

BRITISH LABOUR

COMPANION VOLUME

FROM THE SAME PUBLISHERS

BRITISH FINANCE

DURING AND AFTER THE WAR

1914-21

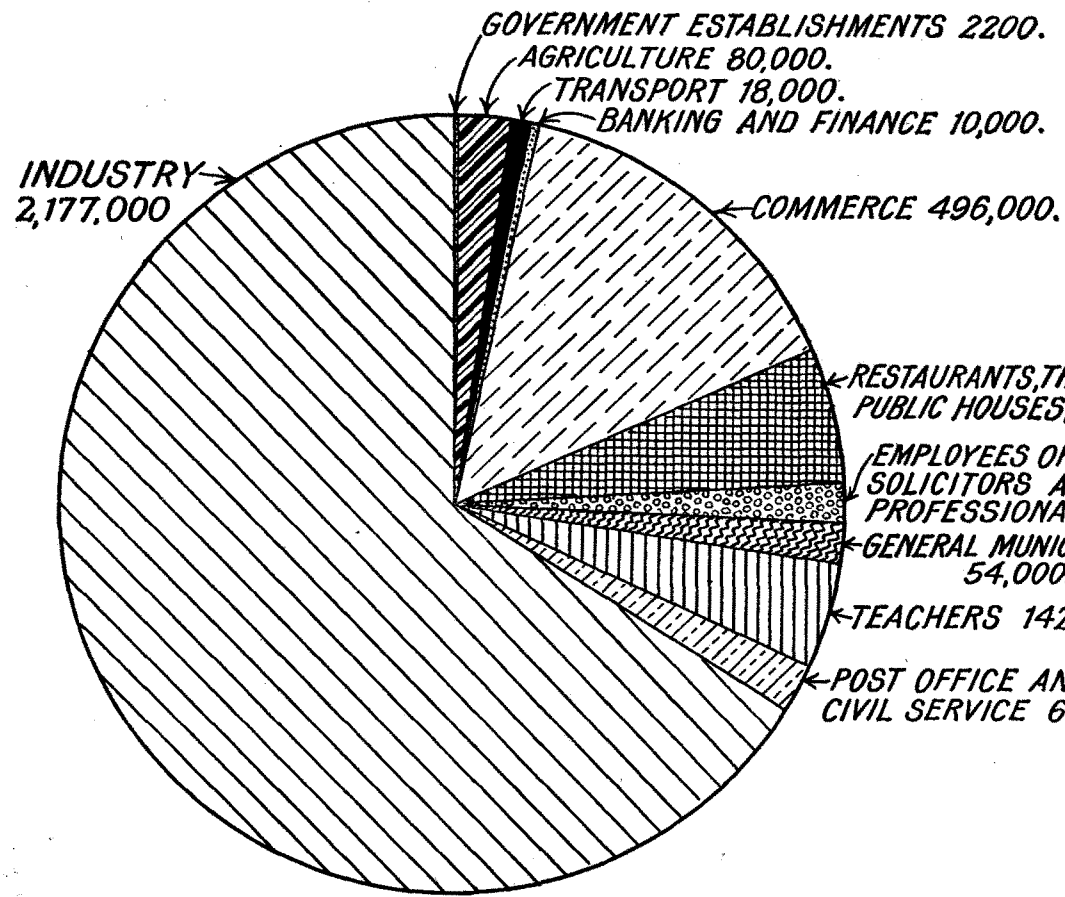
Being the result of investigations and materials collected by a Committee of Section F of the British Association.

Co-ordinated and brought up to date for the Committee by A. H. GIBSON, *Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society, Fellow of the Institute of Bankers.*

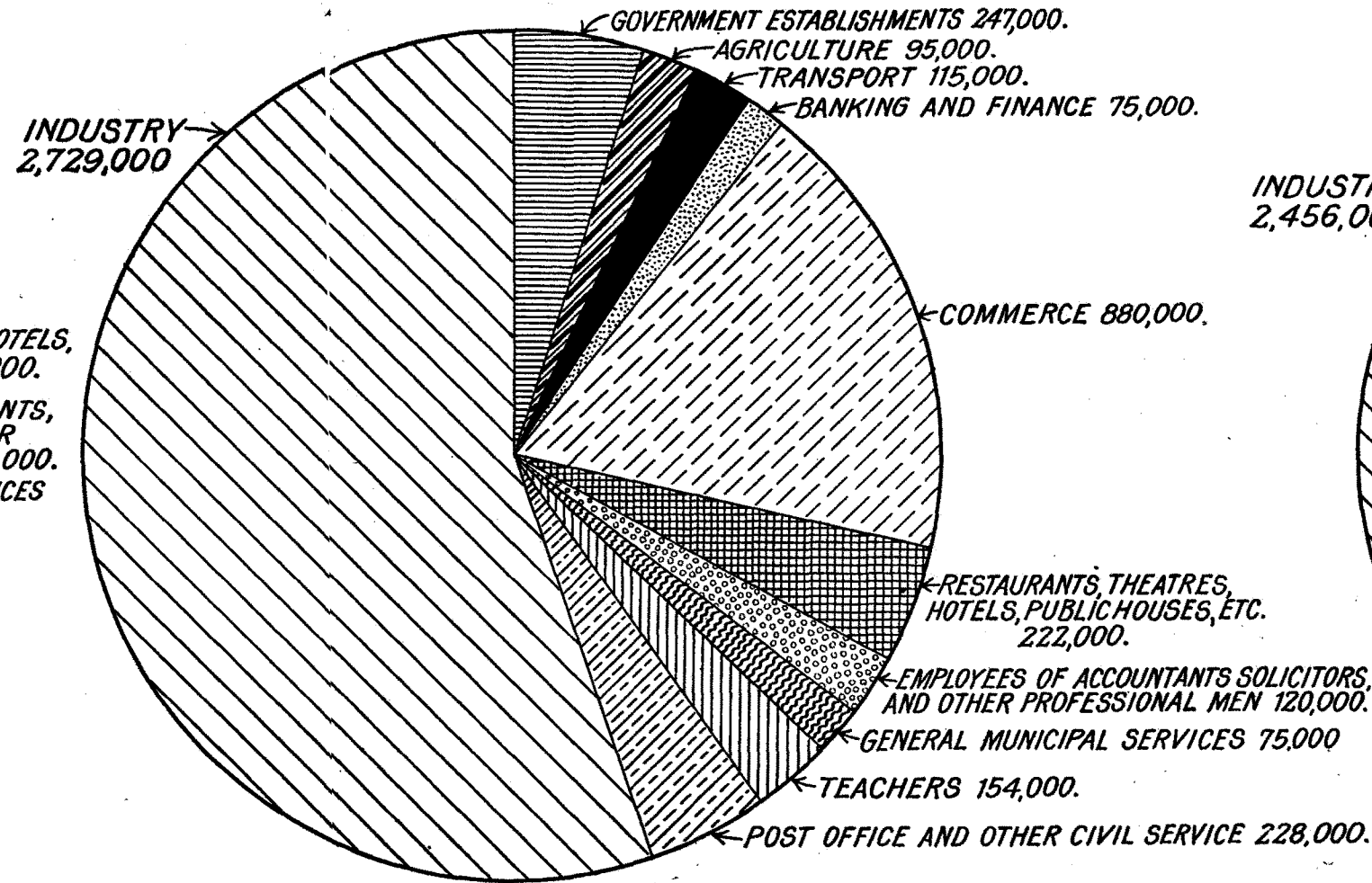
Edited by A. W. KIRKALDY, *M.A., B.Litt. (Oxford), Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Commerce, University College, Nottingham.*

DIAGRAMS SHOWING, ON THE SCALE OF ONE SQUARE MILLIMETRE TO 400 WORKPEOPLE, THE NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION BY OCCUPATION OF THE FEMALES EMPLOYED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM IN JULY, 1914; NOVEMBER, 1918; AND JULY, 1920

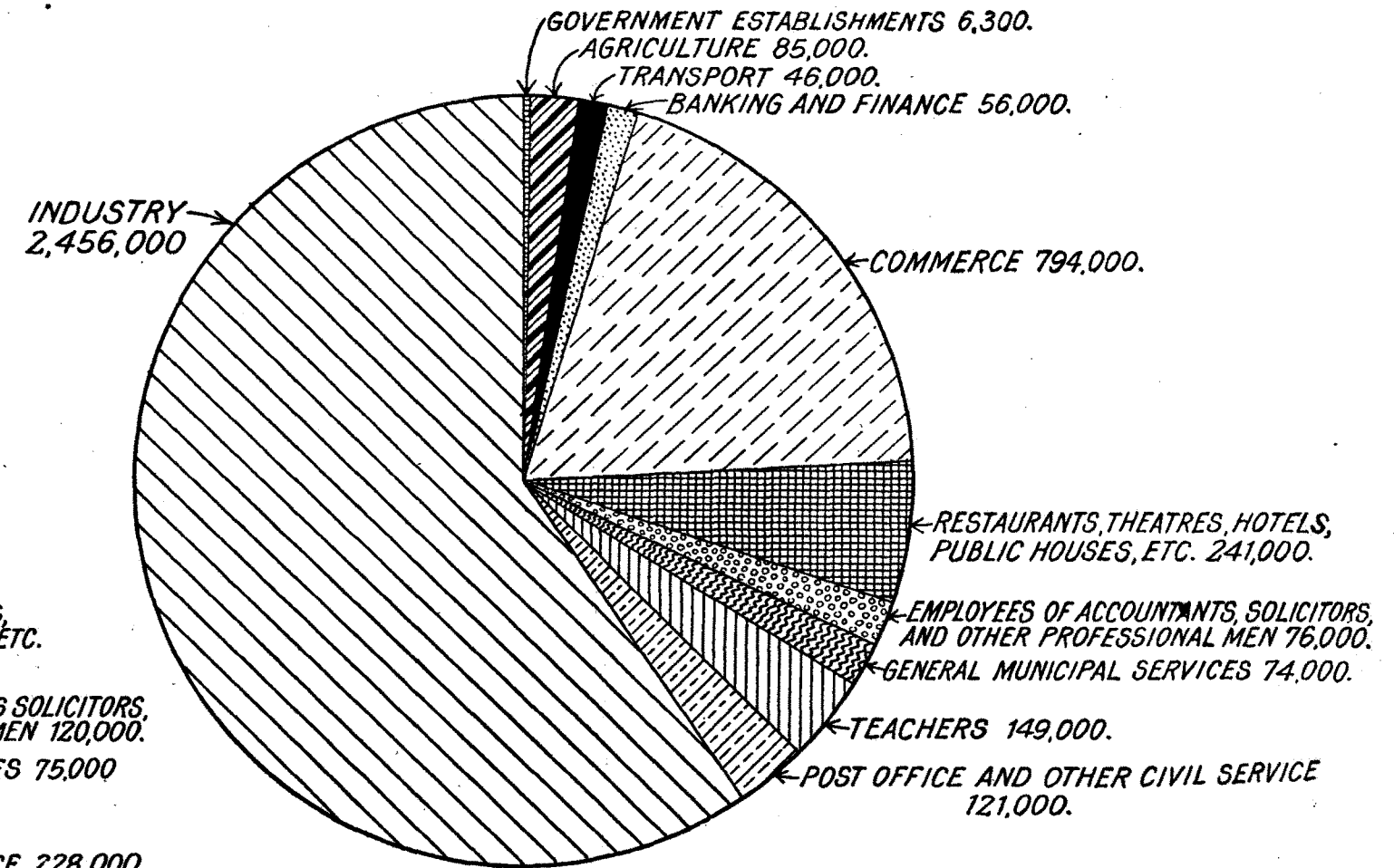
(A) ALL OCCUPATIONS COVERED IN TABLE I



JULY 1914.



NOVEMBER 1918.



JULY 1920.

GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHMENTS. (DOCKYARDS, ARSENALS AND NATIONAL FACTORIES.)

AGRICULTURE.

TRANSPORT.

BANKING AND FINANCE.

COMMERCE.

RESTAURANTS, THEATRES, HOTELS, PUBLIC HOUSES, ETC.

EMPLOYEES OF ACCOUNTANTS, SOLICITORS AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL MEN.

GENERAL MUNICIPAL SERVICES.

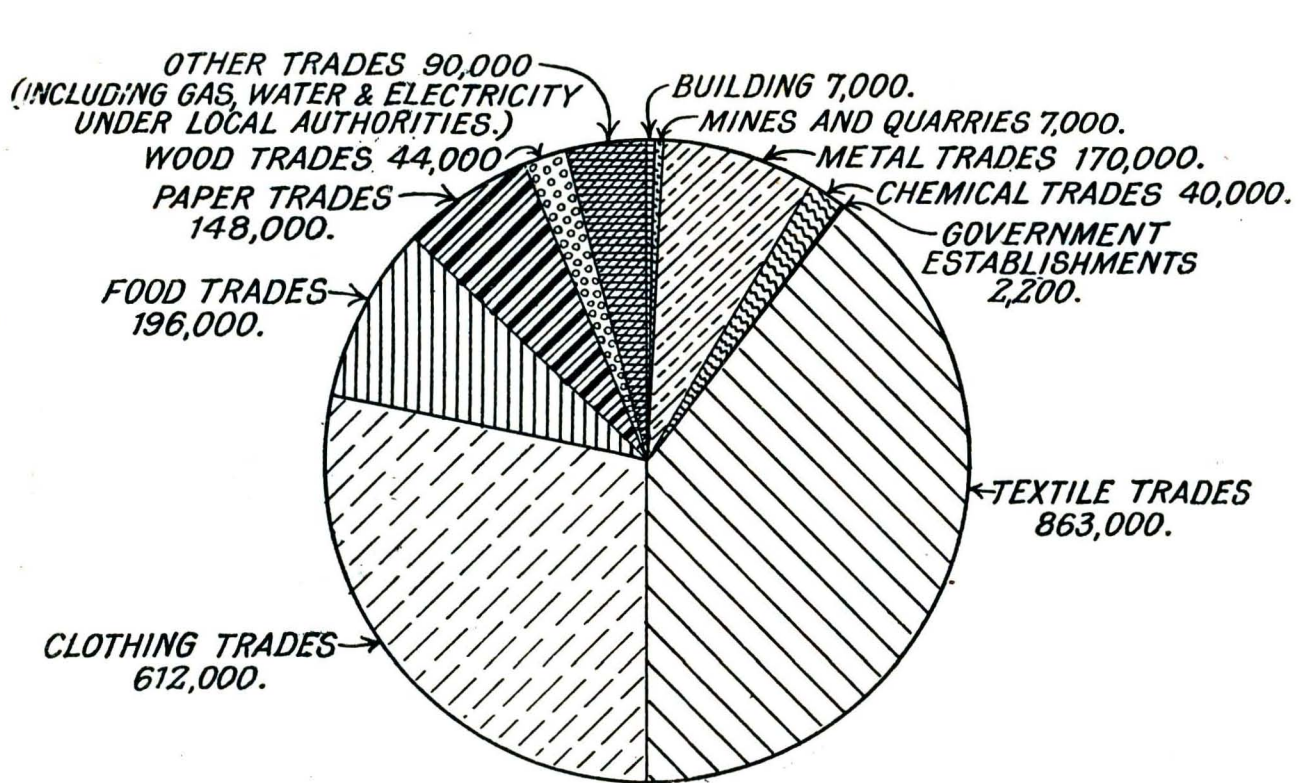
TEACHERS (UNDER LOCAL AUTHORITIES.)

POST OFFICE AND OTHER CIVIL SERVICE.

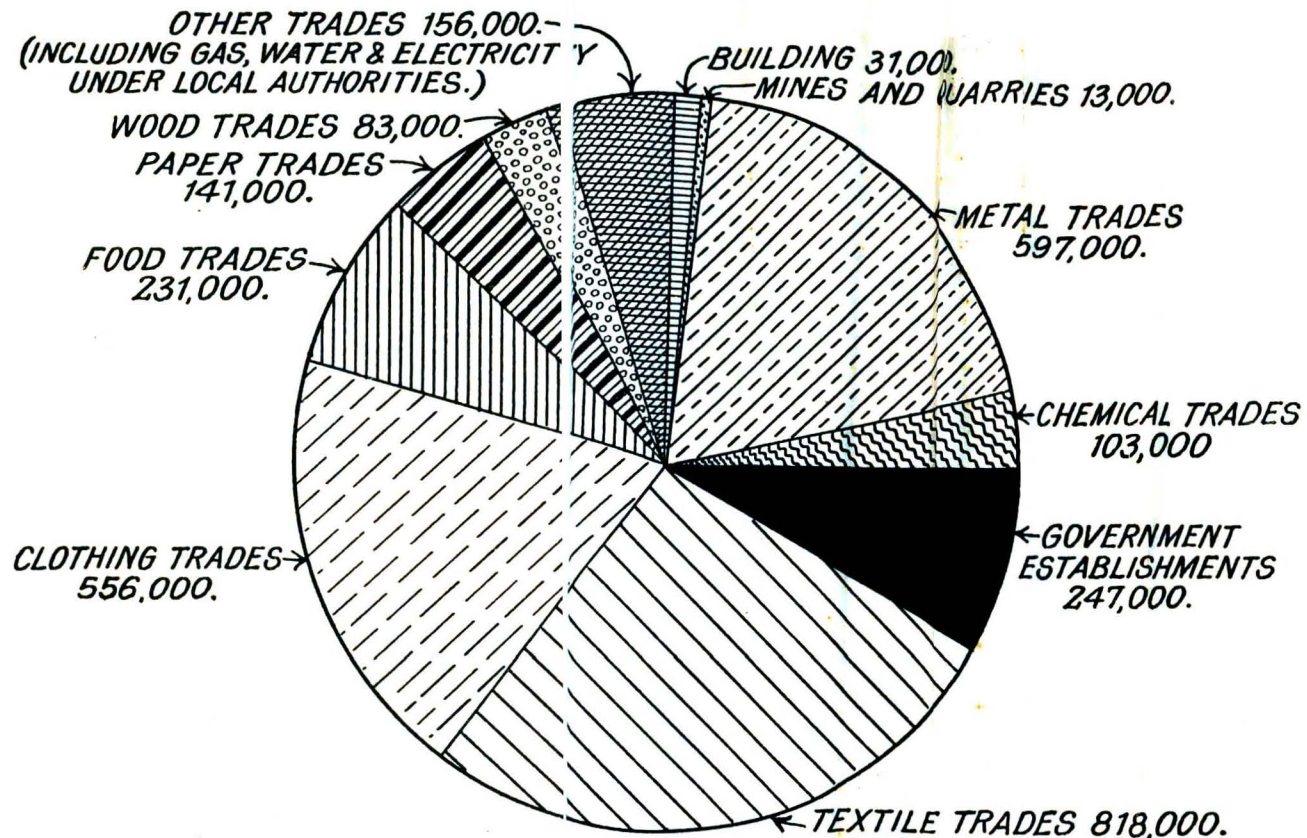
INDUSTRY. (INCLUDING MUNICIPAL ESTABLISHMENTS.)

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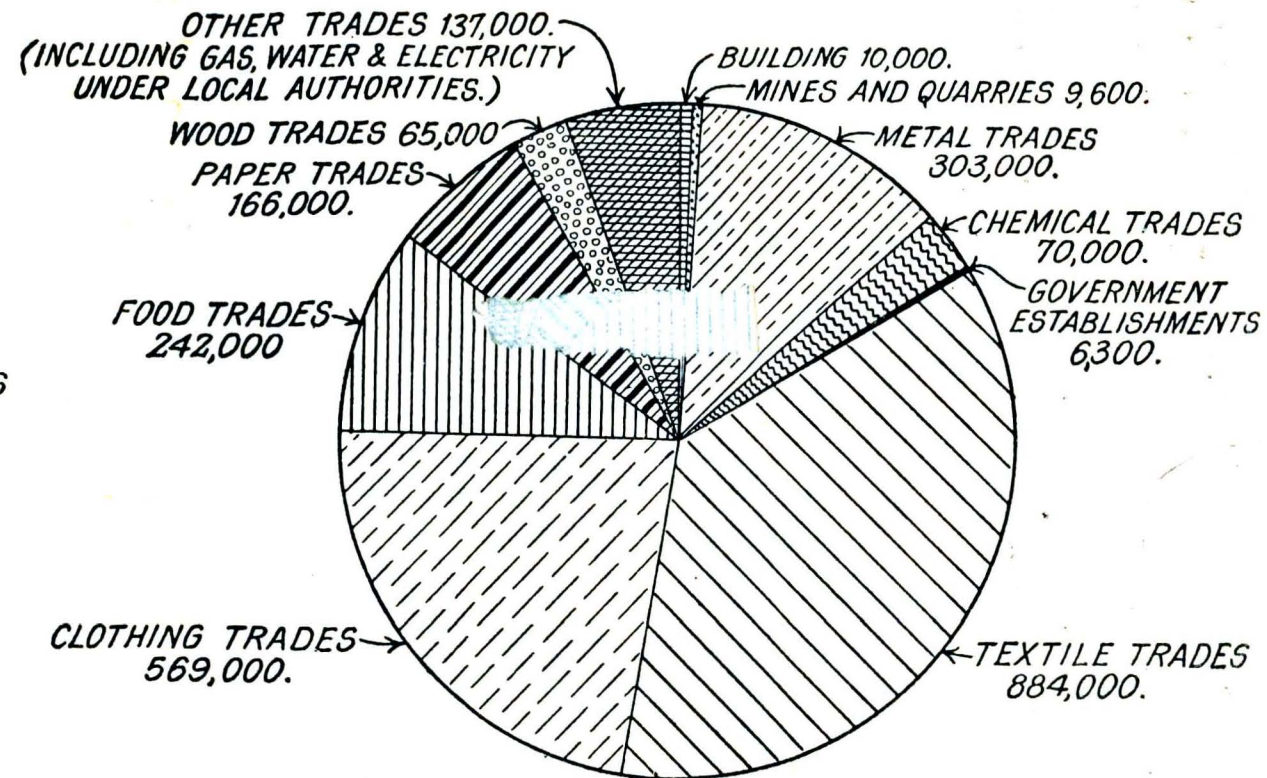
(B) INDUSTRY FURTHER ANALYSED



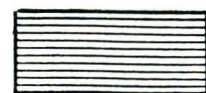
JULY 1914.



NOVEMBER 1918.



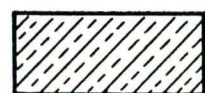
JULY 1920.



BUILDING TRADES.



MINES AND QUARRIES.



METAL TRADES. (UNDER PRIVATE OWNERSHIP.)



CHEMICAL TRADES. (UNDER PRIVATE OWNERSHIP.)



GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHMENTS. (DOCKYARDS, ARSENALS AND NATIONAL FACTORIES.)



TEXTILE TRADES.



CLOTHING TRADES.



FOOD, DRINK AND TOBACCO TRADES.



PAPER AND PRINTING TRADES.



WOOD TRADES.



OTHER TRADES. (INCLUDING GAS, WATER AND ELECTRICITY UNDER LOCAL AUTHORITIES.)

PREFACE

It is hoped that this book may prove to be of assistance in the solution of some of the economic problems which are pressing upon the attention of this country.

The discussions arranged by the Economics Section of the British Association at Manchester, in the summer of 1915, aroused considerable interest, and there was a widespread demand that they should be available to a more extensive public than could attend the meetings. Under the circumstances, immediate publication was deemed to be essential. Thus, although the Reports were interim, and the discussion on Industrial Harmony not only as incomplete as such discussions must necessarily be, but also somewhat inconclusive, being preliminary, and the views expressed being by no means identical, it was decided to publish with as little delay as possible. There resulted four volumes of Reports, which quickly went out of print. The present volume sums up and co-ordinates the section relating to labour.

Professor W. R. Scott, of Glasgow University, wrote the preface to the first volume, from which the following is reprinted—

“Economic questions assumed increasing importance during the course of the great struggle, and in all probability their importance will continue to increase for some years yet. The meeting of the Economics and Statistics section of the British Association afforded an opportunity of collecting and discussing the opinions of a large number of persons whose views were of interest or carried weight. Accordingly, the Organizing Committee decided to concentrate discussion upon those problems which were of immediate and pressing importance. It appeared that there were three groups of these, namely, the prevalence of industrial unrest, the manner in which the labour absorbed by the war was replaced, and the state of credit, currency, and finance as affected by the war. The Committee recognized that these problems could not be dealt with adequately by the method usually adopted by the section by means of separate papers. After a considerable amount of discussion it was decided that the best way of treating the problem of the minimizing of industrial friction was, in the first instance, by assigning one day for a full discussion of this subject. As a

result of that discussion a research committee was formed which reported to the next meeting.

"The remaining subjects presented considerable difficulties. It soon appeared that the problem of outlets for labour after the war was vast and that it introduced many elements which were then hypothetical. Therefore, for the present, attention was concentrated on one aspect of this problem, namely, the extent to which there had been a replacement of the labour of men by that of women during the war. The position during the summer of 1915 was one of change; and in order to present some definite picture of the situation to the meeting, it was necessary to organize a very extended investigation—no less than eighteen investigators contributed to the inquiry. The Conference which initiated and directed the research consisted partly of members of the Organizing Committee, partly of experts who had special knowledge regarding some branch of the inquiry. Professor Kirkaldy, the Recorder of the Section, acted as Secretary of the Conference. The inquiry was prosecuted actively in the London, Birmingham, Leeds, and Manchester districts. In London, a sub-committee was formed with Professor L. T. Hobhouse as Chairman, Mr. J. St. G. Heath as Hon. Secretary, and Mr. E. F. Hitchcock as Secretary. Professor Kirkaldy organized the investigation in the Birmingham district, with the co-operation of Miss Anne Ashley.

"A second Conference, also composed of members of the Organizing Committee, together with experts, was constituted, with Mr. J. E. Allen as Secretary, to report on the effects of the war upon credit, currency, and finance. The inquiries involved were long and detailed, and information of great value was placed at the disposal of the Conference by its members and by others who were consulted upon a number of special points.

"If the address for which I am responsible be added, it will be seen that, as far as the time at our disposal allowed, a serious attempt has been made by co-operative effort to focus and direct economic opinion upon the outstanding economic problems occasioned by the war. It is the earnest hope of those who took part in the work that their efforts may be of some service to the nation. Those concerned in the work would have preferred to have waited for more complete details and for a more matured judgment upon the facts already collected. By sharing the observations which have been

made so far, it is to be hoped that these will be amplified or corrected by others and thus progress may be made as rapidly as possible.

"It is my privilege, as President of the Economic Section for the year 1915, and as Chairman of the two Conferences, to thank most warmly those who have contributed to the production of this volume. The Council of the British Association was good enough to make a special grant to us under the exceptional circumstances. Without it, the Conference on Outlets for Labour could not have proceeded. Professor Kirkaldy, as Recorder of the Section and as Secretary of the Conference already mentioned, has been invaluable. Mr. Allen, the Secretary of the other Conference, was most thorough in his work upon the various stages between the inception and the completion of the Report. To Miss Anne Ashley, Mr. St. G. Heath, Mr. Hitchcock, and Professor Hobhouse we are very greatly indebted, as well as to the investigators who worked with them. It is most remarkable how men engaged in great affairs responded to the invitation of the Credit Conference. We owe more than I can express to the alacrity with which they placed the stores of their experience at the disposal of this body."

The Editor wrote the prefaces to the succeeding volumes. By quoting from them the working out of the plans of the Committee can be realized at a glance. Thus, quoting from the preface to the volume entitled *Labour, Finance, and the War*, published in 1916, it is seen that—

"This book is the result of organized co-operative effort. The work of last year, published under the title of *Credit, Industry, and the War*, was so well received that it was determined to proceed with another volume. Three committees of investigation were established, and the British Association most generously furnished funds to continue the work.

"The investigations which have been completed should prove helpful to those who will be responsible for our economic reconstruction when peace is restored. The financial position and its possibilities have been examined and explained by experts, and labour difficulties, both those which have caused anxiety for years past and those brought into existence by war conditions, have been discussed with those in practical touch with them. Thus it is hoped that the recommendations here put forward may not only arouse interest but lead to some definite results.

"The fear undoubtedly exists in industrial circles that peace abroad may bring us face to face with serious troubles at home. If Capital and Labour should enter upon a period of strife the seriousness of the consequences can hardly be exaggerated. Thus an attempt has been made to construct a forecast of the commercial future. This forecast is the result of many discussions with representatives of varied interests, and it is printed in the hope that it may stimulate others to give thought to the subject. The knowledge and experience of business men may lead them to modify or develop some of the points advanced. But if it induce leaders in the commercial world to make a definite effort to look ahead with a view to discussing their conclusions with all other interested parties, a great thing will have been achieved. One is convinced that unless the leaders on both sides of industry take up a more statesmanlike attitude there is more than the possibility of a disastrous struggle. Common sense, frankness, and a disposition to give and take are required from both sides. If these be practised, and our trade organization be developed on the lines suggested in the following pages, there would be little need to feel anxious as to our industrial and commercial future.

"The chapter on replacement of men by women contains many surprises, and deserves careful attention. A comparatively small number of women replaced men, but the introduction of new methods, especially new machinery, and improvements in works organization, together with the cheerful response of all to the call to make great efforts, resulted in enormously increasing the production not only of munitions, but of all kinds of war equipment. Nor did the national effort stop there, as can clearly be seen by referring to the figures of our export trade. In a word, the nation bestirred itself in every sphere. The comparatively sleepy days of the Victorian Age are at an end: the call is to effort, and still more of it. Two years ago no one realized what the nation could accomplish; to-day all the world is aware that the British Empire cannot be lightly challenged by sea, by land, in the air, or in the workshop.

"The work on the replacement of men by women was carried through by local committees, working under considerable difficulties. The results were co-ordinated by the Secretary—Mr. James Cunnison—under the guidance of Professor Scott. On the whole, the local

investigations were most thoroughly carried out. Special thanks are due to Miss Mellor and Miss Ashley, Messrs. H. E. R. and J. E. Highton, and Mr. Halliday.

"The Committee over which I had the honour to preside included well-known representatives of both Capital and Labour, as well as Economists. It was very striking to find not only how all realized the seriousness of the interests at stake, but that the points on which they were in agreement were infinitely more important than those on which there was some difference of opinion. All agreed as to the need for supplying more information when industrial decisions have to be made, all regretted that in the past a want of frankness has so frequently been the cause of failure to find a solution. The attitude of all, supplemented by that of other representative men interviewed during the course of the inquiry, strengthens the hope that we may be on the threshold of a new era. If only the attitude taken up under the stress of war be maintained for a few years a peaceful revolution will result, and we shall wonder why we did not take the obvious steps sooner."

From the preface to the third volume the following is quoted—

"For a third year in succession, organized co-operative effort has resulted in the production of a volume which should be found of intense interest and prove of considerable value to those who are either studying the economic effects of the war or are in the responsible position of having to guide the nation through a period full of intricate problems and great danger.

"One part of the investigations undertaken by the British Association has this year been marking time. The Government, impelled by a condition of affairs in the industrial world which might have developed in a manner dangerous to our prosecution of the war, set up a Commission to inquire into industrial unrest. It was therefore decided not to publish any detailed report on the subject in this volume. But we have been fortunate in persuading Mr. C. G. Renold, of Manchester, to write a section on his plans for creating Shop Committees in his own works. This part of the book will, one believes, prove by no means the least interesting amongst material teeming with interest. Special thanks are due to Mr. Renold—a very busy man—for finding time to set down his thoughts and experiences on paper, and for allowing their publication here.

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"It is very gratifying to find that serious efforts are being made in several directions to prevent industrial friction on a large scale breaking out when peace dawns, and that these efforts follow closely on the recommendations made in our previous volumes. The practical nature of these recommendations has appealed strongly to labour, capital, and the official world alike. It is to be hoped sincerely that the result of these efforts may be to place our industrial interests on the solid foundation of harmonious co-operation, employers and employees both realizing that their real interests are bound up in common well-being. Well-paid, satisfied labour alone can give that maximum of production which is more than ever necessary under present circumstances, and will continue to be so for many years to come. High wages, satisfactory profits, fair prices, and an adequate working day for all, will never be possible where friction, discontent, and restricted production are practised. But all these should be possible if goodwill and understanding subsist between employers and employed.

"The section in this volume on 'The Replacement of Men by Women' contains much that is worthy of careful thought. The local reports and appendices contain the detailed information bearing out the conclusions which the Committee has drawn up. Special gratitude is due to Professor Kydd, who devoted his furlough from India to the work of drafting this report.

"In conclusion, it may be said that our investigations warrant us in looking forward optimistically. The nation appears to be imbued with a new spirit, and nearly every department of the national life has been quickened to new efforts for the lasting good of all. The war has caused enormous loss. The sad, irreparable loss of young life is most to be deplored, but the lives laid down have not been given in vain if one reads aright the signs of the times. Large accumulations of material wealth, too, have been consumed. We have emerged from the war a poorer people. But war has revealed to us wealth in its true proportions. The community and the individual should have truer notions of life and its meaning.

"From the point of view of the section of the Association responsible for this book, it may be said that Economics has entered upon a new epoch. The importance of the subject has been brought home to every section of the community and, unless

one is very greatly mistaken, it will never be possible again to describe the subject as the *dismal science*. A lead has been given to at least one great section of the nation, and it is a remarkable fact that this lead has not fallen upon deaf ears.

"Our race and our Empire may regard the future with confidence : the great test has been applied, and has evoked a noble response."

The fourth volume, published in 1920, was a small supplementary volume bringing the previous work up to date. Miss Grier¹, of Newnham College, Cambridge, and Miss Ashley, then of the Board of Trade, but now of the City of Edinburgh Council of Social Service, did the principal part of the work in that volume, and they have now spent an immense amount of time in reviewing the whole of the material from 1914 to date. Thus the important section on replacement in the present volume is due to their industry and efforts. They have rendered the Editor's work light indeed. His very special thanks are due to them.

Mr. C. G. Renold has most kindly re-written and developed the interesting chapter he supplied in a previous volume on Workshop Committees. To obtain from a first-hand authority information on this increasingly important subject is a most valuable contribution to the present volume.

In conclusion, one hopes that the account of how women entered industry during the war, and then, when the Armistice came, allowed themselves to be gradually replaced as the Armies were demobilized, without clamouring for "rights" or compensation, should prove to be one of the brightest pages in the great record of women's service to the Empire during this great ordeal. The great question as to what extent women can be employed in our industry is by no means settled. The experience gained during this great epoch should help materially in showing what special spheres women can occupy in our industries with advantage, and one is optimistic enough to believe that, when normal times re-appear, the industrial and commercial machine will function more satisfactorily both to the individual and to the community, because of the assistance which has been and will be given by the woman worker.

A. W. KIRKALDY.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,
NOTTINGHAM, 1921.

¹ Elected Principal of Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, April, 1921.

CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
PREFACE	v
INTRODUCTION: SOME THOUGHTS ON INDUSTRIAL RECONSTRUCTION	xvii
NOTE ON THE PRINCIPAL FIGURES USED IN PART I.	2

PART I

REPLACEMENT IN BRITISH LABOUR, 1914-1921

I. INTRODUCTORY SURVEY	3
II. THE SCOPE AND SUCCESS OF REPLACEMENT	8
III. THE METAL AND CHEMICAL TRADES AND GOVERN- MENT ESTABLISHMENTS	17
IV. THE TEXTILE TRADES	32
V. THE CLOTHING TRADES	41
VI. THE FOOD, PAPER, WOOD, AND MISCELLANEOUS TRADES	49
VII. THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE	67
VIII. THE TRANSPORT SERVICES	73
IX. CLERICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE WORK	77
X. THE TEACHING PROFESSION	83
XI. TRADE UNIONISM	85
XII. WAGES	93
XIII. THE FUTURE POSITION OF WOMEN IN INDUSTRY AND OTHER FIELDS OF EMPLOYMENT	107

PART II

CONCILIATION IN BRITISH LABOUR, 1914-1921

XIV. THE PROMOTION OF INDUSTRIAL HARMONY	119
XV. INDUSTRIAL UNREST	160

PART III

WORKSHOP COMMITTEES (BY C. G. RENOLD)

CHAP.		PAGE
XVI.	INTRODUCTORY	207
XVII.	SCOPE OF WORKERS' SHOP ORGANIZATIONS— MANAGEMENT QUESTIONS WHICH COULD BE HANDLED JOINTLY	213
XVIII.	TYPES OF ORGANIZATION	224
XIX.	STAFF COMMITTEES	237
XX.	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	242
XXI.	COMMENTS ON WORKING	246
	APPENDIX	251
	INDEX	261

TABLES

	PAGE
I. Numbers of Males and Females Employed in each Main Occupational Group in the United Kingdom in July, 1914, November, 1918, and July, 1920 <i>facing</i>	1
II. Numbers Employed in the Metal and Chemical Trades and Government Establishments	18
III. Numbers Employed in the Textile Trades.	34
IV. Numbers Employed in the Clothing Trades	42
V. Replacement of Men by Women in Six London Tailoring Firms	45
VI. Numbers Employed in the Food, Paper, Wood, and Miscellaneous Trades	50
VII. Numbers Employed in Agriculture (Great Britain)	67
VIII. Numbers Employed in the Transport Services	73
IX. Numbers of Females Employed by Railways—Analysed by Occupation	75
X. Numbers of Females in Fields of Employment in which the Great Majority are Clerks	77
XI. Numbers of Teachers Employed Under Local Authorities	83
XII. Number of Females Belonging to Trade Unions	86
XIII. Increase or Decrease in Number of Women Employed, shown in Groups According as Men had Increased or Decreased in Corresponding Occupations <i>facing</i>	107
XIV. Number of Industrial Disputes, 1914–1921	163, 164, 165

INSETS

	PAGE
Two Diagrams showing the Number and Distribution by Occupation of the Females Employed in the United Kingdom in July, 1914, November, 1918, and July, 1920 <i>Frontispieces</i>	
Numbers of Males and Females Employed in each Main Occupational Group in the United Kingdom in July, 1914, November, 1918, and July, 1920 <i>facing</i>	1
Chart Showing the Number of Females Employed at the End of each Quarter from July, 1914 to July, 1920, the Number being Analysed into Five Main Fields	5
Table Showing Increase or Decrease in Number of Women Employed, Shown in Groups According as Men had Increased or Decreased in Corresponding Occupations <i>facing</i>	107

INTRODUCTION

SOME THOUGHTS ON INDUSTRIAL RECONSTRUCTION

THE Great War lasted nearly four and a half years, and was waged more strenuously than any that human history records. It used to be said that a great European war, under modern conditions, could not last more than six months ; but this prediction, like so many other preconceptions, has been falsified by a world calamity that to the great mass of mankind was entirely unforeseen.

In every sphere this war has worked, and will yet work, great changes ; but in the economic sphere the effects that can already be noted far exceed those in any other.

"The man in the street" will tell you that the war has cost this country alone over £8,000,000,000. In mentioning that sum, he probably thinks of sacks of sovereigns, a printing press feverishly turning out Treasury Notes, and the various devices with which he is familiar for making currency or credit. But it would probably sound strange to him to hear that currency generally has been enormously increased during the war period, for it is not currency that has been consumed. The same "man in the street," especially if he live in an industrial district, will discover that there is money in plenty in circulation ; that the people all look well-to-do, and are living as they seldom or never have before ; and he may conclude that war is, after all, not such a bad thing : at any rate, it brings prosperity.

What is the truth ? When we say that the war has cost about £8,000,000,000, we mean that we have consumed that amount of commodities and services ; that we have diverted capital and labour into new channels of production, but that these channels, unlike those connected with a good scheme of irrigation—which may make the wilderness to blossom like the rose—have emptied themselves in the desert, and the runnels are now dry and worthless. To put it plainly, the warring Powers during the war period, some entirely, others more or less partially, turned their attention from profitable production—the output of wealth, the exchange or use of which will produce new wealth—to the production of

instruments of destruction. When these instruments are utilized, they not only consume themselves and leave practically nothing remaining, but they carry out a work of destruction which entails the loss of other accumulations or possibilities of wealth. Nor is the consumption of the instruments and munitions of war the sole or chief material loss to the combatants. The men handling those weapons have to be trained and transported to the field of action, fed during the period of their service, tended when sick or wounded, and clothed and housed in some way. All these operations consume a quantity of food, clothing, and other materials of various descriptions, and there is absolutely nothing tangible to show for this expenditure.

To take our own case, 5,000,000 men trained to industry, helping to carry on the business and trade of this country, would consume almost as much food and clothing, and other materials, as the men in the field and on the sea ; but, as a return for that consumption, there is more than corresponding production of useful commodities, machines, ships, and railway stock which, in turn, assist in the work of developing the natural resources of the world, or of directly taking part in the work of further production. Thus the position is that during the war we were consuming our wealth, and to that extent must remain the poorer and be short of many of the goods and services we used to consider necessities of life, until we have, by renewed efforts, and a return to the industries and commerce of peace, taken measures to restore those useful things which have been consumed.

Now that the war is over, it is incumbent on us all to redouble our activities ; increase the productivity of mill, factory, and field : for so long as there is a deficiency in excess of what we were accustomed to, so long must some of us, and especially the poorer members of the community, feel the pinch occasioned by this devastating war.

But it may be asked : How are we to increase our productivity ? The war, in spite of the suffering and loss occasioned, has not been all loss. As a nation—nay, as an Empire—we have found ourselves. We have taken measures which must result in improving the physique of our race. Of the many thousands of men who have been trained to arms and submitted to discipline, the great majority happily may return to their former occupations now that

peace is made. The self-sacrifice practised by these men will act as a leaven among our population—it has already done so. Have we emerged from this war a better disciplined, a more serious people—better equipped mentally and physically to cope with new conditions? We have learned at any rate what hitherto had only been suspected or was at most known to a few, that we have not produced anything like our industrial maximum.

An insidious element of friction threatening to develop into class war has been sapping our energies practically unchecked far too long. There have been faults on both sides, but daylight is being thrown over the situation, and the waste and loss of this friction has been laid bare. If we do not take to heart this great experience and alter our ways for the better, then we deserve to go down as a nation: but I am persuaded that the lesson is being learned, that the picture now visible of industrial waste and loss—a loss that falls most hardly on the masses of the people, will not pass before our eyes unheeded.

Not only was there loss through friction between employer and employed, but in many industries we were continuing to use out-of-date tools and methods long after they should have been discarded. A long era of prosperity had not, indeed, caused decadence, but was threatening to do so. The war has shaken us up and shown us the realities of life, making the mistakes of the material side with which we have to do here plain and unmistakable.

To beat the national enemy, we had to re-equip our workshops, and the new equipment is now available, to a great extent, for future work. Moreover, we have been taught by a bitter lesson that up-to-date equipment is as necessary, if we are to maintain our position as an industrial and commercial nation, as it was to enable us to maintain our international position.

Friction between employers and workpeople led to restrictions on output, indifference led to utilizing old tools and methods: both meant decrease of productivity. The necessary increase can readily be obtained by remodelling our system in these respects. How this can be carried out so far as reorganization of the industrial forces of this country is concerned, will be developed later; and is dealt with in greater detail in the report presented by a committee of investigation, which has been working for this association.

ATTEMPTED FORECAST OF OUR INDUSTRIAL FUTURE.—I want

to attempt now to make a forecast of what may be expected in the commercial and industrial spheres now we have sheathed the sword. Germany overran some important manufacturing districts. Belgium, North-Western France, and Poland have not only been occupied by the enemy, but machinery and industrial equipment have, in many cases, been removed to Germany. Railway tracks were torn up, in order that their materials might be used for military purposes elsewhere. The busy industrial areas mentioned have undoubtedly suffered very considerably, and will require to reconstruct and re-equip towns and factories, and to reorganize their labour force. To set commerce and industry at work again on anything like the previous scale must be a work of some time. On the other hand, in spite of every effort, Germany found it impossible to interfere with the industries of the United Kingdom by either force or intrigue; nor did Entente Powers invade Germany. Indeed, for the purpose of this forecast it is wise to assume that German industrial equipment has not been affected detrimentally by the war. Thus England and Germany will for some time be the only two European nations prepared to take any considerable part in international trade.

Meantime, during the period of the war, two countries—the United States of America and Japan—enjoyed new and unlooked-for trading advantages. So far as competition from the United States is concerned, it is probable that we need not feel unnecessarily pessimistic. The South American States are at the beginning of a period of development which may well prove to be rapid. The possibilities opened up by the Panama Canal route, even though the present canal should prove a failure, will not be resigned before another attempt is made to pierce the isthmus; that a successful cutting will eventually be made is beyond question. American developments then may be expected to take place principally on the American Continent, in the Pacific, and in the Far East. In these regions, there is ample room for both British and American enterprise.

Nor will Japan, for some time to come, at any rate, compete with our staple manufactures. The development made by Japan during the war would seem to indicate that it is Germany and not Great Britain that will have to bear the brunt of Japanese competition. Small goods and fancy articles which came freely

into our markets from Germany and Austria before the war are now being made in Japan. Our merchants being unable to get supplies of these goods, sent samples to Japan with the most satisfactory results as to price, finish, and quality. Thus we were able to extend our business relations with our ally at the expense of our late enemy. Moreover, although there is no certain information on the subject, it is more than possible that when normal trading is resumed, it will be found that Japan has been extending her business in these and other classes of goods into other markets hitherto the preserve of the Central Powers.

Hence it is of special interest to attempt to forecast to what extent and with what prospects England and Germany will be in competition in international trade under peace conditions. This will depend, for the most part, on two sets of factors: (1) the internal industrial conditions of each country; and (2) commercial factors. So far as the former are concerned, there is much that this country should realize and take to heart.

The United Kingdom, in spite of the war and its heavy drain on our resources, has been enjoying an exceptional time of seeming prosperity. A large section of the workpeople have been earning high wages, whilst some employers have been earning handsome profits. High prices, high wages, high profits have been the order of the day: the return of peace must eventually very considerably modify the last two of these, and how will those affected face the change? To understand how the parties will answer this question, certain agreements must be remembered. Foremost among these is the State guarantee that certain Trade Union restrictions and Government regulations which have been in abeyance for the period of the war shall be re-imposed now that peace is restored. If we were reverting to pre-war conditions, there would be much to be said for this; but one hopes that both parties realize fully that conditions have radically changed, and that, in consequence, both employers and workpeople must be prepared to meet the new situation in a new spirit. Why were these agreements and regulations set aside? Because it was known that they hampered output, and our military success depended upon our producing the greatest possible amount of munitions of war. *Our commercial success will now equally depend on getting the utmost possible production out of our industrial equipment. Are*

we, then, going to restore these obstacles just at the most critical moment ?

With the return to more normal times, the national necessity for war stores and munitions has ceased, and our industrial forces have to rely on the home and foreign markets for employment. Foreign competition will almost certainly be greatly intensified. There may be, unless it is unnaturally checked, a great demand for manufactured goods of all kinds as a consequence of decreased supplies during the war. But all the principal trading nations will, as they get into their normal industrial stride, strain every nerve to get the greatest possible share of orders. If under such circumstances we indulge in an internal struggle between capital and labour, instead of bending our whole energies to retain and extend our hold on markets, we shall lose an opportunity which is not likely to return.

So far as the commercial factors are concerned, we have almost everything in our favour. We have not outraged the sentiments of humanity by employing inhuman methods in waging war. We have retained our position as the headquarters of the Money Market. We have ample shipping resources and equipment in spite of submarine piracy. Our merchants and exporters are keen and ready to carry on their business with even greater energy than before the war. We have arrears to make up, but have the will and, with harmony at home, the ability to carry on a more extended trade. Our capital has not been seriously affected ; our financial establishments and banks are prepared to do their share.

Turning to Germany, there is a most interesting condition of affairs to study. Beaten in the war, Germany will be a poor country for a long period ; the economic position may be deplorable, but hardly irreparable. Every section of the community has already felt to some degree the effects of the war. Now that peace has come, there will be a determined attempt to regain the old position. A disciplined people, acting under a Government compelled by circumstances to foster every possible means for repairing the broken machine of trade and for restoring the national wealth, will, without any doubt, be prepared to make heavy sacrifices to regain what has been lost. The Government will eventually try, by the offer of advantages in the shape of low railway rates and canal facilities, and, as far as possible, bounties on export business

and on shipping, to encourage and to extend foreign trade. Manufacturers and merchants will cut down profits, and workpeople will be carefully taught that only by increased productivity and by a period of low wages can that which has been lost be regained. And in spite of the revolution, this teaching may be successful. One foresees a remarkable attempt by a united and determined people to make good, in as short a period as possible, the waste and loss occasioned by the war and the blockade. German goods for export will be cheap, and the low price will be further emphasized by the depreciation of the mark. For so long as the mark is at a discount, there will be a *pro tanto* advantage to export trade; and, although the mark may eventually regain its par value, a few months or even weeks will have an appreciable influence on re-opening foreign business.

Thus a comparison of English and German opportunities in foreign trade shows that there are certain advantages on both sides. The German advantages are appreciable, but if England is seething with industrial friction, the advantages she possesses will be neutralized and her failure a certainty.

This leads us to consider whether a policy can be devised which will remove causes of friction and assure to our industries a new era of prosperity.

THE NEED FOR NATIONAL ORGANIZATION.—It is, at first sight, curious, but still very natural, that Press and public should from time to time be obsessed with one idea. As the war developed, there was a growing tendency to demand organization in every sphere of national life. The striking successes scored by Germany in the first instance were universally and probably rightly ascribed to thoroughness of organization and complete preparedness before provoking the conflict. As a consequence, a comparison was made between English and German military policy, greatly to the detriment of the former. And not content with this, further comparisons have since been made, with the result that if one believed all that was printed in the newspapers or accepted what passes in private conversation, we should be led to believe that rule of thumb has been the leading British characteristic. It has been forgotten that Germany has for many decades prided herself on her Army, even as England has relied on her Navy. One has been a great military power, the other equally great at sea. The

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test of war has proved that Germany was a very difficult country to oppose by land, but that in naval matters England is supreme. The economist, however, has to go further and investigate into those matters which are connected with his science—viz., the production, the distribution, and the consumption of wealth. Can it be said that the want of organization and other faults of our pre-war military system were typical of what was going on in the industrial and commercial sphere? I, for one, cannot bring myself to accept the truth of this. Had our economic interests been carried on under so-called War Office principles, we could not have built up the great position we occupy as world traders. What, then, are the facts? To answer this question, one should remember the leading facts connected with our industrial development. This brings out some points which the superficial observer inevitably misses. For upwards of a century our industries have been gradually developing, and the progress has, on the whole, been along new and healthy lines—each decade has seen some advance more or less great.

German attention to industry and commerce is much more recent. She was able to benefit by our experience, nor was she slow in doing so. To take a simple illustration. Suppose a case in which a manufacturing firm of fifty years' standing has developed a system, and has equipped factory and workshop as occasion demanded. A rival, seeing the possibility of competing successfully in the same business, organizes a new company, raises the necessary capital, and is able to commence operations with plant, machinery, and equipment of all kinds absolutely up to date, and even with some new improvements. Under these circumstances, provided that the management be good and that there be a demand for the goods produced, the new firm has, on the manufacturing side, considerable advantages. The older firm, however, is not devoid of advantages. It has a certain connection, a goodwill, and, with able management, these will enable it to compete with the newcomer; whilst the managers will have time to consider how to put the manufacturing side of their business on a par with that of the rival firm. The position in a simple instance like this is fairly easy to understand. In the case of a nation, with its many and varied interests, it takes a very much longer time for the situation to develop. The agitation for Tariff Reform and Colonial Preferences

is a proof that several years before the war broke out some Englishmen were awake to the fact that a new condition had come into existence ; and that if we were to preserve our advantageous position, we must take careful stock of newly-arisen factors in world-trade. For Germany was not the only, nor, perhaps, the most serious, of these factors. The United States of America from the time of the Civil War had bent her energies to the work of internal development. Having concentrated on this for nearly forty years, she began to expand a world policy, both political and commercial. Japan, too, emerged with unexpected suddenness into the arena. Thus, as the nineteenth century drew to a close, the economic interests of England required careful and earnest attention. The fiscal controversy, if it did nothing else, had the great and important effect of waking English traders out of the lotus-eating condition into which they were in danger of sinking. All our principal, and many of our less important, industries were carefully reviewed, with results that can be realized by a study of the annual statistics published by the Board of Trade. There was, however, a very subtle policy being pursued which required very minute knowledge and wide experience to grasp. It was our proud boast that we left trade free and untrammelled, that we believed in the health-giving effects of open competition. It needed the stern lesson of the war to make known how this generous policy could be utilized to our detriment by a rival commercial nation. The facts as to the exploiting of the mineral resources of the Empire, as to how the dye and colour industry and various by-product industries have been developed, so that certain vital trades almost passed under foreign control, came to light only just in time.

It became plain, as these facts leaked out, that we needed a better system of industrial and commercial intelligence. There was also a lack of unity of working among our principal industries incompatible with the growing interdependence which has been a marked feature of modern economic life.

Hitherto, apparently, it has been no one's business to survey comprehensively the resources whence our raw materials are drawn. Even those resources within the Empire had been nervelessly left to be exploited by the first comer, and the mask of an English name enabled foreign capital and energy to divert some of our

valuable minerals to foreign countries, whence we have been compelled to purchase them at unnaturally enhanced prices. Sufficient of the facts have been made public to warrant the demand for reconstruction and improved organization of those departments responsible for the national trade.

It would be most unwise as well as ungenerous to attempt to blame our Board of Trade. That department has, on the whole, worked hard and well for British interests. But it is both wise and necessary to criticize the policy that has over-weighted this one Government department. And, although there should be very careful consideration before either recommending or making a drastic change, attention ought to be given to the frequently expressed opinions of Chambers of Commerce and individual traders in favour of the creation of a Ministry of Commerce. The establishment of a Department of Overseas Trade, working as a link between the Foreign Office and the Board of Trade, may develop into a most useful adjunct to our trading interest.

It is hardly fair to charge our industrial interest with lack of organization. An examination of any one of our industries—shipbuilding, shipping, or the manufacture of goods for export—shows that each has been well, and in many cases exceptionally well, organized; but the organization requires to be completed by some machinery with responsible officials to co-ordinate the organization of the several interests. Even in this direction, something has been attempted. The Associated Chambers of Commerce gives, at any rate, the germ of an organization for attending to this great need. We may ask whether this could be still further elaborated so as to give the country what is wanted. Have our Chambers of Commerce sufficient standing to make their Association strong enough for the work, or should we look to the State to supply the keystone to the arch? The answer to this will depend on the views of the individual attempting to give it. Perhaps the time has come when a word of warning should be uttered. Are we not getting too prone to fall back upon the State? We were, and perhaps still are, the most self-dependent people in existence. Both the employer and the Trade Union has, in the past, been but little inclined to turn to the State. Can the completion of our industrial and commercial organization be adequately attained by the interests concerned, or must we look to another State

Department or Sub-Department to effect what is required? Our past history suggests that before turning to the State, we should try the initiative of the interests at stake. This brings us to a further section of the subject.

INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION.—The organization which has grown up with the development of our industries includes two very important but unequally-developed sets of organizations. The industrial army or labour force of this country includes all those who either organize industry or take any part, however important or however humble, in its working. From the captain of industry, or *entrepreneur*, as our brave Allies call him, down to the humblest wage-earner, we have a labour force which ought to be looked upon as one and indivisible. In connection with this force, we now have two sets of organizations whose interests some people consider to be antagonistic. I would here emphasize the fact that these two are really one force. Their main interests are identical, and they can best serve those interests by striving to minimize differences and by doing all that is possible to work together in harmony.

Though theoretically one, the labour force has perhaps naturally developed Trade Unions for manual labour and Employers' Associations for the organizers. British Trade Unions have a fairly long history behind them, and may be said to be in advance of any similar unions the world over. But the fact that, of recent years, there has been a tendency for small unofficial sections of given unions to kick over the traces and to disregard the policy and agreements of their leaders, shows that perfection of organization has by no means been attained.

Employers' Associations are of more recent formation, nor have they so far attained to anything like the same completeness. Both organizations, especially those of the employers, are in need of further development. It is hardly for the economist to show how this can be effected. He can point out imperfections and make suggestions; only those conversant with the practical working can formulate a practical policy. For instance, under the artificial conditions existing between the signing of the Armistice and the resumption of normal trading there are signs that some trades are using their exceptional advantages to increase prices to a greater extent than is warranted, a foolish policy calculated to

result in the eventual detriment of industries practising such a policy.

The most patent defects in Employers' Associations are due to the very virtues of their members. The individual British business man is unexcelled by the business man of any other country. In times of rapid transition and crisis, he has again and again shown his leadership. He knows his own business thoroughly, and as a working unit he has taken a very high place. But one of the most marked developments of modern trade is a growing interdependence of industries. Hand in hand with this, we have become familiar with another phenomenon—the amalgamation of businesses of various dimensions into one large company or corporation. It would appear that the scope for the small concern in either the commercial or manufacturing spheres is very limited. This is as marked among banks as among steel and iron companies. These two and somewhat parallel developments are making a new demand on the individual. He and his predecessors exemplified individualism : the new stage upon which we have entered demands a modification of the old policy. Business in common with everything else is subject to evolution, and evolution on healthy lines can only be obtained by grasping fundamental facts and by applying experience in accordance with economic laws. There need be nothing revolutionary about the required changes in our business organization. We merely have to note what has already occurred, mark healthy tendencies, and clear away or prevent obstructions to natural growth. Our past history amply justifies us in pursuing this policy without uncertainty as to the result. Our industrial history is one of the best examples of steady and, on the whole, well-ordered evolution. We have shown our ability to adjust ourselves to the needs of the moment. As a race, we are healthily conservative without being reactionary. That is to say, we know how to preserve what is good in the old and to amalgamate it with the new. In other words, our organization enjoys that useful quality of elasticity which enables us to keep abreast of the times.

Bearing this in mind, where are the defects of our business man, and to what does he need to give attention in order to come into line with the most recent requirements ? As I have just said, our business man's qualities emphasize his defects. For generations

he has worked as a unit, and individualism has become almost second nature. The call now is that the individual shall sink a part of his personality and become, so far as one side of his activities is concerned, a member of an Association.

We have had Employers' Alliances, Federations, and Associations. Some have failed, some have managed to keep afloat, others have had a certain amount of success. None has hitherto quite risen to what is required. To the onlooker, it would appear that when our employers meet as an Association, there is a lack of sympathy among the members, and, if this persist, it would be fatal. Each individual knows his own business ; he does not know, and perhaps it would be true to say that he does not care to know, his neighbours' concerns. At any rate, as a result, there is a want of cohesion, there is a lack of that co-operation which is required if the Association is to be really successful and accomplish the objects for which it has been formed. This working in co-operation, the large organizations of capital, and the working together in Associations, are comparatively new things to our business community. Time and experience will put things right ; at present we have not accustomed ourselves to a newly-developing condition of affairs. Our business men then need to focus their attention on these early ailments of the movement, so as to get them remedied as soon as possible.

A second group of defects arises indirectly, but almost inevitably, from that which has just been considered. Some Alliances, Rings, and Associations have failed and come to an end. And, in certain cases, the cause has been unmistakable, for there has been a lamentable want of loyalty, and even, in some cases, it must be said, of honesty to the agreements entered into by the Association. Only to mention one instance of this : The New Trades Combination Movement caused a considerable stir during the late nineties of last century, especially in the Midlands among the metal trades. Articles appeared in the journals, and a book¹ was written explaining the new movement. Great hopes were entertained that a new era had opened out before both Capital and Labour. But all ended in failure. There existed, for a time, a kind of syndicalism—a syndicated industry enabling employers to increase their profits, and the workpeople to earn abnormally high

¹ *The New Trades' Combination Movement*, by E. J. Smith. Rivingtons, 1899.

wages. So long as competition could be kept out of the market, things went swimmingly and a specious prosperity developed. But the consumer was being exploited, and the increased prices charged for such goods as metal bedsteads gave would-be competitors and unscrupulous members of the Alliance their opportunity. The cheap wooden bedstead made its appearance on the one hand, and, on the other, there were such things as secret discounts and commissions, with the result that this special alliance ended in failure. The history of that short-lived but industrially-instructive movement has yet to be written. Its cardinal facts should be known to those who now have an opportunity for shaping the industrial future of this country.

Three lessons stand out prominently from this experience : (1) We must learn to work together in association ; (2) all members of an Association must be absolutely loyal and honest to their engagements, either written or implied ; (3) such Associations must be subject to regulation, or the community will be exploited.

Nor is it impossible to suggest a method by means of which this may result. When Employers' Associations have justified themselves, it should be possible to obtain State recognition for them, and it would be practical politics, when both Employers' Associations and Trade Unions have developed to the point at which both merit State recognition, to enforce under penalty, agreements made between them on all those, either employers or workpeople, who wished to work at the industry within the area under the recognized Associations. Thus it would not be necessary to make membership compulsory—self-interest would be the extent of the pressure.

Turning to Trade Unions, we also find defects which require removing. The policy of union has been practised among the workers for upwards of a century, and for at least half-a-century with well-marked success in certain directions. In the first instance, it was the aristocracy of labour that realized the advantage of collective action ; but notably since the eighties of last century, efforts have been made to extend the policy to all grades of labour. Hence the ailments which have to be noted are rather more mature than those affecting Employers' Associations. Success in certain directions has perhaps led some of the more ardent spirits to expect more from their Unions than working conditions have

allowed. The experience of old and well-trying leaders has led them to adopt a more cautious policy than the young bloods are inclined to accept. Thus there has been a want of loyalty—different, it is true, from that met with among employers—but equally disastrous if persisted in, to the object in view. All the men in a given industry should be members of the Union, provided that the Union is well-organized and ably administered. This should, however, be the result of self-interest and a regard for the good of fellow-workers rather than of compulsion; and how that may be attained has just been suggested. Perfection of organization will come when workpeople not only realize the real possibilities of collective action, but are prepared to follow loyally leaders who have been constitutionally elected. The leaders are in a better position to know the facts of the case immediately under review; but if their leadership has been found faulty, there should be adequate machinery for replacing them with men commanding the confidence of the majority of the members.

When agreements have been entered into, the terms should be implicitly observed, even though they may turn out to be less advantageous than was expected. Periodical revisions would make it possible to rectify mistakes or misapprehensions. But it cannot be too strongly emphasized that for both sets of organizations the great factor making for smooth and satisfactory working is absolute loyalty to the pledged word. A large employer of labour, writing to me on this point, said: "In my opinion, no industrial harmony can exist between employer and employed until Trade Unions, through their representatives, can compel their members to adhere to and honourably carry out all agreements entered into with the employers. . . . In fact, until a more honest code of morals exists on both sides, no improvement can be looked for."

Further, there is the need for a more complete and authoritative central authority, both for individual industries and for federated trades. The machinery for this exists in skeleton: it merely requires development.

When the local and central machinery has been perfected, the right to *strike*—which, in common with the right to *lock out*, as a final resource, should be jealously maintained—would be carefully regulated, and would only be resorted to as the considered judgment of the most experienced men on either side. It should be

impossible for either an individual association or a section of it to order a strike or a lock-out on its own responsibility.

What I consider should form the main outline of industrial organization is explained in detail in the Chapter on "Industrial Unrest" (*q.v.*). At the head of this organization there would be a real Industrial Council, representing the industry of the country. The Industrial Council appointed in the year 1911 has never had a fair chance to show its possibilities. It was established at a critical time, and perhaps the Government did not feel justified to throw a great responsibility on an untried body. Nevertheless, it exemplified a very wise policy, and one regrets that it has not been allowed to prove its mettle, for, even now, both employers and workpeople feel that some such Council is preferable to State interference, and there is a clearly articulated distrust on both sides to official arbitration.

There is no need at the present juncture to attempt a new experiment. Our old system, whatever its failings, has been severely tested and proved to be sound. Its elasticity has been its salvation, and it is capable of still further evolution without entailing drastic changes. Indeed, the improved organization that is now suggested would contain practically nothing that is new or untried. It would consist of natural developments of what already exist. Employers and workpeople have organized themselves into Associations and Unions; some of these have developed Federations of similar or even of unconnected interests; and both parties have their national congresses, or, at any rate, the germ of them. The demand of the moment is that the organizations already in existence shall be perfected, and that these perfected organizations shall in all their agreements be loyally and honestly supported by their members. Success depends on absolute loyalty to the pledged word.

Here we have a practical policy suited to the needs of this critical stage in our history. The ideal organization has yet to be formulated; but what is here proposed would form a definite step in advance, and the very elasticity of the system would be a good augury for the future.

Among the innovations recently introduced into this country, and one calculated to have important effects on our industrial well-being, is automatic and semi-automatic machinery. We have been accustomed to the use of labour-saving machines; indeed,

this country was the birthplace of many of them. The re-equipment, however, of our factories for war purposes, in both tools and workpeople, has wrought a revolution comparable with that effected by the introduction of the steam engine.

From the point of view of craftsmanship, our old system had much in its favour. Our mechanics in certain trades had to be highly skilled, for the description of work turned out made considerable demands on the operative. In America and Germany, standardization has been carried very much further than in this country, and, consequently, repetition work has been much more generally practised than with us.

One may grieve over the passing of our old methods, as one is sometimes tempted to regret the days of cottage industries. But neither is compatible with modern conditions, and an important part of the work of reconstruction and reorganization will be connected with standardization and the further introduction of repetition work. This will call for the exercise of careful and experienced industrial statesmanship if trouble is to be avoided, for agreements will have to be framed which will, in the long run, work equitably and satisfactorily to all parties concerned.

A Committee of this Association investigated during the war period the extent to which women replaced men in industry. A certain amount of exaggeration exists as to the number of women who entered our factories or undertook services left vacant by men who joined the Forces. The total number was, in round figures, about 1,500,000.

The entry of large numbers of women into industry has been viewed with a certain amount of alarm by the men ; and Trade Unions have naturally stipulated, where possible, that these women shall receive the same rates of pay for the same work as the men, and that as the men return the women shall give place to them.

That there is but little ground for alarm as to the influx of women can be realized by a consideration of a few facts and figures. The majority of men who enlisted were workpeople of one sort or another : of these, unhappily, some have been killed in battle or have been rendered incapable for work. Even so, the majority have returned requiring occupation. What opportunities do they find ?

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What I consider should form the main outline of industrial organization is explained in detail in the Chapter on "Industrial Unrest" (*q.v.*). At the head of this organization there would be a real Industrial Council, representing the industry of the country. The Industrial Council appointed in the year 1911 has never had a fair chance to show its possibilities. It was established at a critical time, and perhaps the Government did not feel justified to throw a great responsibility on an untried body. Nevertheless, it exemplified a very wise policy, and one regrets that it has not been allowed to prove its mettle, for, even now, both employers and workpeople feel that some such Council is preferable to State interference, and there is a clearly articulated distrust on both sides to official arbitration.

There is no need at the present juncture to attempt a new experiment. Our old system, whatever its failings, has been severely tested and proved to be sound. Its elasticity has been its salvation, and it is capable of still further evolution without entailing drastic changes. Indeed, the improved organization that is now suggested would contain practically nothing that is new or untried. It would consist of natural developments of what already exist. Employers and workpeople have organized themselves into Associations and Unions; some of these have developed Federations of similar or even of unconnected interests; and both parties have their national congresses, or, at any rate, the germ of them. The demand of the moment is that the organizations already in existence shall be perfected, and that these perfected organizations shall in all their agreements be loyally and honestly supported by their members. Success depends on absolute loyalty to the pledged word.

Here we have a practical policy suited to the needs of this critical stage in our history. The ideal organization has yet to be formulated; but what is here proposed would form a definite step in advance, and the very elasticity of the system would be a good augury for the future.

Among the innovations recently introduced into this country, and one calculated to have important effects on our industrial well-being, is automatic and semi-automatic machinery. We have been accustomed to the use of labour-saving machines; indeed,

this country was the birthplace of many of them. The re-equipment, however, of our factories for war purposes, in both tools and workpeople, has wrought a revolution comparable with that effected by the introduction of the steam engine.

From the point of view of craftsmanship, our old system had much in its favour. Our mechanics in certain trades had to be highly skilled, for the description of work turned out made considerable demands on the operative. In America and Germany, standardization has been carried very much further than in this country, and, consequently, repetition work has been much more generally practised than with us.

One may grieve over the passing of our old methods, as one is sometimes tempted to regret the days of cottage industries. But neither is compatible with modern conditions, and an important part of the work of reconstruction and reorganization will be connected with standardization and the further introduction of repetition work. This will call for the exercise of careful and experienced industrial statesmanship if trouble is to be avoided, for agreements will have to be framed which will, in the long run, work equitably and satisfactorily to all parties concerned.

A Committee of this Association investigated during the war period the extent to which women replaced men in industry. A certain amount of exaggeration exists as to the number of women who entered our factories or undertook services left vacant by men who joined the Forces. The total number was, in round figures, about 1,500,000.

The entry of large numbers of women into industry has been viewed with a certain amount of alarm by the men ; and Trade Unions have naturally stipulated, where possible, that these women shall receive the same rates of pay for the same work as the men, and that as the men return the women shall give place to them.

That there is but little ground for alarm as to the influx of women can be realized by a consideration of a few facts and figures. The majority of men who enlisted were workpeople of one sort or another : of these, unhappily, some have been killed in battle or have been rendered incapable for work. Even so, the majority have returned requiring occupation. What opportunities do they find ?

To answer this question at all satisfactorily, it is necessary to

consider some determining factors. Thousands of men have left indoor occupations and their accustomed town life, and have been trained, drilled, and disciplined under open-air conditions. They have lived, worked, and fought in the open country, in some cases, for many months. This experience has had potent effects. Physique has improved, the outlook on life has changed; in many cases, new hopes for the future have been formed. The experience of what occurred after the South African War warrants us in assuming that considerable numbers will only return to indoor occupations and town life if there be no alternative. It is too soon even yet to form an opinion as to what opportunities there will be for land settlement, but it is known that offers will be made both at home and in various parts of the Empire. Moreover, there is good ground for anticipating that there may be a period of good trade. We have to restore our own sorely depleted stocks of goods, and our mercantile marine demands a large amount of new tonnage and repair of the old; railways and other transport services require much new equipment. Turning to the Continent, parts of France, Belgium, and other of the *Entente* countries need reconstruction works of considerable proportions, and in this work we shall play a great part. World markets, too, have been kept short of every description of manufactured goods. We are in a position to both finance and carry on a greatly extended system of industry and commerce, for not only is our banking system prepared to face this, but our man force has been greatly improved, and our industrial equipment to a great extent has been remodelled.

Reverting to the somewhat thorny question of the women who have been engaged on what were men's occupations, I see no cause for alarm. Many women came forward from motives of patriotism and have resumed their former state. The question is, rather, how can we obtain the labour necessary to cope with the post-war demand. The new equipment of our factories will place us in a position to increase very greatly our output; and this should enable us not only to face a possible labour shortage, but, if all the recommendations made by this Section of the British Association meet with a favourable response, our labour force should enter upon a new period of prosperity consequent on a re-modelling which has been rendered possible by a reorganization of our industrial machinery. The appearance of Whitley Councils

is an instalment of our recommendations, and to this extent we are on the right road. This new epoch for labour would include somewhat higher wages, shorter hours, and better working conditions. To effect these salutary advances, both employers and employed need to exercise sanity of judgment, frankness in mutual discussions, and a recognition of the fact that the prosperity and material well-being of each is bound up in a common effort to maintain and develop our industrial and commercial position.

APPENDIX

LETTER ADDRESSED BY THE MINISTER OF LABOUR TO THE LEADING EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATIONS AND TRADE UNIONS.

MINISTRY OF LABOUR,
MONTAGU HOUSE,
WHITEHALL, S.W.1.

20th October, 1917.

SIR,

In July last a circular letter was addressed by the Ministry of Labour to all the principal Employers' Associations and Trade Unions asking for their views on the proposals made in the Report of the Whitley Committee on Joint Standing Industrial Councils, a further copy of which is enclosed. As a result of the replies which have been received from a large number of Employers' organizations and Trade Unions generally favouring the adoption of those proposals, the War Cabinet have decided to adopt the Report as part of the policy which they hope to see carried into effect in the field of industrial reconstruction.

In order that the precise effect of this decision may not be misunderstood, I desire to draw attention to one or two points which have been raised in the communications made to the Ministry on the subject, and on which some misapprehension appears to exist in some quarters.

In the first place, fears have been expressed that the proposal to set up Industrial Councils indicates an intention to introduce an element of State interference which has hitherto not existed in industry. This is not the case. The formation and constitution of the Councils must be principally the work of the industries themselves. Although, for reasons which will be explained later, the Government are very anxious that such Councils should be established in all the well-organized industries with as little delay as possible, they fully realize that the success of the scheme must depend upon a general agreement among the various organizations within a given industry and a clearly expressed demand for the creation of a Council. Moreover, when formed, the Councils would be independent bodies electing their own officers and free to determine their own functions and procedure with reference to the peculiar needs of each trade. In fact, they would be autonomous bodies, and they would, in effect, make possible a larger degree of self-government in industry than exists to-day.

Secondly, the Report has been interpreted as meaning that the general constitution which it suggests should be applied without modification to each industry. This is entirely contrary to the view of the Government on the matter. To anyone with a knowledge of the diverse kinds of machinery already in operation, and the varying geographical and industrial conditions which affect different industries, it will be obvious that no rigid scheme can be applied to all of them. Each industry must therefore adapt the proposals made in the Report as may seem most suitable to its own needs. In some industries, for instance, it may be considered by both employers and employed that a system of Works Committees is unnecessary owing to the perfection of the arrangements already in operation for dealing with the difficulties arising in particular works between the management and the trade union officials. In others, Works Committees have done very valuable work where they have been introduced and their extension on agreed lines deserves every encouragement. Again, in industries which are largely based on district organizations it will probably be found desirable to assign more important functions to the

District Councils than would be the case in trades which are more completely centralized in national bodies. All these questions will have to be threshed out by the industries themselves, and settled in harmony with their particular needs.

Thirdly, it should be made clear that representation on the Industrial Councils is intended to be on the basis of existing organizations among employers and workmen concerned in each industry, although it will, of course, be open to the Councils, when formed, to grant representation to any new bodies which may come into existence and which may be entitled to representation. The authority, and consequently the usefulness, of the Councils will depend entirely on the extent to which they represent the different interests and enjoy the whole-hearted support of the existing organizations, and it is therefore desirable that representation should be determined on as broad a basis as possible.

Lastly, it has been suggested that the scheme is intended to promote compulsory arbitration. This is certainly not the case. Whatever agreements may be made for dealing with disputes must be left to the industry itself to frame, and their efficacy must depend upon the voluntary co-operation of the organizations concerned in carrying them out.

I should now like to explain some of the reasons which have made the Government anxious to see Industrial Councils established as soon as possible in the organized trades. The experience of the war has shown the need for frequent consultation between the Government and the chosen representatives of both employers and workmen on vital questions concerning those industries which have been most affected by war conditions. In some instances, different Government Departments have approached different organizations in the same industry, and in many cases the absence of joint representative bodies which can speak for their industries as a whole and voice the joint opinion of employers and workmen, has been found to render negotiations much more difficult than they would otherwise have been. The case of the cotton trade, where the industry is being regulated during a very difficult time by a Joint Board of Control, indicates how greatly the task of the State can be alleviated by a self-governing body capable of taking charge of the interests of the whole industry. The problems of the period of transition and reconstruction will not be less difficult than those which the war has created, and the Government accordingly feel that the task of re-building the social and economic fabric on a broader and surer foundation will be rendered much easier if in the organized trades there exist representative bodies to which the various questions of difficulty can be referred for consideration and advice as they arise. There are a number of such questions on which the Government will need the united and considered opinion of each large industry, such as the demobilization of the Forces, the re-settlement of munition workers in civil industries, apprenticeship (especially where interrupted by war service), the training and employment of disabled soldiers, and the control of raw materials; and the more it is able to avail itself of such an opinion the more satisfactory and stable the solution of these questions is likely to be.

Further, it will be necessary in the national interest to ensure a settlement of the more permanent questions which have caused differences between employers and employed in the past, on such a basis as to prevent the occurrence of disputes and of serious stoppages in the difficult period during which the problems just referred to will have to be solved. It is felt that this object can only be secured by the existence of permanent bodies on the lines suggested by the Whitley Report, which will be capable not merely of dealing with disputes when they arise, but of settling the big questions at issue so far as possible on such a basis as to prevent serious conflicts arising at all.

The above statement of the functions of the Councils is not intended to be exhaustive, but only to indicate some of the more immediate questions which they will be called upon to deal with when set up. Their general objects are

described in the words of the Report as being 'to offer to workpeople the means of attaining improved conditions of employment and a higher standard of comfort generally, and involve the enlistment of their active and continuous co-operation in the promotion of industry.' Some further specific questions, which the Councils might consider, were indicated by the Committee in paragraph 16 of the Report, and it will be for the Councils themselves to determine what matters they shall deal with. Further, such Councils would obviously be the suitable bodies to make representations to the Government as to legislation, which they think would be of advantage to their industry.

In order, therefore, that the Councils may be able to fulfil the duties which they will be asked to undertake, and that they may have the requisite status for doing so, the Government desire it to be understood that the Councils will be recognized as the official standing Consultative Committees to the Government on all future questions affecting the industries which they represent, and that they will be the normal channel through which the opinion and experience of an industry will be sought on all questions with which the industry is concerned. It will be seen, therefore, that it is intended that Industrial Councils should play a definite and permanent part in the economic life of the country, and the Government feels that it can rely on both employers and workmen to co-operate in order to make that part a worthy one.

I hope, therefore, that you will take this letter as a formal request to your organization on the part of the Government to consider the question of carrying out the recommendations of the Report as far as they are applicable to your industry. The Ministry of Labour will be willing to give every assistance in its power in the establishment of Industrial Councils, and will be glad to receive suggestions as to the way in which it can be given most effectively. In particular, it will be ready to assist in the convening of representative conferences to discuss the establishment of Councils, to provide secretarial assistance and to be represented, if desired, in a consultative capacity at the preliminary meetings. The Ministry will be glad to be kept informed of any progress made in the direction of forming Councils. Although the scheme is only intended, and, indeed, can only be applied, in trades which are well organized on both sides, I would point out that it rests with those trades which do not at present possess a sufficient organization to bring it about if they desire to apply it to themselves.

In conclusion, I would again emphasize the pressing need for the representative organizations of employers and workpeople to come together in the organized trades and to prepare themselves for the problems of reconstruction by forming Councils competent to deal with them. The Government trust that they will approach these problems not as two opposing forces each bent on getting as much and giving as little as can be contrived, but as forces having a common interest in working together for the welfare of their industry, not merely for the sake of those concerned in it, but also for the sake of the nation which depends so largely on its industries for its well-being. If the spirit which has enabled all classes to overcome by willing co-operation the innumerable dangers and difficulties which have beset us during the war is applied to the problems of Reconstruction, I am convinced that they can be solved in a way which will lay the foundation of the future prosperity of the country and of those engaged in its great industries.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

GEO. H. ROBERTS.

INDUSTRIAL COUNCILS

REPORT OF THE RECONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE ON RELATIONS
BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYED

THE Committee consisted of the following members—

The Right Hon. J. H. Whitley, M.P., *Chairman* (Chairman of Committees, House of Commons). Mr. F. S. Button, formerly Member of Executive Council, Amalgamated Society of Engineers; Sir G. J. Carter, K.B.E., Chairman, Shipbuilding Employers' Federation; Professor S. J. Chapman, C.B.E., Professor of Political Economy, University of Manchester; Sir Gilbert Cloughton, Bart., Chairman, London and North Western Railway Company; Mr. J. R. Clynes, M.P., President, National Union of General Workers; Mr. J. A. Hobson; Miss Susan Lawrence, Member of London County Council and Member of the Executive Committee of the Women's Trade Union League; Mr. J. J. Mallon, Secretary, National Anti-Sweating League; Sir Thos. A. Ratchiffe-Ellis, Secretary, Mining Association of Great Britain; Mr. Robert Smillie, President, Miners' Federation of Great Britain; Mr. Allan M. Smith, Chairman, Engineering Employers' Federation; Miss Mona Wilson, National Health Insurance Commissioner. Mr. H. J. Wilson (Ministry of Labour), Mr. Arthur Greenwood, *Secretaries*.

To the Right Honourable D. Lloyd George, M.P., Prime Minister.

SIR,

We have the honour to submit the following Interim Report on Joint Standing Industrial Councils.

2. The terms of reference to the Sub-Committee are—

"(1) To make and consider suggestions for securing a permanent improvement in the relations between employers and workmen.

"(2) To recommend means for securing that industrial conditions affecting the relations between employers and workmen shall be systematically reviewed by those concerned, with a view to improving conditions in the future."

3. After a general consideration of our duties in relation to the matters referred to us, we decided first to address ourselves to the problem of establishing permanently improved relations between employers and employed in the main industries of the country, in which there exist representative organizations on both sides. The present Report accordingly deals more especially with these trades. We are proceeding with the consideration of the problems connected with the industries which are less well organized.

4. We appreciate that under the pressure of the war both employers and workpeople and their organizations are very much pre-occupied, but, notwithstanding, we believe it to be of the highest importance that our proposals should be put before those concerned without delay, so that employers and employed may meet in the near future and discuss the problems before them.

5. The circumstances of the present time are admitted on all sides to offer a great opportunity for securing a permanent improvement in the relations between employers and employed, while failure to utilize the opportunity may involve the nation in grave industrial difficulties at the end of the war.

It is generally allowed that the war almost enforced some reconstruction of industry, and in considering the subjects referred to us we have kept in view the need for securing in the development of reconstruction the largest possible measure of co-operation between employers and employed.

In the interests of the community it is vital that after the war the co-operation of all classes, established during the war, should continue, and more especially with regard to the relations between employers and employed. For securing improvement in the latter, it is essential that any proposals put forward should offer to workpeople the means of attaining improved conditions of employment and a higher standard of comfort generally, and involve

the enlistment of their active and continuous co-operation in the promotion of industry.

To this end, the establishment for each industry of an organization, representative of employers and workpeople, to have as its object the regular consideration of matters affecting the progress and well-being of the trade from the point of view of all those engaged in it, so far as this is consistent with the general interest of the community, appears to us necessary.

6. Many complicated problems have arisen during the war which have a bearing both on employers and workpeople, and may affect the relations between them. It is clear that industrial conditions will need careful handling if grave difficulties and strained relations are to be avoided after the war has ended. The precise nature of the problems to be faced naturally varies from industry to industry, and even from branch to branch within the same industry. Their treatment consequently will need an intimate knowledge of the facts and circumstances of each trade, and such knowledge is to be found only among those directly connected with the trade.

7. With a view to providing means for carrying out the policy outlined above, we recommend that His Majesty's Government should propose without delay to the various associations of employers and employed the formation of Joint Standing Industrial Councils in the several industries, where they do not already exist, composed of representatives of employers and employed, regard being paid to the various sections of the industry and the various classes of labour engaged.

8. The appointment of a Chairman or Chairmen should, we think, be left to the Council who may decide that these should be—

- (1) A Chairman for each side of the Council ;
- (2) A Chairman and Vice-Chairman selected from the members of the Council (one from each side of the Council) ;
- (3) A Chairman chosen by the Council from independent persons outside the industry ; or
- (4) A Chairman nominated by such person or authority as the Council may determine, or, failing agreement, by the Government.

9. The Council should meet at regular and frequent intervals.

10. The objects to which the consideration of the Councils should be directed should be appropriate matters affecting the several industries and particularly the establishment of a closer co-operation between employers and employed. Questions connected with demobilization will call for early attention.

11. One of the chief factors in the problem, as it at first presents itself, consists of the guarantees given by the Government, with Parliamentary sanction, and the various undertakings entered into by employers, to restore the Trade Union rules and customs suspended during the war. While this does not mean that all the lessons learnt during the war should be ignored, it does mean that the definite co-operation and acquiescence by both employers and employed must be a condition of any setting aside of these guarantees or undertakings, and that, if new arrangements are to be reached, in themselves more satisfactory to all parties but not in strict accordance with the guarantees, they must be the joint work of employers and employed.

12. The matters to be considered by the Councils must inevitably differ widely from industry to industry as different circumstances and conditions call for different treatment, but we are of opinion that the suggestions set forth below ought to be taken into account, subject to such modification in each case as may serve to adapt them to the needs of the various industries.

13. In the well-organized industries, one of the first questions to be considered should be the establishment of local and works organizations to supplement and make more effective the work of the central bodies. It is not enough to secure co-operation at the centre between the national organizations ; it is equally necessary to enlist the activity and support of employers and employed in the districts and in individual establishments. The National

Industrial Council should not be regarded as complete in itself; what is needed is a triple organization—in the workshops, the districts, and nationally. Moreover, it is essential that the organization at each of these three stages should proceed on a common principle, and that the greatest measure of common action between them should be secured.

14. With this end in view, we are of opinion that the following proposals should be laid before the National Industrial Councils—

(a) That District Councils, representative of the Trade Unions and of the Employers' Association in the industry, should be created, or developed out of the existing machinery for negotiation in the various trades.

(b) That Works Committees, representative of the management and of the workers employed, should be instituted in particular works to act in close co-operation with the district and national machinery.

As it is of the highest importance that the scheme making provision for these Committees should be such as to secure the support of the Trade Unions and Employers' Associations concerned, its design should be a matter for agreement between these organizations.

Just as regular meetings and continuity of co-operation are essential in the case of the National Industrial Councils, so they seem to be necessary in the case of the district and works organizations. The object is to secure co-operation by granting to workpeople a greater share in the consideration of matters affecting their industry, and this can only be achieved by keeping employers and workpeople in constant touch.

15. The respective functions of Works Committees, District Councils, and National Councils will no doubt require to be determined separately in accordance with the varying conditions of different industries. Care will need to be taken in each case to delimit accurately their respective functions, in order to avoid overlapping and resulting friction. For instance, where conditions of employment are determined by national agreements, the District Councils or Works Committees should not be allowed to contract out of conditions so laid down, nor, where conditions are determined by local agreements, should such power be allowed to Works Committees.

16. Among the questions with which it is suggested that the National Councils should deal or allocate to District Councils or Works Committees the following may be selected for special mention—

(i) The better utilization of the practical knowledge and experience of the workpeople.

(ii) Means for securing to the workpeople a greater share in and responsibility for the determination and observance of the conditions under which their work is carried on.

(iii) The settlement of the general principles governing the conditions of employment, including the methods of fixing, paying, and re-adjusting wages, having regard to the need for securing to the workpeople a share in the increased prosperity of the industry.

(iv) The establishment of regular methods of negotiation for issues arising between employers and workpeople, with a view both to the prevention of differences, and to their better adjustment when they appear.

(v) Means of ensuring to the workpeople the greatest possible security of earnings and employment, without undue restriction upon change of occupation or employer.

(vi) Methods of fixing and adjusting earnings, piecework prices, etc., and of dealing with the many difficulties which arise with regard to the method and amount of payment apart from the fixing of general standard rates, which are already covered by paragraph (iii).

(vii) Technical education and training.

(viii) Industrial research and the full utilization of its results.

(ix) The provision of facilities for the full consideration and utilization of inventions and improvement designed by workpeople, and for the adequate safeguarding of the rights of the designers of such improvements.

(x) Improvements of processes, machinery, and organization and appropriate questions relating to management and the examination of industrial experiments, with special reference to co-operation in carrying new ideas into effect and full consideration of the workpeople's point of view in relation to them.

(xi) Proposed legislation affecting the industry.

17. The methods by which the functions of the proposed Councils should be correlated to those of joint bodies in the different districts, and in the various works within the districts, must necessarily vary according to the trade. It may, therefore, be the best policy to leave it to the trades themselves to formulate schemes suitable to their special circumstances, it being understood that it is essential to secure in each industry the fullest measure of co-operation between employers and employed, both generally, through the National Councils, and specifically, through District Committees and Workshop Committees.

18. It would seem advisable that the Government should put the proposals relating to National Industrial Councils before the employers' and workpeople's associations and request them to adopt such measures as are needful for their establishment where they do not already exist. Suitable steps should also be taken, at the proper time, to put the matter before the general public.

19. In forwarding the proposals to the parties concerned, we think the Government should offer to be represented in an advisory capacity at the preliminary meetings of a Council, if the parties so desire. We are also of opinion that the Government should undertake to supply to the various Councils such information on industrial subjects as may be available and likely to prove of value.

20. It has been suggested that means must be devised to safeguard the interests of the community against possible action of an anti-social character on the part of the Councils. We have, however, here assumed that the Councils, in their work of promoting the interests of their own industries, will have regard for the National interest. If they fulfil their functions they will be the best builders of national prosperity. The State never parts with its inherent over-riding power, but such power may be least needed when least obtruded.

21. It appears to us that it may be desirable at some later stage for the State to give the sanction of law to agreements made by the Councils, but the initiative in this direction should come from the Councils themselves.

22. The plans sketched in the foregoing paragraphs are applicable in the form in which they are given only to industries in which there are responsible associations of employers and workpeople which can claim to be fairly representative. The case of the less well-organized trades or sections of a trade necessarily needs further consideration. We hope to be in a position shortly to put forward recommendations that will prepare the way for the active utilization in these trades of the same practical co-operation as is foreshadowed in the proposals made above for the more highly-organized trades.

23. It may be desirable to state here our considered opinion that an essential condition of securing a permanent improvement in the relations between employers and employed is that there should be adequate organization on the part of both employers and workpeople. The proposals outlined for joint co-operation throughout the several industries depend for their ultimate success upon there being such organization on both sides; and such organization is necessary also to provide means whereby the arrangements and agreements made for the industry may be effectively carried out.

24. We have thought it well to refrain from making suggestions or offering opinions with regard to such matters as profit-sharing, co-partnership, or particular systems of wages, etc. It would be impracticable for us to make any useful general recommendations on such matters, having regard to the varying conditions in different trades. We are convinced, moreover, that a

permanent improvement in the relations between employers and employed must be founded upon something other than a cash basis. What is wanted is that the workpeople should have a greater opportunity of participating in the discussion about and adjustment of those parts of industry by which they are most affected.

25. The schemes recommended in this Report are intended not merely for the treatment of industrial problems when they have become acute, but also, and more especially, to prevent their becoming acute. We believe that regular meetings to discuss industrial questions, apart from and prior to any differences with regard to them that may have begun to cause friction, will materially reduce the number of occasions on which, in the view of either employers or employed, it is necessary to contemplate recourse to a stoppage of work.

26. We venture to hope that representative men in each industry, with pride in their calling and care for its place as a contributor to the national well-being, will come together in the manner here suggested, and apply themselves to promoting industrial harmony and efficiency and removing the obstacles that have hitherto stood in the way.

We have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient Servants,

J. H. WHITLEY, *Chairman*.
 F. S. BUTTON.
 GEO. J. CARTER.
 S. J. CHAPMAN.
 G. H. CLAUGHTON.
 J. R. CLYNES.
 J. A. HOBSON.
 A. SUSAN LAWRENCE.
 J. J. MALLON.
 THOS. R. RATCLIFFE-ELLIS.
 ROBT. SMILLIE.
 ALLAN M. SMITH.
 MONA WILSON.

H. J. WILSON,
 ARTHUR GREENWOOD,
Secretaries.

8th March, 1917.

RECONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE'S QUESTIONS

THE following questions were addressed by the Reconstruction Committee to the Sub-Committee on the Relations between Employers and Employed in order to make clear certain points which appeared to call for further elucidation. The answers given are subjoined.

Q. 1. In what classes of Industries does the Interim Report propose that Industrial Councils shall be established? What basis of classification has the Sub-Committee in view?

A. 1. It has been suggested that, for the purpose of considering the establishment of Industrial Councils, or other bodies designed to assist in the improvement of relations between employers and employed, the various industries should be grouped into three classes—(a) industries in which organization on the part of employers and employed is sufficiently developed to render the Councils representative; (b) industries in which either as regards employers and employed, or both, the degree of organization, though considerable, is less marked than in (a) and is insufficient to be regarded as representative; and (c) industries in which organization is so imperfect, either as regards employers or employed, or both, that no Associations can be said adequately to represent those engaged in the trade.

It will be clear that an analysis of industries will show a number which are on the border lines between these groups, and special consideration will have to be given to such trades. So far as groups (a) and (c) are concerned, a fairly large number of trades can readily be assigned to them; group (b) is necessarily more indeterminate.

For trades in group (a) the Committee have proposed the establishment of Joint Standing Industrial Councils in the several trades. In dealing with the various industries it may be necessary to consider specially the case of parts of industries in group (a) where organization is not fully developed.

Q. 2. Is the machinery proposed intended to be in addition to or in substitution for existing machinery? Is it proposed that existing machinery should be superseded? By "existing machinery" is meant Conciliation Boards and all other organizations for joint conference and discussion between employers and employed.

A. 2. In most organized trades there already exist joint bodies for particular purposes. It is not proposed that the Industrial Councils should necessarily disturb these existing bodies. A Council would be free, if it chose and if the bodies concerned approved, to merge existing Committees, etc., in the Council or to link them with the Council as Sub-Committees.

Q. 3. Is it understood that membership of the Council is to be confined to representatives elected by Employers' Associations and Trade Unions? What is the view of the Sub-Committee regarding the entry of new organizations established after the Councils have been set up?

A. 3. It is intended that the Councils should be composed only of representatives of Trade Unions and Employers' Associations, and that new organizations should be admitted only with the approval of the particular side of the Council of which the organization would form a part.

Q. 4. (a)—Is it intended that decisions reached by the Councils shall be binding upon the bodies comprising them? If so, is such binding effect to be conditional upon the consent of each Employers' Association or Trade Union affected?

A. 4. (a)—It is contemplated that agreements reached by Industrial Councils should (whilst not, of course, possessing the binding force of law) carry with them the same obligation of observance as exists in the case of other agreements between Employers' Associations and Trade Unions. A Council, being on its workmen's side based on the Trade Unions concerned in the industry, its powers or authority could only be such as the constituent Trade Unions freely agreed to.

Q. 4. (b)—In particular, is it intended that all pledges given either by the Government or employers for the restoration of Trade Union rules and practices after the war shall be redeemed without qualification unless the particular Trade Union concerned agrees to alteration; or, on the contrary, that the Industrial Council shall have power to decide such question by a majority vote of the workmen's representatives from all the Trade Unions in the industry?

A. 4. (b) It is clearly intended that all pledges relating to the restoration of Trade Union rules shall be redeemed without qualification unless the particular Trade Union concerned agrees to alteration; and it is not intended that the Council shall have power to decide such questions by a majority vote of the workmen's representatives from all the Trade Unions in the industry.

INDEX

ACCIDENTS and Sickness; General Shop Conditions, 218
 Action, Rapidity of in Negotiations between Employers and Labour, 225
 Administrative Work, Women in, 77
 Agriculture, Women in, 67
 Apprentices, Number of, 216
 Apprentice Training, 219
 Arbitration; Attempts at Diminishing Industrial Unrest, 175
 Awards or Agreements, Application of, 216

BENEVOLENT Work, Shop Conditions, 218
 Board of Trade, Annual Statistics Published by, *xxi*
 Board of Trade Policy Criticized, *xii*
 Boot and Shoe Trade, Women in, 46
 Brick Making, Women in, 60
 British Association, *v*, *vii*
 ———, Conference of Economics Section, *vi*
 British Empire, *viii*
 Building Trade, Statistics of Cost of Production, 149
 ———, Workers' Organization, 150
 Business Questions, General, Education in, 222

CANTEEN, Dining Service, 218
 Capital, Regarded as an Enemy, 209
 Capitalist Industry, 210
 ———, Modification of Method of Remunerating the, 240
 Capitalists, Control Wrested from, 207
 Chambers of Commerce, Associated, *xxii*
 ———, Expressed Opinions of, *xxii*
 Chemical and Metal Trades, Women in, 17
 China and Earthenware, Women in Manufacture of, 61
 Chrematistics, 120
 Civil Service, Position of Women in, 79

Clerical and Administrative Work, Women in, 77
 Clothing Trades, 41
 ———, Cutting Room Processes Lightened, 43
 Co-operation, 142
 ——— as not Promoting Industrial Harmony, 155
 ———, Attempts at Diminishing Industrial Unrest, 180
 Co-operative Employees' Trade Union, 155
 ——— Farming, 144
 ——— Wholesale Society, 143
 ———, Shirt Factory, 144
 ——— Working, 141
 Collective Bargaining, 214
 Colonial Preferences, Agitation for, *xx*
 Commerce, German Attention to, *xx*
 Comfort and Hygiene, Shop Conditions, 218
 Committee and Conference Work, Effect on Employers and Employed, 211
 ———, General Employees, Summary of Activities of, 244
 ———, Manual Workers', 238
 ———, Shop Stewards, Summary of Activities, 242
 ——— Work, Provision of Facilities for, 247
 Committees, Shop, 226
 ———, Staff, Summary of Activities, 244
 ———, ———, Chapter XIX, 237
 ———, Welfare, 232
 ———, ———, Summary of Activities, 243
 ———, Workshops, Summary and Conclusions, 242
 Competition where Trade not greatly affected by Rates of Exchange, 200
 Conciliation Boards, 132
 ——— and Arbitration Boards, 174
 Conclusion of Schemes for Shop Organization, 235
 Continuation Education Schemes, 219

Cotton Trade, Avoidance of Disputes in, 158

Credit and Currency, xiii

Credit, Industry and the War, vii

Credit, International, 203

Currency, Increase During War, x

DEMOBILIZATION, Post War Arrangements, 192

Dilution, 216

Dining Service Canteen, 218

Discipline, Maintenance of, 217

Discussion of Questions, Advantage of to Management, 218

Drink, Food, and Tobacco, Women in Manufacture of, 52

Dye and Colour Industry, Development of, xxi

ECONOMIC harmony, 138

— Position, Do we take a broad enough view of our? 122

— Problems, v

Economics Section, British Association, Discussions Arranged by, v

Effect on Employers and Workers of New Labour-saving Processes, 189

Effects of the War on Labour, Post War Arrangements, 192

Elements of Reconstruction, 196

Employer, The, 189

Employer and Employed, Friction between, xv

— — —, Tension Between, 210

— and Trade Union, xxii

Employer's Alliances, Federations, and Associations, xxv.

— Associations, xxiii

— — —, Defects of, xxiv

— and Labour, Joint Working Between, 207

— and Operatives' Associations, Conference at Manchester, 1915, 35

— and Workers, General Attitude, 182

— and Workpeople, New Agreements in Peace Time, 193

Employment of Women Reaching its Limit, 19

— Departments, Necessity for, 249

— Regularity of, as affecting Shop Committees, 227

— of Women: Replacement of Men by Women (Section I), 3

Engineering, Women in, 20

FACTORIES, Re-equipment of, 193

Farming, Co-operative, 144

Federations of Employers and Workpeople, 156

Female Clerks, Total Numbers of, 78

Fiscal Controversy in England, xxi

"Flying Squads," Women Workers in Glasgow, 23

Food, Drink, and Tobacco, Women in Manufacture of, 52

— — —, Paper, Wood, and Miscellaneous Trades, Women in, 49

Forecast to be made by Business Men of Industrial Conditions and Submitted to Labour Representatives, 193

Foreign Competition, xviii

Foremen, Election of, 221

— — —, Representation of, 230

Fuel Resources, Development of World's, 200

GENERAL Attitude of Employers and Workers, 182

— Business Questions, Education in, 222

— Employees' Committee, Activities of, 244

— Shop Conditions, 217

German Attention to Commerce, xx

— Goods, Cheap Export of, xix

Germany and Fulfilment of Peace Conditions, 200

— as a Factor in World Trade, xxi

— — —, Economic Position of, xviii

— — —, Manufacturing Districts Overrun during War, xvi

— — —, Striking Successes Early in War, xix

Glass, Women in Manufacture of, 62

Government Establishments and Metal and Chemical Trades, 7

Grades, Representation of all, 225

— of Worker for Type of Machine 216

Grievances, Ventilating of, 217

HYGIENE, Shop Conditions, 218

INCREASED Production, Means by which obtained, 198

Indiarubber, Women in Manufacture of, 65

Industrial and Commercial Conditions in Time of Peace, 193

- Industrial Conditions, Influence of on Type of Organization of Shop Committees, 226
- , — on Type of Machinery, 224
- Industrial Council, 185, xxviii
- , Attempts at Diminishing Industrial Unrest, 178
- , Inquiry into Limitation of Output, 126
- , Organization of, 192
- , Those Serving on, 130
- , Why it had not Fulfilled Hopes, 156
- , Development, Leading Facts Connected with, xx
- , Equipment, xvii
- , Forces, Employment of, xviii
- , Future, Attempted Forecast of, xv
- , Harmony, Establishment of Old Age Pensions, 142
- , Promotion of, 119
- , Reports on, v
- , Life, Conditions of, 209
- , Organization, Section on, xxiii
- , Suggested Improvements, 191
- , Reconstruction, Some Thoughts on, xiii
- , Revolution, The, 201
- , Unrest, 160
- , Attempts at Diminishing, 174
- , Causes of, 161
- , Consideration of Alleged Causes of, 162
- , Desire of Some Employers for more Regular and Satisfactory Labour, 171
- , — of Workpeople to exercise a Greater Control over their Lives, 165
- , Disputes, Machinery for Dealing with, 184
- , Effects of War Measures, 173
- , The Employer, 189
- , General Attitude and outlook of Employers and Workers, 182
- , Industrial Council, 185
- , Machinery for Dealing with Disputes, 184
- , Suspicion and Want of Economic Knowledge, 170
- , Trade Unions, 167
- Industrial Unrest, Uncertainty of Regular Employment, 168
- , The Worker, 189
- , Monotony in Employment, 169
- , National Joint Board, 185
- , Organization of Industry, 186
- , Recommendations, 181, 190
- , Speeding-up, 166
- Industry, Affected by War Conditions, 199
- , Capitalist, 210
- , Democratization of, 212
- , Need of new Constitution for, 208
- International Credit, 203
- , Trade, England and Germany, xvi
- Interpretation of Management to Workers, 219
- JAPAN and the U.S.A., xxi
- , New Trading Advantages, xvi
- KHAKI, Demand for, 37
- LABOUR, Conciliation in British (Part II), 119
- , Conference on Outlets for, vii
- , Demand for Control in Industry, 209
- , Departments, Necessity for, 249
- , Discussion of Market Prospects with Organizers by, 202
- , and Employers, Joint Working between, 207
- , *Finance and the War*, vii
- , Force, English, xxiii
- , Idea that Manual Labour Creates all Wealth, 241
- , Outlets for, vi
- , Replacement of Men by Women, vi
- , Reports on, v
- , The Right to Concern Itself with General Conduct of Industry, 207
- , Type of (Industrial Conditions), 226
- , Representatives, Forecast to be made by business men and submitted to, 193

Cotton Trade, Avoidance of Disputes in, 158

Credit and Currency, xiii

Credit, Industry and the War, vii

Credit, International, 203

Currency, Increase During War, x

DEMOBILIZATION, Post War Arrangements, 192

Dilution, 216

Dining Service Canteen, 218

Discipline, Maintenance of, 217

Discussion of Questions, Advantage of to Management, 218

Drink, Food, and Tobacco, Women in Manufacture of, 52

Dye and Colour Industry, Development of, xxi

ECONOMIC harmony, 138

— Position, Do we take a broad enough view of our? 122

— Problems, v

Economics Section, British Association, Discussions Arranged by, v

Effect on Employers and Workers of New Labour-saving Processes, 189

Effects of the War on Labour, Post War Arrangements, 192

Elements of Reconstruction, 196

Employer, The, 189

Employer and Employed, Friction between, xv

—, Tension Between, 210

— and Trade Union, xxii

Employer's Alliances, Federations, and Associations, xxv.

— Associations, xxiii

—, Defects of, xxiv

— and Labour, Joint Working Between, 207

— and Operatives' Associations, Conference at Manchester, 1915, 35

— and Workers, General Attitude, 182

— and Workpeople, New Agreements in Peace Time, 193

Employment of Women Reaching its Limit, 19

— Departments, Necessity for, 249

— Regularity of, as affecting Shop Committees, 227

— of Women: Replacement of Men by Women (Section I), 3

Engineering, Women in, 20

FACTORIES, Re-equipment of, 193

Farming, Co-operative, 144

Federations of Employers and Workpeople, 156

Female Clerks, Total Numbers of, 78

Fiscal Controversy in England, xxi

"Flying Squads," Women Workers in Glasgow, 23

Food, Drink, and Tobacco, Women in Manufacture of, 52

—, Paper, Wood, and Miscellaneous Trades, Women in, 49

Forecast to be made by Business Men of Industrial Conditions and Submitted to Labour Representatives, 193

Foreign Competition, xviii

Foremen, Election of, 221

—, Representation of, 230

Fuel Resources, Development of World's, 200

GENERAL Attitude of Employers and Workers, 182

— Business Questions, Education in, 222

— Employers' Committee, Activities of, 244

— Shop Conditions, 217

German Attention to Commerce, xx

— Goods, Cheap Export of, xix

Germany and Fulfilment of Peace Conditions, 200

— as a Factor in World Trade, xxi

—, Economic Position of, xviii

—, Manufacturing Districts Overrun during War, xvi

—, Striking Successes Early in War, xix

Glass, Women in Manufacture of, 62

Government Establishments and Metal and Chemical Trades, 7

Grades, Representation of all, 225

— of Worker for Type of Machine, 216

Grievances, Ventilating of, 217

HYGIENE, Shop Conditions, 218

INCREASED Production, Means by which obtained, 198

Indiarubber, Women in Manufacture of, 65

Industrial and Commercial Conditions in Time of Peace, 193

- Industrial Conditions, Influence of on Type of Organization of Shop Committees, 226
- , —, on Type of Machinery, 224
- Industrial Council, 185, xxviii
- , Attempts at Diminishing Industrial Unrest, 178
- , Inquiry into Limitation of Output, 126
- , Organization of, 192
- , Those Serving on, 130
- , Why it had not Fulfilled Hopes, 156
- , Development, Leading Facts Connected with, xx
- , Equipment, xvii
- , Forces, Employment of, xviii
- , Future, Attempted Forecast of, xv
- , Harmony, Establishment of Old Age Pensions, 142
- , Promotion of, 119
- , Reports on, v
- , Life, Conditions of, 209
- , Organization, Section on, xxiii
- , Suggested Improvements, 191
- , Reconstruction, Some Thoughts on, xiii
- , Revolution, The, 201
- , Unrest, 160
- , Attempts at Diminishing, 174
- , Causes of, 161
- , Consideration of Alleged Causes of, 162
- , Desire of Some Employers for more Regular and Satisfactory Labour, 171
- , —, of Workpeople to exercise a Greater Control over their Lives, 165
- , Disputes, Machinery for Dealing with, 184
- , Effects of War Measures, 173
- , The Employer, 189
- , General Attitude and outlook of Employers and Workers, 182
- , Industrial Council, 185
- , Machinery for Dealing with Disputes, 184
- , Suspicion and Want of Economic Knowledge, 170
- , Trade Unions, 167
- Industrial Unrest, Uncertainty of Regular Employment, 168
- , The Worker, 189
- , Monotony in Employment, 169
- , National Joint Board, 185
- , Organization of Industry, 186
- , Recommendations, 181, 190
- , Speeding-up, 166
- Industry, Affected by War Conditions, 199
- , Capitalist, 210
- , Democratization of, 212
- , Need of new Constitution for, 208
- International Credit, 203
- , Trade, England and Germany, xvi
- Interpretation of Management to Workers, 219
- JAPAN and the U.S.A., xxi
- , New Trading Advantages, xvi
- KHAKI, Demand for, 37
- LABOUR, Conciliation in British (Part II), 119
- , Conference on Outlets for, vii
- , Demand for Control in Industry, 209
- , Departments, Necessity for, 249
- , Discussion of Market Prospects with Organizers by, 202
- , and Employers, Joint Working between, 207
- , *Finance and the War*, vii
- , Force, English, xxiii
- , Idea that Manual Labour Creates all Wealth, 241
- , Outlets for, vi
- , Replacement of Men by Women, vi
- , Reports on, v
- , The Right to Concern Itself with General Conduct of Industry, 207
- , Type of (Industrial Conditions), 226
- , Representatives, Forecast to be made by business men and submitted to, 193

- Laisser-faire policy supported by employers, 146
 League of Nations, 202
 Leather Trades, Women in, 63
 Limitation of Output by Trade Unions, 126
 Lock-out, Right to, xxvii
- MACHINERY**, Labour-saving Introduction of, Adjustment of Extra Gain, 189
 Management, Functions of, Considered, 211
 — and Men, Establishment of Sympathy between, 211
 — Organization, Elaboration of, 227
 — Questions of, which could be Handled Jointly, 213
 — Touch with, 225
 Manchester School of Political Economy, 146
 Manual Workers' Committee and Staff Committee, Meetings of, 238
 Metal and Chemical Trades, 17
 — Work, 20
 Munitions, Demand for, 17
 — of War Amendment Act, 19
- NATIONAL** Organization, Need for, xix
 New Trades Combination Movement, xxv
- ORGANIZATION**, Democratic, 224
 — of Industry, 186
 — of Management, 227
 —, Types of (Chapter xviii), 224
 Overseas Trade, Establishment of a Department of, xxii
- PANAMA** Canal Route, Possibilities Opened up by, xvi
 Paper Trades, Women in, 56
 Payment by Result, Discussion with Management of, 215
 Peace Conditions with Germany, Had they been Fulfilled, 200
 Piece-rates, Reduction of, Discussed with Management, 215
 Piece-work Rates, 215
 Post-war Arrangements, Demobilization, 192
 Pre-war Practices Act, 91
 Profit-sharing and Co-partnership, Attempts at Diminishing Industrial Unrest, 179
- Processes, New, or Changes in, 216
 —, —, Labour-saving, 189
 Production, as Affected by Class Warfare, 122
 —, Federal System of, 145
 — in Industrial Harmony, 121
 —, Increased, Means by which Obtained, 198
 Profit-sharing, Discussion of Scheme with Workers, 223
 Problems, Discussion of, between Employer and Workpeople, 211
 Promotion, Workers' Shop Organizations, 221
- QUESTIONS** Dealt with by Shop Stewards' Committee, 243
 —, Joint Discussion of as Advantageous to Management, 218
- RAILWAYS** of Great Britain, Division of Gross Proceeds, 137
 Reconstruction, An Anxious Period, 201
 Re-equipment of Factories, 193
 Replacement of Men by Women, x
 —, Scope, 8
 —, — and Success of, 8
 —, Success of, 14
 Representation, Associations of one Trade and National Federations of Trades Organized, 191
 — of all Grades, 225
 Restoration of Pre-war Practices Act, 29
 Rights of Works Committee Men to move about Works, 248
 Ruskin's Law of Life, Adoption of, 148
- SCALE** of Wages, 215
 Schemes Suggested for Shop Organization, 228
 Shop Comfort and Hygiene, 218
 — Committees, Formation of, an Attack on Foremen, 239
 — Committee, General, 234
 —, Type of Organization of, etc., 226
 — Conditions, General, 217
 — Organization, Conclusion of Schemes for, 235
 — Organizations, How they would Benefit Workers, 214
 — Processes, Education in, 220
 — Rules, 217

Shop Stewards' Committee, 228
 ———, Summary of Activities, 242
 ———, Right of to Move about Works, 248
 ——— and Welfare Committee Combined, 234
 Sickness, General Shop Condition, 218
 Single Shop Committee, The, 234
 Social Union, 231
 ———, Summary of Activities, 242
 Special Legislation, Awards or Agreements, 216
 Staff Committees (Chapter xix), 237
 ——— Committee, Composition of, 237
 ——— and Manual Workers' Committee, Meetings of, 238
 ———, Summary of Activities, 244
 Standard Rates to Individuals, 214
 ——— Rate, Investigations of Complaints of, 215
 State, The Rôle of the, 195
 ——— Control, 195
 ———, Partnership of the, 195
 ——— Socialism, 196
 Strike, Right to, xxvii
 Substitution, Women for Men, 12
 Summary of Improvement Suggested in Industrial Organization, 190
 Syndicalism, 195

TARIFF Reform, Agitation for, xx
 Teaching Profession, Women in, 83
 Textile Trades, 32
 Time Rates and Piece Rates, Agreed Relation between, 215
 Tobacco, Women in Manufacture of, 52
 Trade Boards Act, 1918, 95
 ———, International, England and Germany, xvi
 ——— Technique, Education in, 220
 ——— Union Activities Supplemented by Wages, 214
 ——— and Employer, xxii
 ———, Co-operative Employees' 155
 ——— Congress of 1913, 120
 ——— Conditions, Restoration of, 216
 ——— Unions, Defects of, xxvi
 ———, Keeping in Touch with, 224

Trade Unions, Limitation of Output, 126
 ——— for Manual Labour, xiii
 ———, Position of Skilled Workers, 142
 ———, Representation of, on Welfare Committee, 233
 ——— Restrictions, xvii
 ——— Unionism as Affecting Women, 85
 ———, International, under Peace Conditions, xvii
 Trades, Boot and Shoe, 46
 ———, Chemical and Metal, Women in, 17
 ———, Clothing, 41
 ———, Food, Paper, Wood, and Miscellaneous, Women in, 49
 ———, Leather, Women in, 63
 ———, National Federations of, and Associations of one Trade Organized, 191
 ———, Paper, Women in, 56
 ———, Textile, 32
 ———, Wood, Women in, 59
 ———, Woollen and Worsted, 37
 ——— Council, 168
 ——— Disputes Act, 194
 Transport Services, Women in, 73

UNION, Social, 231
 United Kingdom, Seeming Prosperity of, xvii
 United States and Japan, New Trading Advantages, xvi
 ———, International Development of, xxi
 University Extension Movement, 201
 Unrest, Condition of Growing, 199

VICTORIAN Age, viii

WAGE Awards, New Agreements, Discussion of, 214
 Wages Paid to Women on Men's Work, 97
 ———, Scales of, 215
 ———, Trade Union Activities Supplemented in, 214
 ——— of Women, 93
 Wealth, Production, Distribution, and Consumption of, xx
 Weaving, Little Distinction between Men's and Women's Work, 36
 Welfare Committee, 232
 ———, Composition of, 233
 ———, Summary of Activities, 243

- Whitley Commission, 197
 — Councils, xxx, 197
 ———. Joint Working between Employers and Labour, 207
 ——— Report, 197
- Whitleyism in Connection with Industrial Problems, 201
- Wood Trades, Women in, 59
- Woollen and Worsted Trades, 37
 ———, Women Excluded from Heavy Processes, 39
- Women Affected by Trade Unionism, 85
 ———, Employment of, 9
 ———, ——— of During and Since the War (Part I), 3
- Women's Employment, "Flying Squads" in Glasgow, 23
 ———, Lack of Physical Strength, 10
 ———, Lack of Training, 11
 ———, Large Proportion of Married Women, 30
 ———, Metal and Chemical Trades, Main Points Summarized, 31
 ———, Prejudices Against, 9
 ———, Skilled and Unskilled Workers, 12
 ———, Lack of Interest in Trade Unionism, Causes of, 88
 ———, War Agricultural Committee, 71
 ———, Wages, 93
 ———, Adversely Affecting Men's, 103
 ———, Boot and Shoe Trades, 96
 ———, National Transport Workers' Federation, 99
 ———, Treasury Agreement, 101
 ———, Shipyards, 100
 ———, Summing up, 105
 ———, Work in Engineering Shops, 24
 ———, Heavy, Output Considerably Less, 28
 ———, Repetition, 27
 ———, on Shells, 23
- Women's Work, Difficulties of Organizing, 13
- Women, Employment of Reaching its Limit, 19
 ——— in Agriculture, Land Army and National Service Corps, 69
 ——— in Clerical and Administrative Work, 77
 ——— in Industry, Expense of, 14
 ———, Future Position of, 107
 ——— in Teaching Profession, 83
 ——— in Transport Services, 73
 ———, Position of, in Agriculture (Chapter vii), 67
 ———, ——— in Civil Service, 79
 ———, ——— in Cotton Trade, 35
 ———, ——— in Textile Trades, 34
 ———, ——— and Cotton Trades, 32
 ——— Welders' Union, 91
 ——— Workers in Agriculture, 69
- Work, Total Hours of, 216
- Works Committees, Comments on Working of, 246
 ———, Right of Members to move about Works, 248
 ———, Right of Works Committee Men to move about, 248
 ———, Size of as Affecting Organization of Shop Committees, 227
- Worker, The, 189
 ———, Grades of, for Type of Machine, 216
- Workers, Interpretation of Management to, 219
- Workers' Desire for Elementary Economics, 201
 ——— Educational Association, The 201
 ——— Shop Organizations, Scope of, (Chapter xvii), 213
- Working Conditions, 217
 ——— of Works Committees, Comments on (Chapter xxi), 246
- Workshop Committees, Part III (Chapter xvi), 207
 ———, Summary and Conclusions, 242

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