right methods of education.

It is not part of our immediate purpose to detail remedies. The general trend of public opinion is already set in the direction of a better husbanding of our resources. The social sense—the realisation that national prosperity and individual happiness are found ultimately in the subordination of the individual to the social instincts—has grown by leaps and bounds in the last four years. Men and women as such, are more fully alive to the urgency of other's claims upon them as members of an intimately organised association, than ever before in the history of the world. On the other hand, as industrial workers, and as employers and organisers, there exists between these same men and women an antagonism which, if not more bitter than any bred in former times, is infinitely greater in volume and strength, more organised, more articulate. "The whole

basis of human existence is organised association." So long as the productive forces are divided into two groups with—at any rate at some points—divergent interests, wealth, potential and actual, will be squandered and lost in the struggle for the spoil. The prosperous State must unite its members in a common aim. The key to the vast, almost limitless force of an industrial force such as our own will only be found when industry has been recognised as a national service and in some way subordinated to the general well-being.

Socially, on what one might call the distributive side, public opinion is already moving in the right direction. Progress will undoubtedly be exasperatingly slow and hesitating, but on the whole the necessary conversion has taken place and only the natural reluctance of saying good-bye to old idols has now to be overcome. On the productive side, in the world of industry, the change of heart has still to be effected, and ignorance, prejudice and the blindness of vested interest on the one side, with ignorance, prejudice and legitimate grievance carefully nursed and reared to strength by ill-informed and self-interested exponents of the class-war doctrine, on the other side, threaten to precipitate a conflict which shall bring down in hopeless ruin the hard-won progress of the last sixty years' struggle against a harmful and self-destructive individualism.

"The wealthiest country in the world"—and the poorest in health and happiness. To listen, unmoved, to such an indictment constitutes as great a stain upon the nation's honour as our flag would have endured had we remained deaf to Belgium's cry for help. For honour's sake, and then for the sake of our national existence itself, we roused ourselves to superhuman effort, and bore the strain of four years' rack and torture, calmly, almost unconcernedly, indulging neither in despair nor in premature rejoicing through all the fifty-one months of the world's most devastating war. And now another enemy is within our gates—national existence is threatened, not by a foreign host, but by our own apathy and indolence. It is idle to revile the State. The power to convert our riches into wealth in the true sense—wealth which is synonymous with individual well-being—lies not in legal enactments, economic codes and social formulæ; it resides in the individual attitude of mind, in the acceptance of the idea of mutual dependence and the ideal of mutual help. A strong government must preserve unity and coherency by its direction and control, but its strength and ability to effect the necessary measures will always be derived from the national will and spirit that is behind it.—"Save he serve no man may rule."

## THE BARGAIN.

IN the dispassionate phraseology of the dictionary, a bargain is an agreement between two or more parties on terms of give and take. *The* bargain is the commodity or service disposed of by the agreement, which is arrived at by a process of higgling or chaffering. Colloquial use introduces a colouring of its own, and the man who "strikes a bargain" is understood to have made a "good bargain"—a compact which leaves a distinct balance of advantage on his side of the transaction. But in the view of the wise man who relates the instrument of bargaining to its ultimate purpose and value in the activities of life, a true bargain is only arrived at when the parties to the agreement obtain, as nearly as may be, equality of advantage. There is wisdom in the old saw that "it takes two to make a bargain."

We have observed that the purpose of bargaining is to effect the transfer of goods or services. As regards the bargain determining the sale and purchase of goods, we can further describe the transaction as being definitely limited in scope. The quality, nature, amount and time of delivery of the goods is exactly determined and agreed in the terms of the bargain. The completion of the bargain, effected by the transfer of the goods or cash, removes all future liability for the deal on either side, and should either party subsequently feel dissatisfied with the transaction, the blame for the situation rests entirely on his own lack of judgment.

Into the agreement arrived at as to the rate of remuneration for services rendered, however, enter new factors of elusive character, and any endeavour to bring the transaction within the definition of our third conception of a true bargain fails. The present bargain in services in industry has no proper basis of valuation. In the compact effecting the exchange of services for utilities (or money, the power to obtain possession of utilities) it is determined that the amount of service to be rendered shall be computed either by a "time" measure or by a "piece" measure. In neither case can a complete and satisfactory bargain be effected because it is quite impossible to define in the agreement either the amount of work to be completed in the time measure, or the amount of time (the decisive factor in securing a useful bargain) expended in satisfying the terms of the piece measure. Or, in other words, the measure and amount of the thing exchanged being necessarily indeterminate, the bargain must nearly always be a bad one for one party or the other. Unless the time basis ensures an

equable relation between the amount of work completed and the measure of time allotted, that which is done costs more or—*theoretically*, at any rate—less than it should. Similarly, on a piece basis, any maladjustment between the piece remuneration and the period of time proper to the accomplishment of the piece means either extravagant costs of production or insufficient reward of effort.

Now, in industry, these measures of time and piece depend upon the demand for the utilities concerned—an intermediate factor outside the influence of either party. The bargain, therefore, is based on uncertain foundations, and because the parties must always lack precise knowledge of factors vital to the establishment of fair terms, the compact is certain to be in the main of an unsatisfactory character. One side or the other invariably gets “the best of the bargain.” But if the true bargain approximates to equality of advantage between the parties, a bargain in these matters cannot be successfully struck and should not, consequently, be attempted. The interdependence of employer and employed is too intimate to allow of any unnecessary risk of misunderstanding on so vital a question of remuneration; yet so long as a system of payment based on these measures persists, grave and ever aggravated risks are run.

And the solution? A new system must be sought, such as will combine the two measures on one common, definite basis for remuneration. This common basis may be found in the principle of the living wage for all workers, coupled with due regard to the gradations of amount and difficulty of the work done. This living wage should be independent of time or piece, and an additional remuneration should commence when a certain output has been reached. On the other hand, when circumstances prevent employment during all the hours of a full week, liberty, and the ability to enjoy it conferred by the guaranteed living wage, should be the acknowledged perquisite of the steady worker.

When machinery stops working every care is taken to ensure it against possible resulting depreciation. It is overhauled, repaired, oiled, and every effort made to increase its efficiency and prolong its life. The folly and wastefulness of installing a delicate and expensive machine and then grudging expenditure on the lubricant necessary to keep it at its highest pitch of usefulness is apparent to the least enlightened. Yet the analogous case of labour passes, and has passed for centuries, unrecognised by the employing class and the State itself. When labour ceases to work—not because it is weary of work,

or independent of the necessity, but because of some slight maladjustment of the relations between its labour and the world's demand for the service which absorbs it—relations largely controlled by the captains of industry—it is left to take care of itself and maintain its condition and efficiency as best it may. It is difficult to see why the human element in an enterprise should be treated in this inhuman and improvident way, and it is not altogether unnatural that the ready assumption is that the capitalist's interest in his own property takes precedence over human well-being. Possibly, part of the reason can be found in the fact that it is, after all, characteristic of the human to take care of his own property, and our collective responsibility for the members of our own society, though not one whit less real or urgent, is much more remote and therefore more difficult to realise. The State, functioning through the Poor Law, recognises the right to live, but under the existing industrial system is apparently powerless to give adequate recognition to the right to work in order to live. And it must be noted that the money spent in maintaining the idle and the derelict—the majority of whom are the victims and creation of an imperfect social and industrial system—is ultimately drawn from industry. If each industry supported its own workers adequately and continuously it would both relieve itself of most of the burden of Poor Law expenditure and increase the efficiency of its own labour.

The present relation of the worker to his work is unparalleled, uneconomic and inhuman. The employee earning a weekly wage regards his presence in the workshop as entitling him to that wage. The loss involved in the incomplete employment of his time falls upon his employer. In the labour world every fluctuation of demand which is strong enough to affect the industry at all falls primarily upon the piece-worker. Short time is the time-worker's burden. But the cost is nevertheless indirectly borne by capital, and is needlessly inflated by the present system of remuneration. When demand slackens it is to the vital interest of the time-worker to resort to some form of *ca' canny*. Time wages persist at full rate irrespective of output. It may be confidently asserted that the abuse of machinery, the waste of materials and power and various overhead charges that must result from spinning out work in order to maintain a full time wage would go a good way towards defraying the extra wages bill that seems to be demanded under the system suggested. The remainder would be more than covered by the increased efficiency of the worker under conditions of security and plenty.

## SOME VIEWS OF THE MINORITY PRESS.

THE conclusion of an armistice having deprived the Minority Press of its favourite theme—hostile criticism of the conduct and continuance of the war—the newspapers which this term embraces have now, with singular unanimity, burst forth into a positive chorus of “Revolution.” No matter what the subject ostensibly under discussion may be, it is made a peg for some threat, direct or indirect, towards revolutionary action.

Thus, *The Socialist* (December 12th) urges the necessity for establishing a Soviet Republic for Britain, and in describing the present form of Government as “a Capitalist Dictatorship in the interests of Capital” points out that in order to carry out the required reform it is essential that “the working class must become the ruling class.” During the transition period it will be necessary that the working class should exercise a “Proletarian Dictatorship over the whole of society and bend it to its will.” The watchwords in the meantime should be “*Social and Economic Equality! The land and the instruments of production for the People! A Soviet Republic for Britain! All power to the Workers and Soldiers Councils!*”

*The Call* (November 28th) appeals to Soldier and Sailor Electors to vote for the Social Democrats who have “for years urged you and all our fellow men and women of the working class to unite for the Social Revolution.” A picture is drawn of the Capitalist class demanding more and more sacrifices from the workers, and readers are asked to show by their future action that they are shoulder to shoulder with their fellow workers in all lands “for the accomplishment of the International Social Revolution.” In another article in this issue of *The Call* the workers are urged to reply, in answer to the Prime Minister’s proposed reforms, “Too late! The time for petty reforms is past! The Social Revolution is the order of the day.”

In *The U.D.C.* (December) the editor, E. D. Morel, states that the submissiveness of Democracy has broken down under the prolonged privation and savagery of the war, and “the immense constitutional changes in Germany, themselves the herald of the ensuing Revolution, should give an immense impulse to Democracy.”

*The Herald* (December 14th) says that “the time has passed when the workers were content with the hope of mere reforms.” “Labour is demanding to-day not reform, but revolution; a peaceful revolution it may be, but a revolution.” Labour is demanding Freedom, and “the winning of Freedom means the

destruction of Capitalism." The "workers" are reminded that of all the great issues that will "enormously influence the industrial conflict in the coming years" the greatest issue is the conflict between "democracy and oligarchy for mastery in the State."

*Freedom* (December) in a leading article which urges readers not to take any part in the election of a form of Government which has always meant the domination of the many by the few, begs the workers of all countries to "unite and sweep away all the rotten and out-of-date institutions of your masters and in their place build up anarchist groups . . . sweep aside all who would curtail your freedom and keep you enslaved." Another article in this issue points out the futility of putting the new wine demanded by the masses into old worn-out political bottles, and asks if the workers have the courage to break with their old faiths and put their trust in co-operation with communism. If so, then "while our masters are counting votes we can count our acres, our looms, our houses and by *direct action* take charge of all those means of production which alone will bring us peace and victory."

*The Labour Leader* (December 12th), in an article alleging the unfair distribution of wealth by which Labour in return for producing *all* the wealth receives only one-third for its share, whilst the capitalists and landlords receive two-thirds, says: "The only remedy for this state of affairs is a new social order, which means that the workers shall gradually take the production and distribution of all the wealth into their own hands. . . . Workers! think the matter out for yourselves and demand the full fruits of your labour."

Writing in *The Workers' Dreadnought* (December 14th), W. F. Watson is convinced "that revolutionary industrialists will sooner or later have to build up, through the Workers' Committees, a National Administrative Council outside of any Capitalist structure, to supersede the functions of the Parliamentary machine."

*The Herald* (December 14th), in congratulating the N.U.R. upon the concession of the eight-hour day, says that, though the politicians will acclaim the victory as another proof of their sympathy with the people, "the workers will realise that it is unionism that has put the fear of God into the hearts of our politicians, and will recognise the truth of the saying that 'economic power precedes political power.'"

*Solidarity* (December) advises the workers to tackle "problems of peace" wholeheartedly, because the motto of the "master class" is "Divide and Conquer," and traps are being set with

fresh bait to keep the workers slaves. *Solidarity* considers that the National Administrative Council of the Shop Stewards and Workers' Committee Movement should call a conference of the rank and file immediately, which, in its turn, should decide (1) its attitude towards Parliamentary action; (2) exactly what is meant by "the control of industry." The conference should then lay down a plan of campaign for the *immediate future*. "The pressing need is for us to strengthen our forces to obtain Industrial Solidarity."

The Minority Press is also much occupied with the task of justifying the Bolshevik regime, and attacking the Allies for their intervention in Russia. Nearly every issue of these papers contains at least one article on these lines. H. N. Brailsford (*The Herald*, December 14th) says that "the Bolshevik regime survives because experience shows that it is, as yet, the only effective alternative to reaction," and "foreign meddling can only end in a military dictatorship acting for the propertied class." Brailsford considers that there can be not the faintest pretext for Allied military action in Russia, beyond the open avowal of its real purpose—interference in the international politics of Russia. He says that a League of Nations which begins its career by making war upon the Russian people will repeat the worst errors of the old Holy Alliance.

Tom Mann (*Solidarity*, December) writes that Russian workers alone have realised the new order of society for which all Socialists are striving. "They are a glorious example to the world, and to none more than to British workers."

*Freedom* (December) suggests that railwaymen and miners should imitate the action of the E.T.U. at the Albert Hall and stand still until the Government agrees to withdraw troops from Russia, and machine operators and compositors refuse to print telegrams from reactionaries in Russia, Germany and France, unless space is given to workers' organisations in those countries.

Another writer to *Freedom* says that the intervention is due to mortal fear in Governments lest "brother worker, without waiting for the politician's blessing, should stretch forth a hand of fellowship to brother worker in other lands. . . . The reign of force will automatically cease and the fruits of victory will go to the exploited masses in all countries." He also complains that though "it was a well-known fact in September that the end of the war was near, yet a large body of 'freedom-loving' British Tommies were then sent from England to Siberia with expressed intention of putting down the Bolshevik movement in that country."

*The Call* (November 28th) prints a reply by Lenin "in anticipation" of Mr. Balfour's statement that the policy of the Bolshevik Government is one of extermination by starvation, murder and wholesale execution of all parties who do not support their regime. Lenin says that the British Capitalists forget their own year of Terror—1649—and the French forget theirs of 1793. He says, "Terror was justified when it was employed with the object of substituting one exploiting minority for another, but it became a monstrous crime as soon as it began to be employed for the abolition of all exploiting minorities in the interests of the overwhelming majority." Lenin further argues that if the doing to death of 10,000,000 human beings, and the crippling of 20,000,000 more is justified in the World War, then why should the sacrifice of a million or half-a-million victims of the Civil War be considered a crime?

In an election address to "The Fighting Forces" *The Herald* accuses the Prime Minister of attempting to purchase a new lease of power by claiming credit for the exploits of the fighting men and at the same time of cheating them out of their votes. "Without consulting you, he and his associates are to make the peace—without consulting you he is making a new war—men who enlisted to fight Prussianism are being sent to the Arctic to fight Socialism. The Conscription Act passed by Parliament for the war against Imperial Germany is being used to force men to a war against Democratic Russia." "You went out to fight for freedom, but you yourselves are not to be free." "You remember the scanty separation allowance." "You remember the miserable pensions paid to your disabled comrades." "Ask yourselves where your true interests lie. The issues are clear; a lasting peace or more war; freedom or subjection; democracy or oligarchy; the cause of the workers or the cause of their masters? The future of Britain is in your hands."

POSTSCRIPT.—Since the above was written *The Herald*, of January 11th, has appeared with an account of what it calls "The Great Mutiny." No more deliberate attempt to incite British troops to mutiny has ever appeared in the English Press. This poisonous treason, which ought to be burnt by the public hangman, is the logical outcome of the policy advocated by *The Herald* for many months, and is a direct challenge to the continued existence of law and order in this country.

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

There is a time-honoured gibe which declares that figures can be made to prove anything. The soupçon of truth that gives this saying its flavour was never better exemplified than by the claims which have been put forward as to the true interpretation of the arithmetical results of the General Election. One statistician, bolder than his fellows, induced *The Globe* to publish a calculation proving that the National Party, with only two members elected, had demonstrated the strength of its hold on the country, this naïve conclusion being based on the number of votes it problematically *would have* received if it had contested sufficient seats. The claim put forward by Sir Leo Chiozza Money, wherein he sets out to prove at one and the same time that the Labour Party won a great victory and suffered a considerable defeat, is hardly less ridiculous.



The registers showed a total of seventeen and a half million people entitled to vote. Of these some forty per cent. went to the poll and gave a clear majority to the Coalition of about half a million votes. It is objected that the great preponderance of parliamentary seats which the Coalition secured at the election is out of all proportion to the value of the margin by which the victory was achieved. At first sight this criticism appears not unreasonable, but on the other hand the Coalition, with equal arithmetical justification, might answer that if the excess of half a million votes was equally distributed over the whole electorate their candidates would have won every seat in the United Kingdom with an average majority of over 700 votes in each constituency; but of course the truth of the matter is that when a contest is conducted under a given set of rules the result can only be estimated in accordance with those rules, and it is quite beside the mark to speculate as to what would have happened if the conditions had been different.



But if arithmetic will not avail us to explain away accomplished facts there are many lessons that may be learned, many misconceptions that may be avoided, if we study the results of the election with intelligence and impartiality.



The 78 seats won by Labour as compared with 15 in 1892 and 42 in 1910 indicate a considerable advance in Labour representation in the House of Commons, and all evidence goes to prove that when we return to more normal times, the number of Labour Members will be increased many fold and

that the advent of a Labour Government is no longer outside the range of practical politics. Whilst the I.L.P. captured only three seats out of the 50 which they contested, the success of patriotic Labour was one of the best defined features of the Election. It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the wholesale defeat of the Hendersonians was due, not to any lack of attractiveness in their social and industrial programme, but to the resentment felt by the great mass of the people at the cynical disregard of national sentiment with regard to the war that has given this group such an unenviable notoriety.



Viewed in perspective the situation reveals a picture in which, for once, Nemesis is the centre figure. It is seen that all the manœuvres, intrigues, and foreign-inspired counter-plots that made up the policy of the I.L.P. have only resulted in piling up the Coalition majority and in eliminating the arch-conspirators from the House of Commons. If Labour is well advised it will not regret the disappearance of certain undesirables from the ranks of its parliamentary team; but, on the other hand, it is a little hard on the party to have its funds depleted and its representation reduced by the operations and excursions of a group of so-called intellectuals who are obviously out of touch with the sentiments which animate the bulk of the working classes of the country.



It is, however, a cardinal error, but one into which many have already fallen, to assume that the capacity for mischief of the said undesirables is at an end. As the memory of war issues becomes more remote, as new grievances crop up, and as the fruit of never ceasing missionary effort matures, old scores will be forgotten, new ones will be invented, and the bywords and reproaches of to-day may become the idols of to-morrow. Nor is there any justification for the belief that leaders who have been discredited in the political arena will be disregarded in the field of industrial action. More frequently than not the exact reverse is the case, and too much emphasis cannot be laid on the undoubted fact that political failure is a direct and potent stimulus to the forces which make for industrial unrest.



*The Call* (January 2nd), having stigmatised the election as "a farcical travesty of every principle of political democracy, deliberately overridden for the economic advantage of the

few," concludes that "the inevitable result of the capture of Parliament . . . will be the use by the workers of direct industrial methods. . . . By the artificial creation of unemployment, by every device possible, efforts will be made to weaken the powers of the industrial organisations. But the idea that the strike shall be used to compel the attention of Governments, and that by combining political and industrial action the workers' demands can be achieved, has sunk too deeply into the working-class mind for a manipulated election result to afford protection to the propertied classes. . . . The most unscrupulous piece of political trickery in history has deprived British workers of all effective means of expression in this mock Parliament. But they have an invincible weapon in their industrial power."



The programme of the Social Revolution has been revealed in a pamphlet written by Edgar and Cedar Paul, and circulated by W. F. Watson. What are described as "the new tactics" consist of "industrial unionism, workers' committees, independent working-class education . . . Bolshevism in industry, Bolshevism in politics, and Bolshevism in education. And the watchword of the revolution is "All Power to the Workers' Committees !"



The Bolshevik Government in Moscow pretends to be representing Russian peasants and workers, but, as a matter of fact, that Government has taken refuge behind the strong walls of the Kremlin and is being guarded by several thousands of Lettish soldiers who are foreigners in Moscow and who guard the Bolshevik Government against any attempts on the part of the Russian labouring masses to overthrow them.



An appeal signed by leading Russians in England representative of various shades of Russian political opinion warns us to beware of Bolshevism in these words, "We know, since we and our dearest have had experience of it, what the 'ordered State' of Bolshevism really is. It is the negation of freedom in all aspects—liberty of speech, liberty of the Press, liberty of thought, liberty of life. It is the lack of every guarantee, of all justice. It is poverty and famine for the many and wealth and satiety for the few; it is an orgy of robbery, a reign of bribery and violence such as was never known in the darkest hours of the Tsarist régime. It is a mockery of all that is sacred to men: religion, family, home and country."

Speaking of M. Troelstra's agitation in Holland, M. Marchant, a prominent Liberal-Democrat, said in the Dutch Chamber: "He holds a pistol to the head of the bourgeoisie, but asks the bourgeoisie to help him in governing the country. He desires to put an end to uncrowned kings, and at the same time he wants to become an uncrowned king himself. He blames Prussian militarism, but wishes to import Prussian Socialism." These remarks are not inapplicable to the attitude of certain extremists amongst ourselves.

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By the untimely death of Theodore Roosevelt the whole world is morally poorer to an extent that will not be fully realised, if at all, until the present generation has passed away. In the presence of such a compelling personality there was no room for indifference, no possibility of arriving at a just estimate of the man by weighing this quality against that and striking a balance, as we do with lesser folk. Generous in thought, courageous in action, mentally and physically alert, human in sympathy and always uncompromising, when principle was involved, he stood for righteousness without cant, and for idealism without impracticability, a combination as rare in these latter days as it is precious at all times and in all countries. Of his work *The New York Times* says, "his vital achievements were the reformation in business morality brought about by his storming assaults upon rooted evils and his powerful and effective appeals for preparedness in the year preceding our call to arms. By his labour in these two fields he profoundly influenced the thought and character of his fellow men." Would that Britain could discover his like at the present crisis, one of whom it would truly be said that he gave "a new ideal of the duties and responsibilities of citizenship. The national atmosphere was cleaner and purer for his efforts."

◆ ◆ ◆  
Our article, "The Mother of Invention," has brought us a number of enquiries concerning the new water-gas producer plant to which we referred. Fuller details of the invention will be found in *The Motor* of January 14th.

◆ ◆ ◆  
The appointment of a Research Board to consider and investigate the relations of the hours of labour and of other conditions of employment to the production of fatigue is to be heartily welcomed. The members of the Board are well chosen and their names will command universal approval. There is, however, one remarkable omission the reason for which is not immediately apparent. We refer to the fact that the Board as constituted includes no women.

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**FEBRUARY**

MCMXIX

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“To-day it is by serving England each of  
us best serves himself.”

—*J. R. Clynes.*



# INDUSTRIAL PEACE

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# INDUSTRIAL PEACE



## THE SUPPRESSION OF RIOTS.

It is obvious that, as a last resource, any civilised State must be prepared to employ military force to protect the lives and the property of law-abiding citizens against mob-violence ; but this form of defence is so full of risks, the danger of reaction is so probable, and the results of failure so disastrous, that it can only be justified by absolute necessity when every other method has been tried and found wanting. It is an open question whether any such necessity can be demonstrated to have arisen in Glasgow on the last day of January, when troops with fixed bayonets and machine-guns were paraded in the city to overawe the rioters. It will be said that the end justifies the means, and that, in fact, restoration of order was achieved without bloodshed and without any pronounced evidence of public resentment. Such an opinion is certain to be held, and no doubt the argument will convince those easy-going persons who are satisfied to judge only by immediate results, and to assume that what has been, must be. But shortsighted conclusions are too often belied by later developments, and, unless we are very careful, one of those unhappy precedents may be established which wiser counsels will teach us to regret, when perhaps it may be too late to repair the mischief.

The constitutional British method of dealing with riotous assemblages is police control, and the man in khaki should take the place of the man in blue only after the constabulary has been proved to be unequal to the occasion. It is a sound military maxim that victory rests with the commander who makes the best use of his reserves—and as the soldier is the last reserve that Government can call upon even in the most desperate situation, it is bad tactics, and worse strategy, to run the risk of squandering this force or of diminishing its effectiveness by premature employment in preliminary skirmishes. But this reference to tactics, though it has a practical importance of its own, is an almost trivial consideration in comparison with the issues that are involved in the larger question of the limits within which military interference in civil disputes is legitimate and advisable. From the soldiers' point of view the machine-gun is a weapon which accomplishes its deadly work with a maximum of efficiency ; but in the view of those who understand the psychology of British crowds, who have studied the history of

riots, and whose vision reaches beyond the deceptive exigencies of the moment, the machine-gun is the very worst argument that any Government can possibly be persuaded to use under any circumstances short of desperate emergency, for it is an indiscriminating argument which deals out the same measure to the innocent and to the guilty.

The justification for the employment of any force resides ultimately in the sanction of public opinion ; but the national conscience is very sensitive and very uncertain on this point, and woe betide the Government and its agents if they exceed the measure of force that is barely sufficient for the immediate purpose in view.

The mechanism of the machine-gun is designed for war, with the single object of killing as many people as possible in the shortest possible space of time ; the object of the civil authority is to restore order without inflicting loss of life or serious bodily injury. For these reasons the machine-gun is likely in the long run to prove more dangerous to the executioner than his victims. Paraded as a warning, it may possibly achieve its purpose without an aftermath of trouble, but let it once be used in earnest and no man can foresee the consequences.

It may be enunciated as a general law deduced from the history of revolutions that the more violent the methods adopted by the Government for the suppression of outbreaks, the more violent the subsequent course of events. The relation between cause and effect is seen to be clear and unmistakable. We may go further, and say that unnecessary violence employed by authority in the earlier stages of disorder is the surest way to encourage the spread of the revolutionary spirit. The most experienced, the most persuasive and the most versatile agitator cannot carry on successfully without ammunition, and nothing suits his purpose so completely, nothing provides him with such telling propaganda as the ocular demonstration of the doctrine that he is always so ready to preach—viz., that capitalistic Governments are reckless and brutal when the lives and liberties of the proletariat are involved. Conversely, the history of English riots goes to prove that moderation, even apparent weakness, in the type of repression used, brings its own reward, for whilst unduly drastic measures raise a storm of indignation against the Government employing them, public opinion instantly rallies to the support of authority when the forces of Law and Order are temporarily overcome by a violent mob.

Instances of this temperamental peculiarity amongst English crowds could be quoted by the score, but the following examples will serve to illustrate our argument. The fatal Gordon riots

of June, 1750, in which over two hundred people were killed and a much larger number wounded, is an outstanding example of the misuse of troops in time of civil tumult. After a squadron of dragoons, who sympathised with the rioters, had refused to obey orders, infantry soldiers fired into the crowd, which thereupon broke into a frenzy of violence and started sacking and burning. For a whole week rioting continued almost unchecked, and it was not until thirty-six incendiary fires were raging simultaneously, and after the King's Bench, Newgate and Fleet prisons had been stormed, that the authorities began to gain the upper hand. At Birmingham, in 1839, cavalry was again employed against the rioters. This infuriated the mob, and the soldiers were withdrawn. Subsequently the task of keeping order was entrusted to a strong levy of special constables, locally enrolled, and these succeeded in restoring order. In 1848 the Chartists, assembled at Kennington Common, threatened to descend upon London. At this crisis 200,000 citizens enrolled themselves as special constables. The Metropolitan Police were told off to guard the bridges, and troops were held in reserve, hidden in houses on the Middlesex side of the river. The Duke of Wellington took command of this police army, and so perfect were his arrangements that, without the display of a single redcoat, the rioters outside dared not advance to the attack, and their sympathisers within feared to make any demonstration. On the other hand, the Bristol riots, the so-called Peterloo massacre and the outbreak at Featherstone, in all of which military repression was used, have never been forgotten, and are still quoted with gusto by those who wish to exhibit authority in an unfavourable light.

But when we leave the province of historical reminiscence and approach the present problem which confronts us we encounter an aspect which, unpleasant though it be, we cannot afford to ignore. Quite apart from ethical considerations, we are compelled to inquire whether it is safe to trust a weapon which, under certain circumstances, might turn in our hands. The revolutionary elements realise that a loyal army would defeat their hopes, and so they have spared no effort to spread disloyalty in the ranks of our soldiers. No man can tell how far this poisonous leaven has extended, but the days of unreflecting optimism are numbered, and we dare not take avoidable risks. The immediate mobilisation of special constabulary on a large scale is called for in the national interest, and we might do worse than copy the example of Switzerland and Holland, both of which countries have organised a civic guard as a bulwark against Bolshevism.

## PUT YOURSELF IN HIS PLACE.

**Being an intercepted letter from Captain Charles Vickmore, M.C., 6th Royal Contemptibles, to his father, Sir George Vickmore, K.B.E., Chairman of the Glasfield Engineering Company.**

DEAR FATHER,—What's the matter with you people at home ? Have you all gone mad ? Has the machinery for industrial reorganisation, which we have heard so much about, broken down, or is the whole thing a myth that never existed except on paper ? Before I left England there was a good deal of talk about the Whitley Report and the Industrial Councils which were to be established with the object of investigating and settling disputes before they reached the acute stage, but so far as I can gather from the newspapers, you are all living in a chronic state of tension which seems to consist of a succession of strikes, threats of strikes, and eleventh-hour concessions.

As you know, I have always, and strongly, held the view that Labour is entitled to the maximum benefits in the way of higher wages, improved factory conditions and shortened working hours up to the full limit which the volume of production can afford without economic disaster, and, of course, it goes without saying that there is never any excuse for lack of courtesy and consideration in dealing with the men, even when it is impossible to accede to their claims ; but there must be a lot of ill-conditioned people about on one side or the other if, at this critical time, you cannot get on with the job of reconstruction without all this wrangling and bitterness.

Being out of touch with the true inwardness of the situation at home, I must be ignorant of many tendencies and cross-currents which you, being on the spot, can interpret and appraise at their true value ; but it requires no special knowledge to realise what will happen to industry if things go on much longer as they seem to have been doing lately. I don't profess to be anything of an economist, but even I can understand that if more men are employed in the mines at higher wages, whilst the output decreases, the price of coal must soon reach such a figure that all industries which depend on cheap fuel must be handicapped to such an extent that our manufacturers will be unable to compete with America, even in our home markets. What an irony of fate, what a score for Germany, if we, who have put out the greatest effort of all the belligerents, should

deliberately ruin ourselves more completely and irretrievably than if we had lost the war !

Naturally this aspect rankles more than enough amongst those of us who have been through all the discomforts, not to mention the dangers, of the fighting. Now that at last we have beaten the Boche, surely we ought to be able to agree amongst ourselves and take full advantage of the wonderful future which lies before the British Empire. Prussian militarism may have been as black as it was painted, but, when all's said and done, the German people were happier and more prosperous under that system than we look like being after the Syndicalists have impoverished industry until it can no longer support our population, and until emigration becomes the only alternative to unemployment.

Quite apart from the fact that every sane man ought to be sick and tired of fighting, I can imagine nothing more foolish than embarking on a conflict which everybody with any intelligence can see must end in the defeat of both parties. It really looks as if the dead and gone Karl Marx was going to succeed where the Kaiser and all his generals have failed.

I have read dozens of speeches by Government officials, Labour leaders, and other big-wigs, giving their several versions of the cause of industrial unrest, but their conclusions do not seem to tally with the plain facts of the case, nor can I understand, if, to quote a well-worn phrase, "the heart of the nation is sound," how it comes about that the whole drift of the national temper with regard to labour matters not only remains radically "unsound," but gets steadily worse from month to month. I have no doubt but that the difficulties of demobilisation and reconstruction are immense, but I don't see how these difficulties can possibly be overcome without a great deal of mutual forbearance and without a most earnest determination to save the situation before it is too late.

Sometimes I wonder whether you people at home realise how far you have travelled on the road to industrial bankruptcy—it may be that whilst you can't see the wood for the trees, we out here get a truer perspective of the nature, though perhaps not of the extent, of your mutual misunderstandings. Before I joined the Army I remember reading a book, I think by Charles Reade, called *Put Yourself in His Place*. I have forgotten the details of the story, but the main idea stuck in my mind, and the mental habit of trying to size up the true values of a problem by the simple expedient of putting myself in the other fellow's place has been an enormous help in arriving at a satisfactory solution of many a knotty point. If two men stand back to

back, one looking north and the other looking south, it is only natural that they should disagree about the details of the surrounding landscape. The best way of convincing the pair that both are in error is to make them turn right about. This elementary military manœuvre (when translated into practical statesmanship) has the incidental advantage of compelling the two men to see each other face to face at point-blank range. I recognise that face to face and eye to eye are a long way from being the same thing, but if I may venture to instruct my elders and betters in the gentle art of sucking eggs, I would suggest that officers and privates, employers and workmen, and all others who are associated in any common task or business, should make the simple experiment that I recommend. It costs nothing and gives away no principle, it can't make things worse, and if it serves no other good purpose it is still worth while because it proves the good faith of both parties to the dispute. If one side refuses whilst the other consents, the onlooker need not be a Solomon to judge which of the two is in the wrong.

Not improbably you may answer that I am talking through my hat, and that I have no idea of the complexity of the situation; but isn't it possible that that very complexity would disentangle itself if both sides could be induced to adopt my plan? I admit the difficulty of educating working class opinion in the technicalities of high finance, in the laws of supply and demand, the functions of capital, the necessity for increased production, the intricacies of credit, and all the other abstruse pre-occupations that occupy the Captains of Industry. But this is not necessary. What you have to do is to win the confidence of the men, who will be quite willing to trust you in these matters if once their minds can be disabused of the suspicion that they are being "bested." But there is generally a short cut as well as a long way round, and I believe that if employers would learn to look at industrial questions from the point of view of the wage-earner, and act in the spirit of the knowledge thus acquired, the short cut would disclose itself almost automatically, suspicion would disappear, and the more difficult operation of carrying out the second half of the programme would no longer be necessary. Let me have your views on this matter when you have time to write.

Your affectionate son,

CHARLES.



## THE SHOP STEWARDS' PROGRAMME.

OCCASIONAL references to secret conferences called by the leaders of the Shop Stewards' movement have appeared from time to time in the daily Press. We hear of one being held in London and another in Birmingham, and it has been suggested that the object of these conferences is the discussion of methods by means of which a handful of workers, acting unofficially, and repudiated by the legitimate Trade Union leaders, can hold up society and enforce their terms.

The advocates of this policy admit that even unofficial Trade Unionism is to them neither more nor less than a suitable medium through which to exert their influence. Mere modification of present hours, wages and conditions, however drastic, will never satisfy them. Their aim is the foundation of a new society, and, by the enforcement of a series of excessive demands, they hope to render the present form of industry impossible so as to prepare the way for the new ideal.

They recognise that their objective cannot be attained without the support of the rank and file, most of whom are Trade Unionists before they are anything else, and so a programme is drawn up ostensibly on the old familiar lines, but in reality utterly foreign to the whole principle of collective bargaining as understood and practised by official Trade Unionism. The following summary of the main features of the programme will afford some insight into the general tenor of the whole.

The document opens with the declaration that the terms of the programme are binding on the signatories thereto and can only be altered after the expiration of one month's notice of such intention.

Working hours are to be forty per week, to terminate at 6 p.m. on Friday. If there are two shifts they shall be from 6 a.m. till 2 p.m., and from 2 p.m. till 10 p.m. If three shifts, the third shall be from 10 p.m. till 6 a.m., but this shall count as twelve hours for payment, and not eight. In every case there shall be a break of half-an-hour for a meal, included in the eight hours and paid for.

When the Unemployed Register of the Trade Union concerned reaches two and a half per cent. the Unions reserve to themselves the right to order any reduction of hours they consider necessary, and such shorter hours shall carry the full week's wages.

"Overtime shall not be allowed except in very special cases. Each case must be submitted by the employers to the Union for consent before any overtime is worked, except in cases of sudden 'breakdown,' when the Shop's Committee shall be allowed to decide on the merits of the case. All overtime to be paid double time."

"Where payment by results is in operation, or is introduced, it shall only be allowed on a Fellowship system."

"Arrangements to be made for ten days per annum to be observed as holidays at the customary periods. When they fall on a Saturday or a Sunday the following working-day shall constitute the holiday. In addition an arrangement shall be made for each worker to have two clear weeks' holiday per annum at convenient dates. All holidays to be paid for."

As regards out-working allowances, if the worker cannot get home at night, he is to receive his full wages, plus seventy-five per cent., plus travelling expenses. Regulations affecting apprenticeship prescribe that there shall be not more than one apprentice for every three journeymen, with payment all the time on a most generous scale.

No man is to be called upon to work more than one machine at one and the same time, unless the machines are purely automatic, or unless the sanction of the Shop Committee and of the Unions has first been obtained.

In the event of disputes, there shall be a conference between the employers and the Trade Union, which must be held within seven days. There shall be no cessation of work pending the conference, and the conditions prevailing prior to the dispute shall operate until agreement is reached.

When the workman wishes to leave, he is to do so without prejudice from his employer, provided he has given notice of his intention to the Works Committee.

The note of dogmatic aggression which runs through this programme is the worst possible approach to that spirit of co-operation which must be present if industrial peace is to be established, and the fact that some of the claims advanced are in themselves not unreasonable only serves to increase the insidious danger of the movement, for the whole is conceived purely from the producers' point of view, without reference either to the capacity of the country to yield the ransom demanded, or to the power of the Trade Unions to obtain it. The aims are seductive and for the most part only summarise a state to which Labour has long aspired, towards which it has steadily worked since the inception of Trade Unionism, and to which it must and ought eventually to come if the progress of

civilisation is used and interpreted aright. The working man, arguing superficially from the extraordinary accomplishments of the last four years, only too readily convinces himself that all things are possible to those who express their desires loudly and insistently. Blinded by the glare of immediate gain, he abandons the slow, sure methods of experienced leaders and eagerly swallows the larger bait held out by the Shop Stewards. And apparently there is none to warn him that, however abundant its fruit, the uprooted tree will never bear another crop.

Active and immediate measures must be taken to put the true facts before every working man, so as to enable him to judge between the relative values of the moderate but realisable claims of his true friends and leaders and the revolutionary and destructive policy of the unofficial programme. The claims of the Shop Stewards are put forward without regard to the needs of the country, the prospects of industry, the international trade situation, or the unprecedented difficulties likely to arise during the next two or three years. Our future as a nation, promising as it is in many respects, is by no means assured by our past efforts, but rather depends upon our ability to use the opportunities our victory has created. Initiative and enterprise are not lacking, but who will venture to shoulder the abnormal risks entailed in big industrial undertakings by the possibility, nay, the certainty, of the ever recurrent and increasing unrest that the adoption, on any large scale, of the Shop Stewards' attitude must entail? Commercial risks are undertaken in the expectation of an adequate return, but the risks must be reasonable and within defined limits, otherwise enterprise is stifled, capital is not forthcoming and labour must go unemployed.

Labour is indeed an essential part of the economic machine that makes possible our social life, but it is only a part, and depends for its being upon its relation to the whole. The hasty and rigid enforcement of the Shop Stewards' programme, which considers only the part and ignores the sources of its own vitality, can only lead to industrial decadence and social conditions in which the workers and their wives and families would be the greatest sufferers.



## THE MINIMUM WAGE.

LONG ago public opinion conceded "the right to live." The crude acknowledgment by the State of this elementary right is exhibited in the Poor Law System which, unattractive and uneconomical though it be, is nevertheless a legal endorsement of an accepted principle. But the recognition of the right must be associated with some effort towards the provision of the means of its realisation or the right becomes an empty sham, a husk devoid of kernel. In the last resource, the law supplies the bare necessities of existence, upon conditions so crushing and intolerable that they can be, and are, only acceptable to the helpless and despairing. The law says, in effect, "You need not starve; you are at liberty to exist—under conditions that practically preclude any effort to help yourself." But a just and well-informed public opinion demands more than this. It calls insistently for a fair opportunity, for every individual, of access to a secure and reasonably comfortable life. And in a world where there are still masses of unorganised and unskilled labourers competing one against the other in an open market, the first essential step towards this end is the minimum wage. A Health Ministry for the physically and mentally unfit, penal camps for the incorrigibly idle, a minimum wage sufficient to support life adequately—these things, not the soul-destroying methods of the Poor Law, are the natural concomitants of an honest admission of the right to live.

Let us consider exactly what the minimum wage involves, and what it means to unorganised or unskilled labour. It implies, in the first place, the adoption of some standard of living "below which population shall not decline." Public opinion determines the sum which it considers sufficient to meet the needs of a decent life for the individual, and demands that every fit man or woman performing a fair day's work, no matter how unskilled the task, how relatively humble, or how keen the competition, shall receive that sum as payment for his labour. On this side it is a universal extension of the Trade Boards Act, and involves, therefore, a measure which has already been tested and which has "made good." To the worker the minimum wage, coupled with an adequate unemployment and health insurance scheme, means relief from the main burden and anxiety of his life—insecurity. Under existing conditions the unskilled worker, no matter how industrious and steady he may be by nature, is never really sure of a constant income from week to week—sometimes even

from day to day. He is at the mercy of every random influence that disturbs the labour market. The slightest falling-off in health, the fluctuations of his own trade, or of any trade employing labour in his district, the influx of cheap immigrant labour; in the case of women, the advent of the pocket-money worker, or of the worker who is content to supplement the family wage without being entirely self-supporting; any of these fortuitous circumstances may rob the steadiest worker, at least temporarily, of his job. Other work, it will be said, is found. Eventually it is in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, but meanwhile the family budget has of necessity been reduced to a minimum. The comfortable little home has probably been reduced to the absolutely essential requirements in beds, tables, chairs, and pans. The children have learnt the meaning of hunger, and have seen their father impotent to relieve their distress. Only the staunchest can go scathless through repeated experiences of this kind. In the majority of cases the slum-dweller is the inevitable product of the system. Disheartened by perpetual fluctuations in an income too small to admit of adequate individual provision against these protracted "rainy days," compelled at some particularly bad time to establish his family in the least expensive slum, the man, consciously or unconsciously, drifts into a manner of life requiring the minimum expenditure on home and family. In the good days the surplus is spent on extravagant fare, clothes, drink or amusement. And when the lean days come, the family, having no liabilities beyond the four or five shillings weekly rent, cut off the "luxuries" and contrive, in some mysterious fashion, to procure a hand-to-mouth existence until better days come round again. Need we wonder at the thriftlessness and extravagance of the poor? Or rather, are the poor really thriftless, or does the system under which they live inevitably lead all but the very strongest to an apparently thriftless way of life?

That the establishment of a national minimum wage offers enormous advantages to the worker will hardly be disputed. How is it likely to affect the employer and the consumer? Commissioners on the working of the Trade Boards Act report that the increased rates of pay resulted in so rapid an increase in the efficiency of the workers that it was not found necessary to raise the price of the article in order to secure the returns customary in the trade. In other words, *increased wages* have in every case (under the Trade Boards Act) resulted in lower labour costs. Given the proper housing reform and a Ministry of Health to help us rid ourselves of the incubus of the C3

man and mother, the minimum wage and insurance schemes will create and maintain a race of efficient, self-supporting and contented workers. No one measure will afford a panacea for all our social and industrial ills, but no measures will ultimately avail unless they are rooted in the self-sufficiency of the individual citizen. And this can only be obtained by the adequacy and continuity of the income of the humblest grade of worker. Every form of service for which there exists a public demand must be recognised as worth a living wage. The man or woman who performs a service must be enabled by virtue of that service to meet the requirements of a healthy life. Otherwise his earnings must be subsidised—a process involving much expensive and cumbrous machinery of the Poor Law type, and much suffering and deterioration to the individual, and giving an altogether inadequate return for a constantly increasing expenditure. The underpaid service is, in the long run, the greatest drain on wealth ; it is not only a dead charge on industry, but it breeds the inefficient in ever-increasing numbers and feeds upon the vital sources of wealth itself—efficient labour.

The difficulties in the way of the adoption of a minimum wage are many and various, and though some would disappear of their own accord as soon as the advantages of the system had had time to operate, others, though not insuperable, would call for special measures. To the former class belongs the problem of the existence of a large army of workers incapable of earning a living wage—incapable, that is, of rendering an amount of service entitling them to the share of goods and services essential to our conception of a decent life. As already quoted, the Trade Boards Act has proved that the living wage rapidly converts the half-starved and wholly listless and discouraged worker into an efficient member of society. The degree of efficiency attained is low, it is true, but sufficient to enable the individual to contribute as much as he takes from society. The existence of the incompetent in large numbers is indisputably due to the faultiness of our social and industrial systems in the past ; it is but just, therefore, that the present burden be shouldered and, in the course of time, eliminated by those who in the past have created it, and in the future will reap a share of the reward. And not only justice—that cold, dispassionate arbiter so beloved by the Englishman—but common sense, humanity and even self-interest plead eloquently in favour of the adoption of such a course.

The very grave difficulty of uniform piece-rates does not really arise here. The minimum wage is a time rate guaranteed

to every worker in each industry. It has been clearly established that, owing to a variety of causes, frequently very difficult to determine, the individual output in similar factories varies very considerably. The amount, therefore, of work that must be done to earn the national minimum and the additional rates paid for the application of intelligence and effort resulting in output above the requisite minimum, would be fixed by the Works Committee of each factory, subject, in case of disagreement between management and workers, to the District Committee of the industry in question.

The main difficulty underlying the adoption of the minimum wage would probably be the present impossibility of applying the principle uniformly. The cost of living varies so greatly in different parts of the country that the minimum in one district might be wholly inadequate in a second, or excessive in a third. Either we must introduce a series of district minima in place of one national minimum, or measures must be adopted to eliminate the local variations in the cost of living. Again, the minimum wage itself would tend automatically to reduce the differences. The present system of transport charges is, if not the most important, certainly a powerful influence. The nationalisation of railways paves the way to the elimination of this particular cause. Carriage of goods could be conducted on a system analogous to that adopted by the Post Office and outlying districts could be linked up by suitable transport facilities. Of course, there are difficulties in the way, but while the individual would at least find that he "gained on the roundabouts what he lost on the swings," the nation as a whole would reap considerable benefit. The scheme is not altogether a new and untried one, and we have the example of the principle as applied in Switzerland. The greater dispersion of the population by the utilisation of factory sites suitable hitherto in every respect except as regards their proximity to railways or sources of supply, would in itself make for a healthier population, whose efficiency and increased pleasure in life would more than justify the extra cost the system would at first entail.

Radical changes are necessary, and the minimum wage goes direct to the root of our social and industrial disease, and, whatever its difficulties may be, the possibilities of its adoption and the social and industrial amendments necessary to its success, demand the most careful consideration of all concerned in forming a coherent and comprehensive plan of the manifold and interdependent factors necessary to our maintenance as an independent nation.

## THE STRANGLEHOLD ON LABOUR.

IN one sense, every strike is detrimental to the public interest. Still more is it against the public interest that any strike should be successful. We are not denying the justice and the social value of the right to strike. If the men have a just claim which they are unable to enforce, or a genuine grievance which the masters will not be persuaded to redress, then it is right that they should have the power to gain their point by direct action. Even so, the strike will be against the public interest, because an important issue is decided, not on its merits, but by the application of blind force. The necessity for an ultimate appeal to force is, at any rate, so far as we can see at present, undeniable, but the power to use it must reside in the hands of an impartial body, who will apply it only when, the case in dispute having been decided in the light of previously-determined rules and standards (as in the common law of England), the compliance of the offending party cannot be otherwise obtained. The unchecked application of force by any party that fails to obtain what it wants by the simple expedient of asking for it, is a public menace. The world has stood aghast at the folly and excesses to which the cult of force committed the German nation. The strike or lock-out policy is analogous.

In the past labour has frequently found itself at an unnecessary disadvantage. It was a fact that an unenlightened employing class either enjoyed more than their legitimate share, or, far more often, owing to their selfishly timid and shortsighted policy, hindered the worker from the attainment or creation of his share. The argument of force was then applied with eminently successful results because, in these particular cases, might happened to be right. But a dangerous creed of *might is right* was thereby fostered, and to-day the question amongst disciples of the newer unionism would appear to be not, is the claim just, reasonable and beneficial to the majority, but are we strong enough to enforce our demands. And thus the successful strike but forms the prelude to a further strike, since desire is insatiable, and the only curb to its fulfilment is lack of power.

And where is it all leading? There are a few men in the country whose word carries conviction to all parties, and because we believe that this is truer of Mr. J. R. Clynes than of any other labour leader we quote direct from a recent speech delivered by him at the American Luncheon Club. Speaking

of the industrial situation to-day, Mr. Clynes said: ". . . in the main there is a tendency among Trade Unions to make demands, and to press them, that the trades cannot very well afford to meet, and which the country will not for some time be able to bear. . . . We have lost so much wealth and got into such a state of disrepair during the period of the war that all the energy that we can bring into industry is required for the purpose of enormously increasing our products and thereby adding to the aggregate of wealth of this and other countries." Underlying and ostensibly conditioning all the aims of Labour we find one simple and altogether desirable ideal: the "National Minimum"—"the securing to every member of the community, in good times and bad alike, of all the requisites of healthy life and worthy citizenship." Labour's justification for the application of force, then, should be the impossibility of achieving this aim by other methods. Let us see how far the present actual demands made under the menace of direct action are in consonance with this ideal.

The gradual worsening of the economic situation throughout Europe in each successive year of war constitutes an irrefutable fact. And, in addition, we have the grave warning of Mr. Clynes, an able and far-sighted statesman, whose fidelity to Labour interests could hardly be questioned by even the most extreme leader of the younger Labour movement. The nation's need to-day, we may fairly assume, therefore, is increased production—production on a scale large enough to make good the losses of the past and to ensure "the national minimum of health, leisure, education and subsistence." With the goodwill of all parties this can be brought about by more scientific organisation, by the wider use of the best machinery and by the common-sense employment of human effort regardless of the fundamentally uneconomic restrictions on the employment of labour and the individual output of effort prevalent in 1914. The pre-occupation, then, of honest and enlightened Labour would be the means to the attainment of these desiderata. And such is, indeed, the policy of the best elements in Labour. On the other hand, an examination of the recent strike demands of two of the strongest and wealthiest sections of Labour reveals an outlook so out of tune with the needs of the times, and particularly of those less fortunate members of the community whose welfare is Labour's avowed aim, that the impartial observer is forced to conclude that their goal is not the building up of "a new social order based on fraternity," but rather the apotheosis of the class struggle, of the Sinn Fein creed, and that their attitude is so irrecon-

cilable, so obviously contrary to the people's welfare, that they would rather witness the eclipse of the whole nation than fail to assert their own domination of the situation, and to lay greedy hands upon that "surplus wealth" which, they so constantly insist, is in the guilty hands of the robber capitalist.

The miners demand a 30 per cent. increase on present wages, a six-hours' day, and the nationalisation of the mines. The engineers, having obtained the 47-hour week, call for a revision of piece rates to enable them to earn the same total weekly wage as hitherto on a decreased output of work. Shorter hours, higher wages for the miners; shorter hours, higher rates for the engineers; output per man per hour to remain as before. Does the intelligent worker really believe that the profits on the mines, for instance, are so enormous that the 25 per cent. reduction in hours and the 30 per cent. increase on the wages of more than a million miners can be shouldered by the industry itself? Certainly not. The mines are to be nationalised, and then presumably the wages of this particularly favoured class will be paid out of the "surplus wealth" created by all the workers in the country. W. L. George, offering "Labour's armistice terms to the rich," stipulates that the increase must be real, not nominal. "It is no use settling strikes by tricking us—namely, by raising prices equally with wages: our increase must come off profits." But all attempts to create profits are rigorously excluded from the programme of the political strike leader, whose aim is not industrial welfare, but the overthrow of the existing system of parliamentary government and the substitution of a Soviet form of control. The Joint Committee of Workshop Stewards—the instigators of the strike outbreak in London, Belfast and Glasgow on January 27th—"resolve to demand a 40-hour maximum working week, with the object of absorbing the unemployed. If a 40-hour week fails to give the desired result, a more drastic reduction of hours will be demanded," and they summarise their immediate programme in the following short sentences quoted from a leaflet recently circulated. "No more hours than forty to be worked per week. No reduction of wages. No resumption of work until demands have been conceded." The principle of the absorption of the unemployed is right, but its application demands sacrifice and self-denial from all until better organisation and more scientific methods of production supply the aggregate of wealth that will permit of the enjoyment of the National Minimum in return for, say, a six-hours' working day.

A very little arithmetic will prove that industry does not at present yield anything like the total amount of the increases demanded. Yet, if Labour insists, the wages must be found. So, failing a Government subsidy, the price of coal must go up, and because practically no industry is independent of coal the price of everything else will go up. Moreover, the members of one trade will not be content to see better conditions than they enjoy themselves obtaining in another trade. They, too, will insist upon shorter hours and higher pay. Prices will again go up, till finally the worker will awake from his dream of "might and ourselves alone" to find that the diminished purchasing power of his money has absorbed his increase of wages, while the costliness of his product has robbed him of his hold on foreign markets and precipitated him in industrial ruin, worklessness, and starvation.

Labour *can* have the National Minimum, not by dint of coercing the State or devouring "surplus wealth" (which is quite inadequate for the purpose), but by improved machinery and better organisation directed towards greater production per unit of human effort.

In deliberately ignoring this side of the question, the extreme section of Labour is obviously trying to render the position of the capitalist untenable and overthrow the present system. Now, the capitalist system as we have worked it in the past may not be perfect, and may well merit radical modification, but the course at present pursued involves the ruin not of the capitalist alone, but of the country as a whole—and the misery of millions of idle workers will not be less intense than that of thousand of employers lacking contracts. We cannot have the National Minimum without importing from foreign markets, and we cannot pay for imports if the price of our exports prohibits their acceptance by other countries. No country will send a measure of corn to England in exchange for a bale of cotton goods if the same measure of corn will exchange for a bale and a half elsewhere.

No individual, no class, no nation can determine its exact course by a policy of force coupled with complete disregard of its dependence upon the interaction of others—unless its goal be suicide. Self-determination can only take place within the limits imposed by the complex organisation of modern society. The self-determination of Labour within these limits would be a real step forward in social progress. The attempt of the extremists to dominate the situation to the exclusion of all other interests, to effect their own emancipation by the expedient of revolution rather than in co-operation, means national disaster from which no class will escape.

## THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CRAFTSMAN.

THE abnormal conditions obtaining in the engineering industry during the war period have created a remarkable position for the skilled craftsman. It has been proved by experience that much of the work done by highly skilled men is of such a simple nature that it can be done by people utterly ignorant of any workshop practice. Of this fact the skilled men are perfectly aware. It has been so frequently demonstrated that a certain amount of fear has gained prominence in the minds of the men themselves and influenced the guidance given by the Trade Union officials. So serious has the matter become that the leaders of the men have brought pressure of every description to bear in the hopes of curtailing what they regard as a dangerous practice. Although up to the present no satisfactory solution has been found (the skilled man persisting in regarding the dilutee as an unwelcome trespasser menacing the quiet enjoyment of his jealously guarded preserves), one can take comfort in the hope that the unfriendly attitude of mind is only the temporary setting of a stage in industrial revolution. For the skilled craftsmen do not, and need not, fear the dilutee, and most of the expressed animosity arises from the influence of syndicalist propaganda, with its specious promises of a new world for the unfortunates of the existing system. But the promises of the Syndicalists are illusory and economically wrong, and the industrial history of the war has shown much of the old trade union policy to have been unsound and unprogressive. The true Trade Union leader knows it, but the mass of Trade Unionists are naturally not easily divorced from principles which have guided them and their fathers from the slough of utter helplessness to the independence born of the union of great numbers, and they fall, therefore, an easy prey to the Syndicalist leaders, who urge them to hold fast to the familiar rights and customs, nurturing thus a spirit of unrest and of hatred for all who try to sweep away the shackles that will impede the continued progress of Labour. It is so easy to persuade the men that the forfeiture of every old-time right is a capitalist trick to further enslave the worker ; so difficult to convert the mind to new ideas, however sound and full of promise.

If the men and some of the Unions persist in their present attitude there will be many long, hard fights in which the Trade Unions, their members, the engineering industry, and the nation

must suffer heavy loss. Many of the old methods and principles of Trade Unionism have had a tendency to retard progress, inasmuch as they, instead of levelling up, have levelled down. The incompetent workman has been carried on the back of the competent man, and the capable and efficient workman has been checked by having to keep pace with the inefficient. Production is retarded and the nation's wealth reduced ; the workman is unfairly treated inasmuch as he is not allowed to develop his earning capacity to the full, and little by little discontent grows as the result of the penalisation of ability imposed and maintained by the workman through his Union. It is unfortunately true that during the war the skilled workman has never been adequately remunerated for his degree of skill. It was the skilled workman, and he alone, who made it possible for the diluttee to earn a living wage. Without his aid the diluttee would have been hopelessly lost as to how and where to begin. Notwithstanding this, many employers, blind to their own and the nation's interests, have been callously obdurate in the unfair treatment meted out to the skilled men. The slight increase added to the skilled men's wages was wholly incommensurate with the nature of the work and the responsibilities borne. A far more equitable method of remunerating the skilled man for his labour would have been the granting of a bonus on the production of the diluttee for whom he was responsible and whose work he made possible. The absence of such a simple remedy bred discontent where satisfaction might easily have reigned. Nor was this discontent unjustifiable, for every skilled man knew that he was receiving actually less in total wages than the diluttee subordinate to, and dependent on, him.

The war being virtually over, the period of reflection has begun. The skilled man feels that in consequence of his patriotism he had been badly treated and seriously exploited. He knows that the exigencies of the Empire's peril necessitated—whether he would or not—the setting aside of protective conditions which he had spent years of his life and pounds of his wages to create. With these facts deeply embedded in his mind and the self-evident results before his eyes, the skilled workman is to-day fighting hard to clear all the dilutees out of the engineering industry. Unanimous in their desire and accustomed to co-operate for the achievement of such ends, the craftsmen have quickly and quietly got to work and are, to the best of their belief, rapidly regaining for themselves control of the ability to earn the highest possible wages. Now, on the surface, such action may seem natural, and, in essence, fairly general in all ranks of life in a competitive system. The baleful effect of

the policy is evident from an analysis of the motive underlying the action. Filled with a suspicion and discontent emanating from the firm belief that there is no reward for improved or increased effort, the workman is rapidly converted to a gospel of life in which money, and more money, no matter how it has been obtained, and quite irrespective of increased efficiency and output, is the end of endeavour.

At present the skilled men, prejudiced by a sense of past injustice, remain blind to the change and progress effected by the war throughout the industrial sphere. In the future their earnings will depend largely on the ability to produce at low costs and the dominating factor will be the increased efficiency of manufacturing generally. In a world in which manufacturing is to play so great a part, the diluttee, as well as the highly skilled, will find his place, and each enlarge the possibilities of the other and enrich the nation as a whole. It is up to the skilled man to appreciate the diluttee at a true wage-earning value. Instead of driving him or her indirectly on to the Union's funds he should increase the reserve of those funds by directing the unskilled man's labour to useful account. This can easily be done, and it is only a matter of adjustment which hinders the welding of the skilled and unskilled into one whole from which both parties could reap a lasting benefit.

On the other hand, Capital will have to prepare readjustments, not only of machinery but of output and production. The keen competition which will certainly come from the great American Republic and from Japan must inevitably change many methods of manufacture. One of the greatest changes will be the cheapening of production, effected by improved machinery and the adoption of the best of the principles of scientific management evolved by America years ago. That high wages and cheap production are inseparable from the industry of to-morrow is as certain as the dominance in the future of the engineering industry itself. It is certain that the Japanese intend to make a big bid for the textile industry of this country, but it can only be captured if the skilled men here, through wrangling and strikes, afford the opening. There will be no room for false sentiment. Competition takes no cognisance of that unmarketable commodity. It seeks the goods, and it is the nation that delivers them promptly and up to standard that will succeed. How far the skilled men of Great Britain will rise and seize the greatest opportunity of their lives remains to be seen, but it is certain that neither the Government nor the people are willing to be ousted by the foreigner owing to petty jealousy at home.

To meet the new demands the employer will have to draw upon the enormous numbers of unskilled workers throughout the country. The country could not afford to lose the business, even if it necessitated such a drastic step as driving the skilled man himself temporarily out of the engineering industry; and the employer would, therefore, of necessity be backed up by the Government if any such action were taken. Nor would this cause more than a temporary dislocation of the industry, as there is at hand a large reservoir of highly intelligent and extraordinarily adaptable unskilled labour. That reservoir is not indifferent as to its future. It contains the germs of success, being keenly interested and enthusiastic, and, so far from wishing to retard production, is anxious to further its increase. Nor is it the intention of the Government and of the nation to allow that productive capacity to be wasted. At the nation's cost it has been created and trained, and there is no reason, other than prejudice, why its earning capacity should now be lost to the State. It was brought into existence to meet a great emergency of world-wide importance, and although the clash of arms has ceased, a period of industrial strife might make serious demands on the productive capacity of every man with any knowledge of the engineering industry. The need for the craftsman is by no means ended, nor will it be so long as the engineering industry exists, but he must realise and shoulder his responsibilities to the nation and to his fellow workers, or suffer replacement by a new class of skilled worker.

## THE RECONSTRUCTION SOCIETY.

THERE is a time for all things, and though propagandists who devote their energies to the dissemination of advice lay themselves open to the charge of theorising instead of taking action, there is at present only too much evidence that if the situation at home is to be saved, the imperative need of the hour is a greater knowledge of fundamental facts.

The time has come for the recasting of the mould of our national life. The old form is cramped and out of date, and many of us are only too anxious to "scrap" it and start again. The new mould is in the shaping, plastic to our touch. Ambitions run high, each hopes to find a place for this or that long-cherished scheme, and there is a tendency to assume that the possibilities of the re-cast are illimitable. The moment is ripe for an immense leap forward, but we must inevitably jostle and foul each other if we take it in the dark. The nation stands to-day at the crossways with everything within her grasp. No greater opportunity has ever offered : science, political freedom, the individual realisation of the value and dignity of work, mutual regard, goodwill, and the desire for better things have grown apace during the last four years despite the sustained effort of the irreconcilables to antagonise the classes. What a calamity, what a tragic betrayal of the hundreds of thousands of lives laid down, if, through ignorance, malice or confusion, we take the wrong direction, or dissipate our strength by breaking into hostile groups and running to and fro in ineffective directions !

These things being so, one of the greatest services that can be rendered to the Commonwealth is the direction of well-informed and moderate propaganda devoted to clearing away the prejudices, misunderstandings and misrepresentations which obscure the national outlook. Amongst the organisations that have undertaken this task perhaps the most energetic is the Reconstruction Society.\* The aim of this association is to forward the re-building of the Empire by educational work, by wide dissemination of the facts concerning proposed constructive measures, and of the fallacies underlying Bolshevik propaganda. A non-party organisation, founded in 1908, the broad policy of the society is the promotion of all measures

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\* The Reconstruction Society, 58-60 Victoria Street, London, S.W. Secretary, C. H. Dant.

of true social reform. Its object is to maintain the position of our country, to defend the Constitution as a whole, whilst striving incessantly for the improvement of the details of its structure, and furthering industrial and social reform on sound, harmonious lines.

The method employed for the furtherance of these ends is publicity and propaganda carried out by trained lecturers and public speakers, and by means of the wide distribution of literature in simple pamphlet form. A complete list and specimens of these latter can be obtained on application to the Secretary, Mr. C. H. Dant, and the following titles will give our readers some idea of the variety and purport of their contents: "Reconstruction: Political and Economic"—"Mr. J. R. Clynes and Reconstruction"—"Methods of Production: American and English Ideas Compared"—"The Co-operative Movement: A Warning to its Members"—"The Land and its Problems"—"Extension of Small Holdings and the Settlement of Discharged Soldiers and Sailors on the Land"—"Why not Become a Bolshevik? Russia's Eight Good Reasons"—"The Measure of Bolshevism"—"Bolshevism in Britain"—"The Bolshevik Mad Dog."

Active campaigns have been carried out by the society against Bolshevism and Labour unrest deliberately fomented amongst the miners in South Wales and the shipbuilders on the Tyne, in Southampton and Coventry, and public meetings are held daily in London with the object of supplying the workers with sound facts wherewith to resist the arguments of Bolshevik agitators.

To organise, to combat, to educate, to build up afresh, to help Labour to free itself from the influence of anti-patriots and of self-destructive agents; to reconstruct our social system on humanised and truly progressive lines, and to promote all social reforms tending to further the development of every individual as a self-maintaining and self-directing asset of the State—such is, in brief, the scope and purpose of the promoters of the Society; diffusion of knowledge the instrument with which they seek to realise their aims.



## SOME VIEWS OF THE MINORITY PRESS.

THE recent happenings in Belfast and on the Clyde have served as a signal to the Minority Press to concentrate upon "the only war that counts—the Class War" (*Freedom*, January), and the cause of the dispute is entirely submerged by the tide of triumph at the prospect of "the General Strike at last."

Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, writing under this heading in *The Workers' Dreadnought* (February 1st), says that the workers in Belfast have started a movement "which contains within itself the capacity to establish the Soviets in Britain." "The general strike . . . is the most educative of all weapons because it reveals to the workers their own limitless power. Nothing can crush the general strike if the workers remain solid, for remember that *soldiers, sailors and policemen are also workers and no violence can be used towards industrial strikers without their permission.*"

Miss Pankhurst urges the workers to enlarge their demands in order that the result may be more than worthy of the sacrifices involved, and she informs her readers that the foremost spirits leading the strike are hoping to "set going a movement which shall not end until the workers have secured the complete control of industry and till an industrial council of workers' delegates shall have replaced the present Parliament."

*The Call* (January 30th) in a leading article entitled "Full Steam Ahead for the Revolution" foretells a rude awakening, "and that very soon," for the complacent and short-sighted people who imagine that things are going to settle into the old pre-war grooves. It expresses great satisfaction at the rapid reduction in the number of working hours demanded—from a 54-hour week to a 30-hour week is a far cry—"but why stop at a 6-hour day or even a 30-hour week? Why not, whilst we are about it, go for the complete control of industry by the workers so that they may fix the working day needful to provide the necessaries, and even some of the luxuries for every worker and his wife and children, and none for the idlers able to work?"

*The Call*, in common with all the organs of the Minority Press, makes a great point of the identity of interests between the workers and the soldiers and sailors, and states that an encouraging feature of the present position is that "men of the Forces are standing shoulder to shoulder with their brethren in industry." It is a curious fact that this brotherhood was not discovered until after the signing of the Armistice; indeed, during the war this section of the press invariably described the Army in terms the reverse of brotherly.

*The Call* expresses itself very strongly against Mr. J. R. Clynes' proposal of an association of employers and workmen, and prophesies that, whether they would have it so or not, Mr. Clynes and the Labour leaders must soon fall into line with the demands for industrial unity and complete control by the workers in the common interest ; or, failing this agreement on their part, they must witness the utter collapse of the traditional trade unionism.

This issue of *The Call* prints three articles under the title of "Rumblings of Revolution." The first of these is an invitation to Socialists to study the unrest in the Army as an event of profound significance. It is more than "a craving of soldiers for home. . . . The military might of the world is in the melting-pot ; and we must ensure that these forces reassemble and crystallise, not for reaction, but unequivocally for democracy and socialism." The writer urges that the position justifies the formation of "permanent Workers' and Soldiers' Councils in close contact with organised labour . . . a stable and democratically directed Army of the People, not a helpless, submissive tool for use in any future war for Imperialistic expansion."

The second of these articles is by William Gallacher, who says that the spirit behind the Clyde organisation is strong enough to carry it to victory, and boasts that the strikers have the Glasgow Federation of Discharged Soldiers and Sailors behind them. He concludes : "Now at last we begin to see the light, and, come what may, we will keep on at the fight until at last we emerge into the full light of the Socialist Republic."

John Maclean follows Gallacher and urges his readers to make the strike on the Clyde the beginning of greater things. "Let this be the Class War started at last . . . into the fight, comrades, and make it a real revolutionary one. . . . If the Midlands could be paralysed for a twenty minutes' meal hour surely England ought to be paralysed for a drastic reduction of hours of labour. England, arise !"

Robert Williams, writing in *The Herald* (February 1st), is not so optimistic, and wonders whether these "tremendous events" will really produce beneficial results, or whether they will lead to the old course of the vicious circle. He urges that the working class—who are "now at war, real war, where the alignment of opposing forces is not national or racial, but class"—must learn lessons from the experiences of war and work for "Unity of Command." He asks that the driving power which comes from the rank and file and the Shop Stewards Movements should be coupled together with some measure of co-ordinated action, as at present the greatest drawback to victory is the

absence of concentrated effort. He points out that "the Triple Alliance, together with the engineering trades, might make and unmake Governments and terminate dynasties."

Mr. Philip Snowden, writing in *The Labour Leader* (January 30th), describes the strikes which are now taking place as "the skirmishes before the general attack upon a wide front and between enormous armies," and the leading article in this issue announces that the work of the I.L.P. in the struggle of the present and future must be to direct the spirit of unrest which is so widely manifest. "The half-defined thoughts of a richer life which move the worker to strike for a crumb from the master's table must be turned into definite Socialist conceptions and determinations. When we have done our work Labour will use its tremendous power to effect that bloodless revolution which will make man truly free."

*Freedom* (January), in an article on "Progress of Social Revolution in Europe," states that a keen observer of events has said that it would not be surprising if Workers' Committees and Soviets were in power and in full working order in Britain before the end of 1919. The writer of this article claims that the whole of the Allied statements on Russia is a reminder that "the position we took up at the outbreak of war has been more than justified"—this position being that "the workers of one country have no real quarrel with the workers of any other. That the one war upon which all workers should unite nationally and internationally is the Class War."

In this issue of *Freedom* John Wakeman lays down a programme to be carried out "when the Revolution comes." This programme is modelled on the Bolshevik methods in Russia, and he deplores the fact that it will be difficult to carry out a successful revolution while the average working men and women are supine and do not exist as individuals.

In a note on the Election, *Freedom* says that it matters very little to the workers who sits in Parliament, and consoles its readers for the results of the General Election by pointing out that "the election of such an overwhelming majority of reactionaries is the best thing that could have happened, as many workers will now realise how hopeless it is to expect anything from that rotten and corrupt institution. As we Anarchists have so often pointed out, the workers hold all the weapons with which to gain their freedom if they will only use them." The argument is put forward that if the workers decide to work the lands, mines, railways, etc., solely for the benefit of "the people," there is no one to prevent them—no one, that is, "except those members of the working class who have put on

uniforms as soldiers or policemen, and if they refuse to shoot their fellow-workers the revolution is brought about without bloodshed. . . . The Houses of Parliament could then be used as a museum in which to exhibit those relics of a bygone age, the ballot box and the policeman's baton."

The discontent in the Army over demobilisation is hailed with unconcealed pleasure by all these newspapers, who foresee in a loyal soldiery an insuperable barrier to their revolutionary aims. Every incident which could serve to increase the discontent is seized on with avidity, and the soldiers are congratulated on their "sheer, flat, brazen, open and successful mutiny" (*Herald*, January 11th).

*The Call* (January 9th) points out that the beginning of the collapse of the old order in Russia and Germany was marked by events of a similar character to those at Folkestone and in London, and advises the Socialists to get into touch with the soldiers, whose military training "will be of great worth in our Labour movement."

W. F. Watson (*Workers' Dreadnought*, January 11th) describes the trouble as "most welcome," and on behalf of the London Workers' Committee he extends the hand of comradeship to the soldiers and assures them of the whole-hearted support of the thinking workers in any action they may see fit to take, "however drastic."

Mr. Snowden, commenting in *The Labour Leader* (January 16th), says that the soldiers' revolt has given the Government "a very severe shock," as they see in it the "possibility of a Bolshevik revolution in this country." "The soldiers have given another illustration of the power of direct action."

The Minority Press has lately given great publicity to an appeal signed by Lenin and Tchitcherine, and addressed to the British troops in Russia. The title of this appeal is, "Why have you come to Mourmansk?" and its object to cause disaffection in the British Army in Russia. After disposing of various supposed official reasons for intervention as lies and pretexts, the appeal declares, "You have been brought here to occupy our country in the interest of Allied capitalists. You have been brought here to overthrow our revolution and bring back Tsarism." and ends by saying that for the first time working people have got control of their country. "The workers of all countries are striving to achieve this object. . . . Comrades! Englishmen! . . . remember this! If the Russian revolution is crushed, then the power of the capitalists will be enormously strengthened in every country, and the fight for economic freedom will be put back for a hundred years."

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

Month by month we have been in the habit of printing on the front page of INDUSTRIAL PEACE a short motto especially applicable to some burning question of the moment. In March, 1918, we selected the classic proverb, "Opportunity has locks before but is bald behind." More recently we followed this up with "A breath to extinguish a taper, bellows to kindle a blaze." It is, however, one thing to quote wise saws and quite another matter to get anybody to take them to heart, and so the locks of opportunity are now beyond our reach and the bellows are already being requisitioned because nobody could be found who would take the trouble to blow out the lighted taper. In spite of many warnings, Authority preferred to insist upon holding fast to the mutually-exclusive theorems : (a) that the taper was not alight ; (b) that it would go out of its own accord.



But the fact that past opportunities have been lost, never to recur, is no reason for missing those less obvious and more expensive opportunities which are still to come. If there is a dangerous fallacy underlying the proverb which tells us that it is never too late to mend, there is also a note of encouragement bidding us not to relax our efforts, late though the hour may be. We remember, in the early days of the war, how the faint-hearted fraternity, looking back, like Lot's wife, when they should have been pressing forward, were turned into pillars of salt as they uttered the incantation "Too late." Fortunately, those who got busy prevailed against those who could only repine, and "Full Speed Ahead" will again win the day if intelligence is mated with resolution and good fortune attend on both.



If there is anything certain, anything undeniable in the present outlook, it is that the prevailing spirit of unrest and indiscipline, if left to work out its own damnation, will increase and multiply. Whatever is done must be done quickly—a policy of drift is a policy of *felo-de-se*. Difficulties that are shirked grow like those evil genii so horribly depicted in the *Thousand and One Nights* for nursery edification. Difficulties that are faced often retire again into the magician's bottle, whence they emerged in obedience to the appropriate incantation.



But something more than the wave of a magician's wand is called for. The difficulties which confront us cannot be

got over by explaining them away. They have to be tackled in detail, they have to be tackled earnestly, and they have to be tackled soon. The springs that feed the Severn and the Thames are so close to each other that a squad of Boy Scouts could divert Severn water into the Thames valley and *vice versa*, if they set to work at the right spot in the Gloucestershire hills ; but not all the King's horses and all the King's men could do the trick even a mile or two away. So we must begin at the right place or leave the job alone.



The events of the last few weeks that have caused so much alarm are not altogether to be regretted, for at least in part, they have torn down the veil of complacent, but unwarranted, optimism which, by hiding the truth from the public, allowed the high-priests of *laissez-faire* to jog along the old familiar road to Avernus. Now for the first time it is beginning to be realised by the man in the street that "it is easier to make war than to make peace" and that "if we sow the seeds of discontent and dissension in the nation, we shall reap defeat."



So much is all to the good, but we are still a long way from getting to the root of the mischief. Many a cherished tradition must be relinquished, many a new truth must be revealed before the two parties in the coming industrial settlement learn to think in the same language. It may be that there is nothing more difficult in the whole world than the creation of a new spirit, but it's got to be done, and the water never gets any warmer whilst we stand shivering on the brink.



"At this moment the air of Europe is quivering with revolution. Two-thirds of Europe have been swept away by its devastating deluge, and the situation is full of perilous possibilities ; and if Parliament, the new Parliament, through lack of courage on the part of those who are there to guide it, through the selfishness of interests, or through the factions of partisans—if it fails, the institutions even of this country may follow those of many in the rest of Europe."—THE PRIME MINISTER.



Asked for his advice as to the best line of policy for the State of Kansas to pursue in the sphere of industrial politics, an American wit replied, "Raise more corn and less hell."



We hold no brief for millionaires and are certainly strongly opposed to any state of industry in which they are fashioned at the expense of the working man's health, leisure and comfort,

but when he told the miners that "we can produce enough in less than a six-hour day if we are not producing to make millionaires," Mr. Robert Smillie voiced a false and highly-dangerous argument which is only too readily accepted by the unthinking followers of the Syndicalistic doctrine.



Production in nearly every important industry is conditioned by the amount of coal produced, and (given our present methods) if we limit our coal production, we limit the produce of every other branch of industry, and there will be less than ever to divide amongst ourselves and less to exchange with other countries, who will, of course, give us correspondingly less of their goods. The millionaire does not secrete large quantities of coal in the mysterious recesses of his vast estates. He may secure a larger share of the price of the coal than is just or desirable—but that is quite another story. The fact that Labour must learn is that, primarily, the amount of the worker's wealth will depend on the total amount of goods produced. Errors in the subsequent division affect him seriously, but they form a second and entirely separate problem which must be dealt with on its own merits.



"There are some people who seem to want their fellows to believe that the less they produce, the more there is to divide. . . . The pre-war standard of wealth production will not ensure for the working classes the wages they are receiving to-day."



"The modern labour movement is becoming one of the most intolerant of organisations ever known, and there is little room in it for the man who desires freedom to think and to act according to his courage and convictions. We are being Prussianised by it. The movement is doomed to destruction unless it is taken out of the hands of those who have been anti-patriotic during the whole of the war, and those who are simply seeking revolution for revolution's sake or for personal notoriety."

G. H. ROBERTS, M.P.



In reply to the British Foreign Minister, who stated that the policy of the Bolshevik Government is one of extermination by starvation, murder and wholesale execution of all parties who do not support their rule, Lenin replied that "if the doing to death of ten million human beings and the crippling of twenty million more is justified in the World War, *then why should the sacrifice of a million or half a million victims of the*

*Civil War be considered a crime?*” Only a madman could use such a line of argument and no form of civilisation could survive if calamities that are past are made the reason for future massacres of innocent people. On this principle the leaders of any revolution against Lenin and Trotsky would be justified in exterminating half a million Bolsheviks, and so on, until everybody is dead. People who are sane long for peace. The cult of Bolshevism would eventually involve mankind in the fate of the Kilkenny cats.

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In their report on the “Hands off Russia” demonstration in Manchester on February 3rd, at which John Maclean and W. Paul indulged in a Bedlamite orgy of abuse directed against the Government, President Wilson, the Lord Provost of Glasgow and all other rulers except Lenin and Trotsky, the *Manchester Guardian* includes an account of W. Paul’s speech, devoted mainly to a general attack upon the British Press, with an exception in favour of our inestimable contemporary to whose Russian correspondent—well-known for his purely Bolshevik sympathies—Mr. Paul pays special tribute. Apparently the temptation to indulge in self-advertisement, even when the puff comes from the least convincing source, is too strong to be resisted. It is said that the correspondent referred to is acting as the official propagandist in England and America for the Bolshevik Government. For all we know he may work for the love of the thing, but if he is a paid official of a Government which is notoriously ill-disposed towards this country, we are entitled to ask how, in his capacity of special correspondent to an English newspaper, he can give that impartial information which the British public has a right to expect.

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The *Observer* of February 9th prints a highly interesting account of an interview in which the managing director of a Newcastle firm develops his plan for the establishment of “permanent peace in industry.” Although one swallow doesn’t make a summer, and although there can be no one system of management which is equally applicable to all industries, it is encouraging to find even an isolated example of success attending upon a practical experiment conceived on the lines of joint control and actuated by a spirit of co-operation for the common benefit of all concerned in the business. We hope to discuss this experiment later on, and shall be particularly interested to hear whether this model factory restores the network of Trade Union rules and agreements, usages and customs so dear to the heart of G. H. D. Cole.









If you are  
the digitalization  
of cultural work  
We have been  
and offer you a  
systemic  
technical  
solution.

