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Industrial Anarchy—and the Way Out

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Industrial Anarchy —and the Way Out . . . By W. Walter Crotch . . .

Author of "The Cottage Homes of England," "The
Coming Trade War," "Charles Dickens: Social
Reformer," etc. etc. :: :: ::



With an Introduction by

The Rt. Hon. G. H. ROBERTS, M.P.

*"And he gave it for his opinion that whoever
could make two blades of grass, or two ears of
corn, to grow upon the same spot of ground where
but one grew formerly, had rendered more essential
service to mankind, and deserved better of his country,
than the whole tribe of politicians put together."*

DEAN SWIFT.

LONDON: HUTCHINSON & CO.
PATERNOSTER ROW :: :: 1920

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

BY

THE RIGHT HON. G. H. ROBERTS, M.P.

WHOEVER contributes to clear thinking and wise direction at this critical period in the history of our country renders signal service to his fellow-citizens. Far-flung and devastating war has ensued in tremendous and universal upheaval. Dynasties are crashed down; systems of government are daily challenged, and the many are questioning the destinies of the human race.

Having been acquainted since boyhood with the writer of this book, I know him to be a bold and independent thinker, endowed with a considerable gift of literary expression. While preserving a close friendship, we have differed in thought and action, which is but to say that we possess a mutual regard for individuality. Over and beyond this we unite in love of our country, in faith in our race, in hatred of wrong and injustice, and in desire that the world may be better when we quit than it was when we arrived.

Early in life Mr. Crotch evinced interest in social welfare by studying housing conditions in Norwich, our native city, and the rural districts of Norfolk.

He embodied the results of his investigations in a book which, under the title of "The Cottage Homes of England," did much to awaken the public conscience and to inspire betterment. Among Dickensians he is recognized to have imbibed very freely of the humanitarianism, the spirit and purpose of Charles Dickens. This marks him as hating cant and humbug, as being a true friend of the poor and oppressed, and as having courage combined with a facility for making himself understood by those who will listen to him.

To the outstanding problem of the period, the Industrial Problem, he brings to bear a ripe experience and intimate knowledge. In an analysis of the causes of unrest and strikes he has succeeded in delineating them as psychological as well as material. He sees clearly that it is not exclusively a matter of bread, boots and shelter. True, these are primary requisites, therefore the provision of security in employment and equitable remuneration rightly appear in the forefront of popular demands. But something more must be granted before enduring peace and content will abide in the land. The modern worker wants a definite status in industry and the community in which he lives and has his being; he wants the independence and dignity implied in the designation of British citizen!

Accompanying an acute diagnosis of the disease are suggested remedies. In asking me to pen this introduction Mr. Crotch states he does not expect me to subscribe to all he has written. It is in that spirit I have responded to his request. Seeing the shore strewn with the wreckage of shibboleths and doctrines, and hearing formulæ claimed to contain

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a panacea for all social wrongs, like an old-time lady's remedy for all diseases of the flesh, the while believing there is no magic solvent of deeply-rooted, long established, and variously caused grievances, constitute my reason for welcoming and commending this book. To endeavour during this "One life—a little gleam between two eternities," to throw the brightest light on and disseminate the widest knowledge respecting a problem that is urgent and insistent, tends to expedite sound progress and avert violent reaction.

GEORGE H. ROBERTS.

Norwich,
January, 1920.

To
MY OLD FRIEND
GEO. H. ROBERTS, M.P.
WHO FOR YEARS PAST HAS STRIVEN
UNTIRINGLY TO PROMOTE INDUSTRIAL HARMONY
THIS LITTLE BOOK
IS
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

Industrial Anarchy—and the Way Out

CHAPTER I

THE NEW, WAR

LABOUR is in revolt. All over the world the rumblings of discontent may be heard, now low and murmuring, now raised to a mighty roar; while every now and then the dispassionate observer may detect some crack or fissure in the fabric of our social edifice, warning us of the danger that lurks in the wrath, in the terrible destructive force that has lain for so long dormant in the sleeping giant; now, at last, roused to a consciousness of his power, but not yet determined as to whether he shall use that power, constructively, and to build up, or whether, like another Samson, he will pull down the edifice of our civilization, even if he himself is crushed beneath its weight. As I write the signs of Labour's discontent are manifest on every side. I

read in the Press that the railway strike has cost the nation, directly and indirectly, fifty million sterling—and I note that the matters, in dispute, have still to be adjusted. Following this item, I find that Mr. Hodges, the Secretary of the Miners' Federation, has been threatening resort to the Miners' "strategic policy" of restricting output, unless the Government carries out the commands of the Federation and nationalizes the coal industry. Another paragraph tells me that the Iron Founders have rejected the terms of settlement arranged by their leaders, and the same day's paper records the fact that New York harbour is "frost bound" by a strike of the lightermen; that it is on the cards whether the rail services in the United States are not suspended, together with the coal mines and the steel industry. The settlement of the world war is almost forgotten in the grave industrial crisis that threatens.

Turn from America to France, and we find the same phenomenon. Paris is without papers, we read, because of a strike in the printing trades, to be followed by one among the railwaymen shortly. Marseilles, or at all events its docks, are in the hands of Bolsheviks! A bitter labour conflict is impending in Spain, and martial law has been proclaimed; while Italy, so competent au-

thorities allege, is bound to see a violent Labour upheaval soon, and some one hundred Socialist M.P.'s have been returned. Russia is saved from labour troubles only by civil war, but not so Germany. In Berlin itself, the Spartacists are still able to paralyse industry every now and then, and the Government only succeed in quelling them with the greatest difficulty and by the unsparing use of the machine gun. In Canada, a huge strike has just been settled; in Australia, the men of the Mercantile Marine have just gained a notable victory—by defying the law! Japan has just experienced its first taste of Syndicalism. The revolt is world-wide, and it grows rather than diminishes in intensity. During the war we scanned the papers each day to find, if we could, some slackening in the operations that might presage victory, and we found for years that time added only fresh fields to the military operations, fresh bitterness to the fighting. It is so to-day with the other war in which civilization finds itself engaged. Peace seems far away. There is no hope of a decisive victory. Only one certain fact emerges: the ruin of industry, if the conflict still endures.

Strictly speaking, the conflict is an old one. It began before Armageddon, and was suspended only while the world was busy

tackling the Huns. Then it was renewed. The years before the war saw a railway strike, a miners' strike, both on national lines—and two strikes that paralysed the Port of London. The great, and now neglected, genius of Lord Askwith was strained to the uttermost to adjust the thousand and one smaller, but still serious, disputes that sputtered up every now and then from underground, warning us that it was on the surface of a live volcano that we were dwelling. Then, to indulge in a strange paradox, the war brought peace. It healed our national dissensions. We became one people—class and sectional differences were forgotten, and for the most part we stood shoulder to shoulder, steady and united. But when the danger passed, the unity went with it, and to-day we are back again hard at it, fighting each other, with all the old familiar tactics well in evidence; such as the "lightning" strike, the "stay-in" strike, the "irritation" strike, the "sympathetic" strike; fighting with rancour, where there was yesterday brotherhood; with glowering destructiveness, where two years ago there was unity and concord.

And this new war shows no sign of abating. Mr. Tom Mann, the ablest and the most uncompromising of the Syndicalists, the first leading Trade Unionist to advocate "Direct

Action," has been elected to the Secretaryship of the Engineers' Society, for long reputed to be one of the most staid, conservative organizations in existence. We read that Labour is revising her plans for the next great struggle, the next onslaught upon Capital. There is to be a G.H.Q. Staff, so that the blow, when it comes, is not to be delivered by the railwaymen alone, not even by the Triple Alliance, but by all the forces of Labour acting simultaneously, in concert; while the co-operative societies, it is suggested, will accumulate reserves of food. Thus the strikers will not be overwhelmed by the catastrophe that threatens to engulf the rest of the community. "The Call" tells us, for instance, that "the crying need of the moment in the Labour movement is for a small Committee of approved tacticians, the smaller the better—a kind of General Staff—whose sole duty would be to consider and apply strike tactics, considering moves and counter-moves, so as to enter upon the struggle, not with tears and melodramatic gestures, but with initiative, boldness, and the assurance of reaching with the minimum of suffering, and dislocation the immediate stage of social progress, *the dictatorship of the proletariat*. The railwaymen's strike is an open battle in the social revolution. It is

a question of the survival of the Capitalist system or the rise to power of the working class."

On the other hand, the Government have already formed their Civil Guard, and Lord Wrenbury is appealing for volunteers for his corps of citizen strike-breakers. We have here all the essentials for Civil War; all the ingredients for a cataclysm such as we have not been called upon to face for three centuries, when the trained bands of London fought the Cavaliers, and Cromwell's Horse routed the foreign legions of Prince Rupert. Worse, we have exactly the temper which provokes a conflict of that description. For, on the one side, we have Labour, unappeased by concessions, unsatisfied by shorter hours and higher wages, and resolutely determined to effect the break up and destruction of the present system; while, on the other, we find steady, sane men of business, prepared almost to welcome a national strike, because they believe that the Government would certainly surmount the crisis; that Labour would be decisively beaten, and that that "would settle things once and for all!"

I question the wisdom of both attitudes. First, I have the gravest doubts as to whether Labour can destroy the present system of Society. Secondly, even if she succeed in

doing so, she could not herself construct a sane and preferable alternative. And, on the other hand, I doubt whether, if she were badly beaten, it would "end the business." For the Englishman is an obstinate person, and once he has got an idea in his head he will suffer any amount of punishment before he gives it up. The very Trade Unions that are to-day the *foci* of unrest, were bred in defeat. Their strikes were broken, and their leaders went to prison—to penal servitude—or to Botany Bay. But they persisted. In my view, the Unions would persist again if the Government found opportunity to crush them by the ruthless use of military force. Moreover, we must remember this; that no Government could employ force on a large scale and unsparingly unless it had public opinion overwhelmingly on its side, and in the absence of disorder, of rioting or of the threat to riot—short, in fact, of an actual rising, the soldiers could not be used. Even if Labour unrest continues, I do not think that we shall see rioting or widespread disorder, or the use of troops, save to protect property. For the workman has found the folly of violence and the efficacy of strikes. In the thirties and forties, riots and rick burning were constant, and he was disciplined very effectively by the yeomanry and the soldiers.

But strikes were few and far between—and the Labour movement of that day petered out so soon as the more active spirits went to Australia or Canada, there to carry the Chartist programme that they could not get enforced here. I believe that the British workman has never forgotten the lesson. Hence, to-day, save when at Glasgow or Liverpool the pugnacity of the Irishman asserts itself, strikes are generally very orderly—and very dangerous. Renewed with perfect discipline and admirable organization, they threaten to make industry, if not impossible, at least extremely difficult until, at last, as I have said, the staid and responsible man of business longs for a crisis that will settle the matter, and put Society on a firm basis, once and for all. It is an idle dream; for force can only succeed when you can employ it effectively and when it has moral authority behind it, and, as I am going to show, the roots of Labour discontent are too deep for force to prove a remedy.

The first fact that we have to realize in considering this, the gravest problem that confronts the Nation, is that it is, in essence, a psychological one. It has to do with a certain mental attitude; a spiritual disposition that will not, and cannot be dealt with by mere material concessions. I find }that

men of business, organizers of industry who are by no means ill-disposed to Labour, are continually complaining that there is no finality to the Trade Union demands. Hours are short, they say, and wages have risen, yet strikes continue. It is not the least ironical and distressing factor in the situation that as wages rise, so prices advance. Yet, singular to relate, while wages—real and monetary—are higher in the United States of America, production there is cheaper. Only this year certain American publishers visited England, bought up the copyright of several works by English authors and hied them back with the manuscripts to the land of hustle—there to get them printed, bound and stitched at rates so far below our own that they could afford to send them across the ocean and still make a profit on the transaction. Yet American labour in the printing trades is higher paid than our own! In England, however, the rise in prices tends to outstrip wages and doubtless much of the existing discontent is due to this, and to the feeling that the workman is no better off than he was before. But over and above this fact, I am inclined to think that the true explanation must be found in a new mental attitude on the part of the worker.

The keynote of that attitude is destructive. The workman regards himself as at war with

Society.* He has become thoroughly "class conscious"—that is to say, he sees himself and his class as separate and distinct from the nation and the community. Something like contempt of Parliament has grown up in his mind, and whereas forty or fifty years ago the Radical working man was a keen politician, continually putting pressure on the House of Commons for Land Reform, Free Education and Manhood Suffrage, to-day his descendants disdain the constitutional weapon and rely on the use of that right of combination which has made Trade Unionism so powerful a force. The modern workman regards the capitalist, the Government and his own employer in particular, with much the same suspicion and the same hostility that he extended to the Government of the Kaiser. Sir Charles Dilke once said of Parnell that "dealing with him was like dealing with a foreign power." It is as a foreign power that the workman thinks of the industrial and political institutions of the nation.

Let no one think that this is an exaggeration. There is before me as I write a very remarkable report signed by Sir G. Croydon Marks, M.P., Sir Maurice Levy, M.P., and Mr. Eugene Wason, M.P., who were appointed with others by the Government during 1917 to report upon Industrial Unrest.* They found that the work-

men were at once so cynical and so distrustful of all authority, even including that of their own Unions, that they were only too pleased to initiate sudden and repeated insurrectionary movements. This is what they wrote :

“ The result of this apparently universal distrust alike of the Trade Union Executive and of the Government Departments who act with, and through them, has led to the formation of a vigorous defensive organization for the protection of the workmen inside their own separate workshops, known as the ‘ Shop Committee ’ or ‘ Rank and File ’ movement, with Shop Stewards elected from the workers in every shop. These men take upon themselves the duties of swiftly protecting and safeguarding whatever questions are involved, whether of wages or working conditions, that may arise between the workers and the management, without requiring to lose time by communicating with any Executive or central Headquarter group to intercede or negotiate for them. From the success secured by this movement, great bodies of men who originally stood aloof, have joined, and now are in accord with their methods, until the ‘ Rank and File ’ organization threatens to be-

come, in our opinion, a most serious menace to the authority and entire work of the A.S.E. and other skilled workers' Unions.

“The distrust of the Trade Union Leaders, and entire want of confidence in the Government promises concerning the workers' interests and the recognition of Trade Union aims and objects, is felt by other Unions than those of the skilled Engineering and Electrical Trades. Members of the National Union of Railwaymen, the Carpenters and Joiners, the United Pattern Makers, the Enginemen and Firemen's Mutual Protection Association, the Boilermakers, Iron and Steel Ship Builders' Society, the Association of Tramway and Vehicle Workers, the National Union of General Workers, the Workers' Union, the Ironfounders, the National Amalgamated Union of Labour, the Colliery Surface Workers, all alike, without a single exception, expressed distrust in, and total indifference to, any promise the Government may make, while some referred to 'Russia' and openly declared the one course open for Labour was a general 'down tools' revolutionary policy to secure reforms that constitutional action was failing to effect.”

Let us take another instance of this new temper of our industrial democracy. It is supplied in that remarkable pamphlet, "The Miners' Next Step," which has become, in effect, the unauthorized programme of the immensely powerful Miners' Federation. The following amazing extracts speak for themselves.

The authors demand that :

A continual agitation be carried on in favour of increasing the minimum wage, and shortening the hours of work, until we have extracted the whole of the employers' profit.

That our objective be to build up an organization that will ultimately take over the mining industry, and carry it on in the interest of the workers.

It will be seen that the policy is extremely drastic and militant in its character, and it is important that this should be so. No statement of principles, however wide, embracing no programme, however widely desired and shrewdly planned; no constitution, however admirable in its structure, can be of any avail unless the whole is quickened and animated by that which will give it the breath of life—a militant, aggressive policy. For this reason our examination of the policy

must be minute and searching. The main principles are as follows :

DECENTRALIZATION FOR NEGOTIATING

The Lodges, it will be seen, take all effective control of affairs, as long as there is any utility in local negotiation. With such a policy, Lodges become responsible and self-reliant units, with every stimulus to work out their own local salvation in their own way.

CENTRALIZATION FOR FIGHTING

It will be noticed that all questions are ensured a rapid settlement. So soon as the Lodge finds itself at the end of its resources, the whole fighting strength of the organization is turned on. We thus reverse the present order of things, where in the main, we centralize our negotiations and sectionalize our fighting.

Now let us see how the "fighting" is to be developed :

THE USE OF THE "IRRITATION" STRIKE :

Pending the publication of a pamphlet, which will deal in a comprehensive and

orderly way with different methods and ways of striking, the following brief explanation must suffice. The "Irritation" strike depends for its successful adoption on the men holding clearly the point of view that their interests and the employers' are necessarily hostile. Further, that the employer is vulnerable only in one place, his profits! Therefore, if the men wish to bring effective pressure to bear they must use methods which tend to reduce profits. One way of doing this is to decrease production, while continuing at work. Quite a number of instances where this method has been successfully adopted in South Wales could be adduced. The following will serve as an example:

At a certain colliery some years ago the management desired to introduce the use of screens for checking small coal. The men who were paid through and through for coal getting, *e.g.*, for large and small coal in gross, objected, as they saw in this the thin end of the wedge of a move to reduce their earnings. The management persisted, and the men, instead of coming out on strike, reduced their output by half. Instead of sending four trams of coal from a stall, two only were filled,

and so on. The management thus saw its output cut in half, while its running expenses remained the same. A few days' experience of a profitable industry turned into a losing one ended in the men winning hands down. Plenty of other instances will occur to the reader, who will readily see that production cannot be maintained at a high pressure, without the willing co-operation of the workmen; so soon as they withdraw this willingness and show their discontent in a practical fashion, the wheels begin to creak. And only when the employer pours out the oil of his loving kindness, by removing the grievance, does the machinery begin to work smoothly again. This method is useless for the establishment of general principles over the whole industry, but can be used, like the policeman's club, to bring individual employers to reason.

JOINT ACTION BY LODGES

The tendency of large meetings is always towards purity of tone and breadth of outlook. The reactionary cuts a poor figure under such circumstances, however successful he may be when surrounded in his own circle by a special clique.

UNIFYING THE MEN BY UNIFYING DEMANDS

It is intolerable that we should ask men to strike and suffer, if nothing is coming to them when they have helped to win the battle. We have seen many fights in this coalfield in which all sections of underground workmen were engaged, but only to benefit one section, *i.e.*, on a haulier's or collier's question. We must economize our strength, and see to it that every man who takes part in a fight receives something, either in improved conditions or wages, as his share of the victory.

Finally there comes the great, the crowning objective, stated thus :

THE ELIMINATION OF THE EMPLOYER

This can only be obtained gradually and in one way. We cannot get rid of employers and slave driving in the mining industry until all other industries have organized for, and progressed towards the same objective. Their rate of progress conditions ours; all we can do is to set an example and the pace.

NATIONALIZATION OF MINES

Does not lead in this direction, but simply makes a National Trust with all the force of the Government behind it, whose one concern will be to see that the industry is run in such a way as to pay the interest on the bonds with which the Coalowners are paid out, and to extract as much more profit as possible, in order to relieve the taxation of other landlords and capitalists.

Our only concern is to see to it that those who create the value receive it. And if by the force of a more perfect organization and more militant policy, we reduce profits, we shall at the same time tend to eliminate the shareholders who own the coalfield. As they feel the increasing pressure we shall be bringing on their profits, they will loudly cry for Nationalization. We shall and must strenuously oppose this in our own interests, and in the interests of our objective.

Now, against this policy, it is useless to direct either the threat of force, or the soporific warnings of experience. It is useless either to say that if it comes to a final struggle between the Government and the Bolshevik

elements in our midst, the former must win; and it is useless perpetually to assert that the British workman is a shrewd, sane, level-headed, even-tempered man, who will listen finally to reason and will not pursue a fractious policy to his own hurt. No man who is in such a frame of mind as I have described is reasonable; that is, amenable to the appeal of argument. Neither is he to be cowed by force. He may be temporarily subdued by it, but, like the dog, he will return to his vomit.

If we are going to deal with the problem of Labour unrest, if we are going to defeat the Bolshevik wire-pullers in our midst, then we must realize that, as I have said, there is a psychological cause for the unrest that I have described and we must deal with it. We must have for him a constructive, an alternative programme to that which is perpetually dinned into his ears by the revolutionary agents, who are working ceaselessly to undermine our civilization. If we succeed in doing that, we shall wean the workman from the Bolshevism that is eating into his very bones. If we do not, then we must resign ourselves to the fact that strikes have become endemic; that attacks on industry will become incessant, to be renewed again and again with greater vigour and skill than ever, and at last to wear down the spirits and the morale of the garrison

defending the citadel. In a word, whichever side wins, the ruin of industry is certain. That is the prospect! What is to be done?

When, on November 11th, the news flashed across the world that Germany had signed the Armistice and that another dread chapter in our history had closed, a great master of English prose, James Douglas, wrote the following passage:

“ In dust and in ashes let us confess that we were led out of disaster by ways that we knew not, and that the true secret of our undeserved and unearned salvation is eternally locked in the cold young hearts that beat no more with ours and everlastingly hidden in the young eyes that see no more the earthly sun.

“ In our grateful humility let us clasp hands as brothers, resolved that in the days to be we shall labour together for the sure gathering of the great harvest of liberty and peace in all the sorrow-stricken lands.”

It is in the spirit of that great appeal that I have undertaken this little work, designed as it is to help all that is best, all that is worthiest in England, designed to make us yet again one nation. I shall range myself

against those who desire a revolution to be achieved by syndicalist ruthlessness on the one hand, and those who seek to attain stability by that military dictatorship, which Dean Inge at once dreads and welcomes as the outcome of the present situation. I shall try to point out a more excellent way—the way of sane compromise and wise reform that shall give us an England worthy of the men who gave us victory ; that shall rear a race puissant, strong and free, a race that shall yet lead the nations in the paths of wisdom, on towards the supremest summits of human development, till they look back on this dark chapter with the same wondering credulity that we ourselves read of the plagues and tortures of the Middle Ages.

CHAPTER II

BOLSHEVISM VERSUS PRODUCTION

INEVITABLY, the facts that I have recited in the previous chapter lead to this inquiry; an inquiry that is heard invariably whenever the Labour Movement, or Industrial Unrest, are discussed.

“What,” it is asked, “has changed the Englishman; changed him from his old blithe-some, happy-go-lucky, sunny self into a sour and disgruntled recusant; an incipient rebel, who needs only an opportunity to overturn the existing order he once so cheerfully accepted?” “Agitators,” is a favourite explanation, and frequently, for want of a better, it is accepted. Manifestly, it is absurd. Agitators we have had with us always. This fractious temper, on the part of the Englishman, is something new and as dangerous as it is new; for it is both a defect and a quality, on the part of our race that once they get their teeth really into anything, they require no

little persuasion and considerable force to make them let go.

At the present moment, the British Bull Dog is hanging on to Capital, and to organized industry for all he is worth. It is vital, not only for our sakes but for his also, that we should convince him of his error, and to do this we must be at pains, first of all, to understand him.

We must discover in what lies the workman's springs of action; in what his objective consists; why this new, and unrecognizable phase of his mentality has become so suddenly and so ruthlessly asserted; in a word, we must, to use a colloquialism "get inside his mind" and find out exactly what it is that he is after.

Now, if we do this, I think we shall find that, in point of fact, the Englishman has not, so far as essentials are concerned, changed one iota; but his conditions and his outlook during the past half century have altered profoundly.

Surely I am right in this contention, for if the war has proved anything, it has proved emphatically that the Englishman has *not* altered. He has retained his essential qualities, unblemished and undiminished. It is not merely that the men, who upheld the honour of "this dear, dear land," showed that their mettle rang as true as did their fathers'; not merely that shop assistants and clerks

turned themselves into warriors, almost without training, sometimes at a moment's notice. But the cheeriness, the blithe *insouciance*, the unquenchable optimism that marked the Englishman of yore, these were again to the front. Mark Tapley was in the trenches, every inch of him ; Sam Weller went laughing over the top ; there were few grouzers on the way back from Mons ; nor at the first, or second, battle of Ypres. Masking the will to win, there was jollity, harmony, concord—till these very men came home and began to lead the van into another war, the Class War, which they are now fighting in a vastly different spirit, but with the same tenacity !

Think of what our lads in the trenches suffered ; how cheerfully they fought with all the odds against them, often without ammunition—sometimes without support, frequently without hope, but always with unfailing good humour, inexhaustible spirit and a geniality, too innate to be cowed, too deep seated to be eradicated. Think of these things and you will agree that it is not the Englishman who has altered, *he* is the same as ever ; it is his life, his outlook, that have altered.

Let us see in what the change consists. The workman of fifty years ago was not separated from his employer by anything like so huge a gulf as is now the case. The industrial unit

was smaller; the mammoth trading concern had still to emerge. Workmen could and did rise by industry and cleverness out of the rut, and became themselves employers. Others, as able but less fortunate, still cherished the ambitious idea that one day they would do likewise, and these men were pillars that helped to support the existing order. To-day, the men who most nearly resemble them, both in the fact that they are above the average in intellect and initiative, and have a certain restlessness, a proneness to discontent, no longer give their energies to the ideal of going into business on their own, but devote their abilities to trying to overthrow the hated "master class" altogether. The change is a very important one, for it affects the abler, the "liver" members of the working class, the men who lead the way in social evolution.

Fifty years ago, the work of the average mechanic admitted of far more individuality and character than is the case to-day. I shall never forget the interest and awe with which certain Clerkenwell watchmakers once pointed out a famous worthy of their district and craft, famous because he was the last survivor of the watchmakers who could make the whole of a watch—make all its innumerable contrivances and delicate *minutiae*. They, alas—could only complete one tiny fraction of the in-

strument and, whereas the *doyen* of their trade knew the joy of fashioning a complete thing, they spent their days in making some trivial section, whose very function was unintelligible to them. Consider the difference that this must make in the life of a man! Inevitably the craftsman who makes a complete thing must feel the gratification of that creative instinct which goes deep down into our nature. He feels the joy of achievement, the natural satisfaction in completion :—

“ Give a Man a horse he can ride,
 Give a Man a boat he can sail,
 And his rank and his wealth,
 And his strength and his health,
 On shore—nor sea shall fail.”

So, too, if he makes any one thing himself, —even if it be only a boot. But keep him hard at it all day and every day making the thousandth part of a boot, and his mind, unsatisfied, becomes fertile ground for seeds of discontent.

This, then, is the second great change that has come over the condition of the workman. Both these changes are adverse; both have affected his outlook profoundly. But not so much as the third differentiation, which though it is intrinsically beneficial, has yet inclined

him more than anything else to lend a ready ear to the revolutionary propaganda.

Fifty, or say sixty years ago, the workman was acutely conscious of the need to produce wealth. He was, if not poor himself, at least bred up in the traditions of poverty. The hungry forties, the lean years that followed the great Napoleonic war, when windows were still taxed and bread was dear and meat unknown—these had left him vividly impressed with the acute need of producing more goods and yet more goods, and the result was that he worked twelve, fourteen, aye, eighteen hours a day, and six days a week. I do not say that such a frame of mind was the highest, or the most refreshing to contemplate. I do not say that these unnaturally long hours made for the best work, or even for the greatest output. But the point is that the outlook of the men, who toiled long and arduously, often for a bare livelihood, was primarily dictated by a constant fear of poverty. We were a poor nation, and the workman knew it. To-day, we have ceased to be poor and he knows that also!

For there has come a new and a mighty force into the complexities of our civilization—Education! To-day the workman reads; he reads that this company is paying a dividend of twenty or thirty per cent., or that another company has seen its shares' advance from a

few shillings to five or six pounds. Or he notes that a well-known coal owner has departed this life leaving a million or so behind him, or that some young peer has retired from business with some seven million sterling; so that when he is asked to increase output, to work harder, to speed up and be more efficient, he replies instantly that he is not going to work harder in order to "earn more profits for the boss!" It is a fallacious, if you like, an insane view, but it persists!

More probably than not, he sets the ball rolling towards another strike, with a view to forcing up wages yet higher; if he succeeds, as he probably does, then prices go up also, for, mark well, increased wages are not followed to-day by an increase of output, and can, therefore, only be met by a rise in prices.

During the nineteenth century wages advanced and prices fell *because output increased*.

To-day wages are advancing and prices are rising, while output remains only stationary, and strikes have become endemic.

As matters stand, the workman laughs at the appeal that is made to him. "I will not work to make profit for the boss" and the nation goes short in consequence.

Am I wrong? Do I exaggerate? Then listen to the words of Mr. Frederick Harrison, one of the fathers of Trade Unionism, one of

the most devoted friends Labour has ever had in Britain. This is what he says :

“ For forty years I have publicly pleaded for reduced hours of work, for free popular education, for higher standards of life for all workers alike. In the very few years that remain for me on earth, I have nothing to gain or lose ; and my hope is that I may be spared the sight of the chaos into which our country seems to be hurrying.

“ The peril is this. Burdened as we are with a colossal fixed debt, which must soon amount to 8,000 millions, we are still plunging headlong into debt day by day. We have been importing yearly £800,000,000 more than we export ; and for most of what we import we only pay in paper ‘ promises to pay.’ The bulk of our products at home are paid for by ‘ promises to pay.

“ The wages paid enormously exceed the real value of the work done. Bread, coal, houses, sea and land transport are all subsidised—as very soon meat and milk* will be subsidised. That means that the producers of all these necessaries are paid far more than the goods really earn.

“ Down to 1914, producers earned in any market far more than they received. During the

* Since Mr. Harrison wrote these words “free” milk is supplied to poor mothers.

war, as an emergency necessity, they received far more than they earned, and this still goes on in peace to something, they say, like £200,000,000.

“All this is besides the bonus given for war-service. A large part of the wages now paid to workmen are doles—*i.e.*, gifts paid over and above the value of their work out of the taxes of their fellow citizens. So far Labour is being pauperized. It is being given money which its labour does not earn. It is sucking down the savings of thrift, and piling up debts to lie heavy on our children.

“This cannot go on. If some ten or fifteen millions of men and women continue to receive a large portion of their wages out of the pockets of the taxpayers, this monstrous form of charity must soon end—because the fund that supplies it will speedily dry up.

“No country in the world can make a practice of paying its workers a bonus of £200,000,000 more than they really earn.

“Besides which, the whole transaction is one of paper credit, *i.e.*, of promises to pay, not of money or money’s worth. The most unthinking can see that it means bankruptcy for the State, ruin to the private citizen, starvation to the workman.

“Yes! I say starvation! See how this works out. Our islands do not grow enough

food for our crowded population. We do not, and cannot feed ourselves. We have to buy food abroad—or starve. Now the American Food Controller tells us the ghastly truth that Europe as a whole does not now produce food enough for some 100 millions of its inhabitants.

“France, Germany, even Italy, are less stinted than the East of Europe. But of the 100 millions, at least 10 millions of our people must be fed from overseas. Down to the war we easily paid for food and for all else we imported. Although our imports were greatly in excess of our exports we met the deficit thus :

1. By exporting coal,
2. By our investments abroad.
3. By our vast manufactures.
4. By our splendid merchant shipping.
5. By better and cheaper products.

“All this has gone. We now have a deficit of 800 millions on the balance of trade; and the sources from which we used to meet it are no more.

“1. *We cannot afford to export Coal—we have hardly enough for ourselves.* Our coal is more costly to raise than the coal of America, Belgium, or Germany. There is no certain per-

manent market for our exported coal—even if we had any to spare at home. *We are faced with the suicidal necessity of having to import coal—to pay Americans for Coal*, as well as for our meat, corn, cheese and bacon.

“2. Our foreign investments have been taken up and paid away to save the exchanges.

“3. Owing to the cost of coal, the rise of wages and the ever-growing prices of raw materials, our manufactures are becoming too dear for foreign traders to buy. *America, Germany and Belgium are producing goods more cheaply and as good.*

“4. Nearly half our merchant ships have been sunk. We have not enough to bring home what we need; and by the *rise in prices building new ships is delayed.*

“5. *Shorter hours, slack work, and incessant strikes have involved far LESS PRODUCTION AND UNSTEADY TRADE.*

“Down to the war, our products were the best, the largest, the cheapest in all Europe. Now AMERICA has taken our place as LEADING THE INDUSTRIAL WORLD. To-day, our products are, per man, among the smaller in volume, the dearer, by no means the best. All the five ways in which we led the world in industry and paid for our food are gone. *I tell you starvation stares you in the face.*

“Some anarchists are silly enough to say

that slack work calls out more workers, and that higher wages only bleed the bloated capitalist. It is just the reverse. Slack work releases capital to go elsewhere.

“Higher wages means rise of prices to the millions. Take the example of bread. Shorter hours and better wages to the bakers add one halfpenny to every loaf. To those who pay income tax at 6s. it is a trifle—hardly as much as a box of matches. To the brickmaker, the porter, the dustman, with a large family at home, it may mean half of the 1s. rise in wages he has just won.

“This is only a beginning. Some say the loaf will go up to 1s. 6d. In any case, the 6s. income-tax payer can laugh at that. He already pays in taxes 4d. on every loaf sold, and if he had to pay 8d. more he would not cry out. But with the loaf at 1s. 6d. millions of poor families would grow thin—children and infants would waste away.

“Why does the loaf go up? Well, first, because from the inflation of paper money, every pound we send to U.S.A. is only 17s. here. Then the bakers raise their wages by a strike; the miners by strikes, and Sankey Money, increase the cost of ships; railwaymen and dockers do the same with land transport.

“So it goes on in a vicious circle, every rise

of wages re-acts through the whole system of labour; and it presses first and mainly on the poorest and more helpless."

It ought to be very clearly understood that in accepting Mr. Harrison's diagnosis, it is not necessary to indict the class of whom he writes. There is not, at all events under a competitive system, any moral obliquity attaching to the workman when he gets as much for his labour as he possibly can. In doing this he is only following the example of his employer, who buys in the cheapest and sells in the dearest market. Moreover, he has learnt that that employer has on occasions found it expedient and profitable to limit output for the simple reason that, when there is a brisk demand for goods of a certain quality, it may pay the capitalist to limit the supply and so obtain a higher price for the products. This has long been a recognized tactic of commercial exploitation, and it is absurd to blame the workman when he, on his part, follows in his master's footsteps. When Marx told the workman to practise thrift in the output of the one thing he possessed, his labour power, he appealed very clearly to the recollections of two or three generations of proletarians, who had seen many commodities go up in value as their output diminished. The coal strike of 1892 is a notable case in

point. Here the men were defeated largely because their employers had accumulated huge stocks of coal, and the cessation of their labour actually enhanced their employers' profits. It is only natural that they should have drawn certain deductions from this fact.

But the important point is that we have now reached a crisis in our development, when the restriction of output is suicidal to labour. We may see this clearly if we take a brief survey of the industrial progress of the past seventy years. According to Sir Robert Giffin the general course of wages and the increase in population from 1850 upwards may be stated approximately thus :

Level of wages.	Population.
1850.....100	27,000,000
1885.....149.4	36,000,000
1900.....178.7	41,155,000
1905.....178.8	43,221,000
1907.....181.7	44,100,000

Now from 1850 onward to 1900 prices generally fell, so that the rise in wages during that period was not only a monetary but a real gain. From 1900 to 1910 prices rose again, however, and it is computed that the purchasing power of

a pound in the latter year was equivalent to about seventeen and sixpence just before the Boer War. Even so, however, the status of the wage earner had considerably advanced. Yet when we come to consider the position of many of the unskilled and worse paid workmen, it was still, in many instances, deplorable. According to Mr. Booth, whose monumental "Life and Labour of the People" is a work of unique authority, "the result of all our inquiries makes it reasonably sure that one-third of the population are on or about the line of poverty, or are below it, having at most an income which, one time with another, averages twenty-one shillings or twenty-two shillings for a small family (or up to twenty-five or twenty-six shillings for one of a larger size) and in many cases falling much below this level." Sir Robert Giffin's estimate as to the number of the poor, *i.e.*, of this class, where the men earned less than twenty shillings per week is 25 per cent. of the total population. A considerable proportion of them, he says, are agricultural labourers.

Now it should be noted in this connection that since the war the wages of these, *i.e.*, of the very poor, have enormously increased. The wages of agricultural labourers, for instance, have risen from somewhere round about fifteen shillings per week to thirty-seven

and six. But so great has been the increase in prices that it may well be doubted whether their position shows any sign of material improvement. According to the "Board of Trade Journal" the purchasing power of a pound to-day is somewhere round about nine shillings and while wages have, in the agricultural districts, more than doubled, the prices of certain commodities have advanced 200 per cent. and 300 per cent. It is doubtful, therefore, whether the poorer labourers are much better off with their increased wages, and as matters stand at present their lot cannot be improved until the increased production of commodities, and especially foodstuffs, enables prices to be reduced. Milk is to-day a shilling per quart, eggs are sixpence each, meat is two-and-eight to two-and-ten a pound, bread is ninepence the quarter loaf, soon it will be a shilling, fish is twice as dear as in pre-war days. Boots that cost twelve-and-six before the war are now round about two guineas, clothes are dearer in proportion, fares have risen enormously, even drugs and medicines have not escaped the rise. Rents, except for householders within the limits of the Rents Restriction Act, have risen greatly and beer and tobacco have quadrupled in price and diminished in quality. It may be seriously doubted, therefore, whether the position of the wage

earner in receipt of £2 per week to-day is any better than when he earned fifteen shillings before the war. In some cases, where all the members of a family are workers, there may be a gain in the aggregate, because all are either employed or in receipt of an unemployment allowance.

But it must be remembered that even these wages are maintained only artificially and by relief from the taxes, which not only provide grants to some thousands of out-of-work men and women, but also subsidise bread, sugar and railways. This confronts us with another aspect of the question, an aspect the nation cannot afford to ignore, that of finance.

Taxation has now reached a point when it cannot be, in the nature of things, considerably increased, although it is still inadequate to the needs of the situation which faces us, and leaves us with a heavy and increasing deficit.

This situation cannot continue, for what does it mean ?

In my view, it involves, and must involve, revolution, for its perpetuation makes it impossible for us to achieve that national solvency without which insurrection is not only inevitable, but finally irresistible.

When a Government ceases to be able to pay for the defence of property, then its func-

tions pass into the hands of men who, acting vigorously and swiftly, seize property, and by controlling it, dominate the community. Looked at from this angle, the prospect is not a nice one. The catastrophe may not be imminent—but it is none the less certain unless retrenchment is effected.

Let us look for a moment at our financial position.

As Lord Buckmaster has reminded us :*
 “ The interest on our Debt at the present moment, as provided for by the Budget itself, is £376,000,000. When you have established a sinking fund, and have raised the money that is necessary under this year’s Budget, £400,000,000 a year will be the amount that we shall be compelled to provide, in order to cover the interest and the sinking fund on the standing and irreducible charges to which we are committed.

“ Next after that comes pensions to the wives and families of the men who have sacrificed themselves in our defence. I do not think £70,000,000 will be adequate.

“ There is then £35,000,000 for education ; £17,000,000 for Old Age Pensions, and £13,000,000 for industrial insurance. On the Housing Bill we shall incur an annual liability of not less than £20,000,000. The present

* Speech in the House of Lords, July 21st, 1919.

loss on the railways is £60,000,000 a year. This comes roughly to £210,000,000. If you take the total expenditure of the permanent burden that we have to meet, that is £650,000,000.

“Now there remains the Army, the Navy and the Air Service. Our irreducible minimum cannot be put at less than £150,000,000 when everything is cut down. This, added to the figures I have given, makes a total net immovable figure of £800,000,000.

“How are we going to meet it? The indirect taxation at the present rate is £237,000,000 a year. Twelve million pounds a year comes from stamps. That leaves £550,000,000 to be raised annually by direct taxation. At the present time 1d. in the £ Income Tax produces £5,000,000 a year, and you will, therefore, have to have an income tax to meet that figure or its equivalent of 9s. 2d. in the £.

“And that assumes that our industries remain thriving and flourishing—that the returns will remain elastic and high. It is only on that basis that 1d. in the £ produces £5,000,000.”

That is to say, that it is only by increasing output that we can hope to pay our way; otherwise, as Lord Buckmaster is at pains to state: “Bankruptcy lies before the country,

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and behind bankruptcy treads revolution with swift, impatient feet.”

Increased output alone can save us, and that is exactly what at present Labour denies us !

CHAPTER III

THE ROOT OF THE MATTER

It is clear that in the failure of the workers to increase output we have the cause of the present industrial deadlock and of the financial crisis that threatens.

Prices remain high, largely because commodities are scarce. Hence Trade Union action is resorted to and wages are forced up, while the Government is compelled to impose taxation upon a scale that is without precedent in our history, but which still leaves the National Exchequer faced with an alarming and growing deficit.

Increased production alone will afford us an escape from this intolerable position, but, as we have seen, we must not hope either for that or for the industrial peace, which is indispensable to higher output, from the rank and file of the workers so long as their present frame of mind continues. They remain deaf to the appeals of men like Mr. Frederick Harrison, Mr. Brownlie of the Engineers, and

Mr. Appleton of the General Federation of Trade Unions, clinging obstinately to the doctrines of "ca' canny" and striking on the slightest provocation.

What is the cause of their obduracy? I believe that it is fourfold.

(1) The workman still dreads the effect of that "over-production" which brought about the unemployed crisis of the 'nineties, and which prevailed in the bad times following the Boer War.

(2) He feels in his bones the conviction that with increased output and falling prices his wages will be reduced also, and he doubts if he will get them back to the old level, even if prices rise again.

(3) He does not think it "good enough" to put out all his strength in order to increase profits and dividends for shareholders.

(4) He has lost that creative joy in his work that gave his father an incentive to put his back into it and "do his damndest."

Now, of these four causes, I believe that (3) and (4) are infinitely the more important, and I propose to deal with them first. They call emphatically for a complete revision of our industrial arrangements, and a restoration to the workman of a similar status—with better conditions—to that which he enjoyed before production became what I may describe as

“factorized”; that is to say, in the days when men were not employed in huge mammoth concerns, but worked in small shops, and for businesses that were not too large to give them—first, an interest in the prosperity of the business, and, therefore, a powerful inducement to do their best, and, secondly, a reasonable measure of control over the manner in which their work was done.

Let us take a blacksmith's forge, where, in addition to the smith, three or four farriers are employed; or, if it be preferred, a small builder and carpenter's business, employing, say, himself and half a dozen other workmen; or, if you like, an artificer in Soho, who keeps a few men busy on jewellery and ornamental plate. In all these cases the men employed have an entirely different outlook from those who are at work day by day in a factory.

First of all, they learn this: that unless they each do their best the business will certainly suffer and go to the wall, and they will lose their job. Secondly, as to the way they do their work: they have not only a certain amount of creative pleasure, but complete “control” as to the details. The employer works alongside his men, and the details of administration, of how the work is arranged, are settled, not by any hard and fast routine as in a factory, a coal mine or a steel forge,

but quite easily and naturally—as a rule, without friction or heat.

Now where these conditions do not prevail, the worker feels that he is a man labouring under the highly-regulated routine of the factory; he feels he is a machine, and a machine to produce profit for others. So he "slacks," practises "ca' canny," and strikes whenever there is a sporting chance of victory.

The best analysis of the workman's feelings under the artificial conditions of modern industry has been given to us by Lord Robert Cecil, a detached observer who has studied the question at first hand for himself. His conclusions are marked by extraordinary freshness and originality.

Lord Robert, first of all, will have none of the pet panacea of the State Socialists—Nationalization. He takes as his text a statement by Mr. Harry Gosling. "I see," said that moderate but very earnest Labour leader, "a tremendous, an irresistible tide advancing. . . . That tide is the movement of the workers towards a fuller share in the control of industry. It is the movement from the status of employee to the status of partner."

"It would be difficult, if not impossible," says Lord Robert, "to arrange for the workman to be a partner of the State. But there

is no impossibility, or even, as I think, any serious difficulty in giving him the 'status of a partner' in a private undertaking. To me it seems that this demand made on behalf of Labour is essentially reasonable. The stake of the wage-earner in an undertaking is at least as great as that of the employer. The employer supplies the capital and the directive ability, both of which are, no doubt, as necessary for the success of the undertaking as labour itself. But, broadly speaking, the employer has at stake only the money he has invested in the concern. It may be—it sometimes is—a very large portion of his livelihood; if he loses it, he will be seriously inconvenienced, but no more."

Lord Robert goes on to point out that if the wage-earner loses his employment too often he may find extreme difficulty in getting anything else to do. In the country districts this difficulty is enormously increased by the present condition of *housing*. For, if the labourer loses his employment he probably loses his house as well, and, as things stand, it is exceedingly doubtful whether he and his wife and children will find any decent habitation. To a lesser extent this is true in many urban districts also. That means that if, owing to mismanagement, an undertaking fails, the employer may be financially hard hit :

but the wage-earner will certainly lose his employment, may easily lose his house and home, may not impossibly drift into the class of unemployed, and from thence—tragic product of modern civilization—the unemployable.

“Who can say, in these circumstances, that the stake of the wage-earners in industry is less than that of the employer? or that it is unreasonable for the former to ask, at any rate, for a consultative voice in the management of the business on which their very existence depends? I know it is said that if you once allow this you will cut at the root of our whole industrial prosperity; that even if such a change did not produce complete disorganization, as some think it would, it must hamper industrial enterprise. Industry, it is said, must be directed by one brain, or, at any rate, by one interest.”

How does Lord Robert meet this objection? The same argument, he points out, has often been used in the political sphere. An autocratic or oligarchic form of government has—in theory, at any rate—certain executive advantages. In practice, the advantages are not so great as they sound, because whatever the system of direction in industry or in politics, it is necessary to work through the machinery of government or management, and it is on the excellence or

incompetence of that machinery that the smoothness of executive action mainly depends.

“I do not deny,” he goes on, “that where you have a really capable autocrat, his decisions ought to be more rapid than would be those of a more democratic form of control. But capable autocrats are rare, and incapable autocracy is the worst of all forms of government. Moreover, the important thing is not to make the decisions, but to get them carried out; and the rapidity and efficiency with which decisions are carried out depends far more on the willing co-operation of the subordinates than on anything else. If, therefore, a change in the organization of industry were introduced which would utilize what is at present quite wasted—the intelligent will of the workers—it is not improbable that, so far from diminishing, it would improve the present efficiency of industry.

“It is also sometimes said that the secrets of industry would no longer be safe if representatives of the workers sat on the Boards of Direction. There are many who think that British industry has lost far more than it has gained by the *secretiveness* of employers. But, waiving that consideration, why should it be thought that wage-earners, as a class, are less discreet than others? They certainly keep their own trade secrets remarkably well.

The proceedings of bodies of Trade Union leaders are at least as secret as those of the Cabinet.

“Consider, too, with how many secrets printers are entrusted. Great quantities of highly confidential matters are constantly being printed in commercial negotiations, in legal proceedings, in literary ventures, and in political and diplomatic affairs. And yet I have never heard of an instance in which the printers were accused of indiscretions. It is, of course, true that unconscionable employers would find it impossible to conceal from workmen directors the extent of their profits. But that is one of the chief reasons for the proposed change.”

“It seems to me, therefore, that from every point of view there would be much to be gained by raising the status of the worker to that of a partner. Such practical experience as there is on the subject seems to confirm this view. In many undertakings both here and abroad experiments in the direction indicated have given encouraging results. The difficulty is to apply the principle.”

For there is, as he remarks, no cast-iron scheme applicable to every industry. The circumstances of each undertaking must be separately considered. In every case, however, the general principles are the same.

The wage-earners should be given, in the mode, and subject to the conditions required by each industry, a share in the profits; if possible, a share in the capital, and, above all, a share in the management. Indeed, the share in the profits and capital is chiefly of importance as an element in the status of partnership. It may have (in some cases it has had) the result of increasing the interest of the wage-earners in their work, and giving them a sense of responsibility for its execution. But unless it carries with it some voice, be it only consultative, in the management of the undertaking, profit-sharing will be shorn of half, and more than half, its advantages. And when it is said that the wage-earners should have a voice in the management, it is not enough to give them a voice in the settlement of wages and conditions of labour.

“In the first place, the two things cannot be divided. The method in which a business is carried on often automatically settles the wages that can be paid. Unless the wage-earners are given a share in the responsibility for carrying on a business, it is almost impossible for them to consider questions of hours and wages in a broad, practical spirit; and unless they are in a position to obtain, as of right, authoritative information as to the economic position of the undertaking, how

can they form a trustworthy judgment on such questions? To exclude the wage-earners from a share in the general management is to destroy the chief psychological value of the proposal. Labour would still remain in a position of inferiority to Capital, and the whole conception of the partnership of the two would have disappeared."

I have quoted Lord Robert Cecil at some length for many reasons. First, he is an impartial authority. He is neither a workman, nor in the ordinary sense a capitalist; but he has been at pains to acquaint himself at first hand with the views, not merely of Labour leaders, but of the rank and file of the workers in his constituency, among whom he has recently held a series of meetings, so as to discover exactly what they feel and how they view modern industrial developments. That is an example that other legislators might follow with great advantage, not only to themselves, but to the community. Lord Robert was, it must be admitted, very fortunately placed in regard to the conduct of such an inquiry. Although he is not associated with any industrial or commercial undertaking, his long training in affairs and his practice at the Bar has saved him from the reproach of being a mere theoretician, while it has cost him neither his independence of

mind nor his freshness of ideas. Undoubtedly there is very much, indeed, in the phase of labour unrest that he explored. I have no hesitation in confirming his view that over and above wages and conditions of labour, the workman is dissatisfied with the part which he has to play at present in the conduct of industry. The time has gone by when men will regard themselves as mere "hands," who are hired to do the bidding of directors, whom they never see, and whom they often feel know less of the actual workaday conditions of the business than they do themselves. Nor can it be argued that our industrial undertakings would not be greatly strengthened and informed by enlisting the administrative ability and organizing capacity which the workman, in common with other members of our race, possesses. I shall at a later stage give several illustrations where this has been done with conspicuous success so far as the individual business is concerned, though not with any general results as regards the allayment of the Labour unrest as a whole. But, important as Lord Robert Cecil's recommendations may be, they still leave, as it seems to me, two cardinal causes of that situation untouched.

A long study of the Labour question has convinced me that one of the most powerful

factors in the failure of the workers to increase output lies in their own fear of unemployment. This was brought very forcibly home to me years ago when I heard a certain lecturer of the S.D.F., who was engaged in the building trade, explain some of his recent experiences to a large audience of working men who, like myself, were delighted with the freshness and originality of his speech. He explained that not long since he had been engaged in helping to erect a large building in the suburbs of London. When it was nearing completion a flaw had been discovered in the plans, with the result that all the work had to be destroyed and done over again. He asked with great force whether we thought that he and his fellow workmen were displeased at finding that they had toiled to no purpose and had spent hours of precious labour to no avail. On the contrary, as he told us, and as we readily understood, he and his mates were all delighted. More, they earnestly trusted that yet another flaw would be discovered in the plans so that the work would have to be knocked down once again and done all over again. Why was this? Simply because if this were so they would be protected against several weeks of possible unemployment.

Now we are confronted in this candid confession with a condition of affairs that we

must all see is wrong and unnatural. It cannot be good for any man to have so little interest in the work he does that he is actually glad when that work is destroyed. We have only to contrast the delight with which these builders and bricklayers saw the housebreaker at work on the edifice they had constructed, to contrast the enthusiasm with which they witnessed the structure taken away as rubble in carts, with the feeling that would have been excited in the minds of the mediæval workman had they been told that the cathedral which they had erected, and often adorned out of pure lightness of heart with specimens of their own handiwork, was to be razed to the ground.

Yet, unnatural as was the attitude of this man, it was by no means inexplicable. At that time a sinister position obtained in British industry, which has left enduring marks on the mentality of the worker. It was a commonplace of the Socialist writers and speakers of that day to dilate on the evils of over-production, and they pointed out in innumerable tracts, pamphlets and speeches that, at the time when unemployment became rife, factories were invariably choking with goods. Men went without boots, because there were so many boots in the shops that no one would pay the bootmakers to produce more

Similarly, they wore old clothes because there was a glut of suits in the market and so the tailors went unemployed. Houses could not be built because the supply had outstripped the demand, not the human demand for homes, but the effective demand for people who could pay rents for them. I do not pretend that this was an accurate or an exhaustive analysis of the then prevailing economic situation. But it undoubtedly was true enough to fasten two facts in the mind of the average workman. First, that if he produced too many goods under that condition of affairs he would be unemployed unless trade were brisk, because the market for those goods did not exist and, therefore, they could not be consumed; and secondly, that if he and others were unemployed wages would inevitably fall and consumption would be further restricted. It, therefore, became a tactic among Trade Unionists to restrict production and to retard output, for they saw in any large increase of the latter, almost a certainty of unemployment and reduced wages.

It seems to me to be very important indeed that it should be brought home to the workman conclusively that the condition of affairs, which gave rise to these fears, has long since passed away, and that an educational campaign should be initiated in all the large industrial centres

to familiarize him with the details of the new industrial situation.

Let us contrast for a moment the position in which the world finds itself to-day with that against which the workmen revolted before the war. At the present moment there is no glut of goods of any description, nor is there any possibility of such a glut arising. The war has left a shortage of necessaries in every land under the sun. Over and above the paramount shortage of foodstuffs there is an enormous shortage of houses. As somebody once remarked the world needs refurnishing, and it will be years—at least a generation before the task is carried out, while to discharge it, we shall require vastly increased supplies of coal, of iron, of timber, of raw materials of every sort and description. We shall need, we need now, thousands more ships. We shall have to be provided with all kinds of new and greatly improved machinery. Transit will have to be re-modelled and brought entirely up-to-date. When the workman leaves England and finds himself in a new country there is no question as to the restriction of output nor of shorter hours, nor of unemployment, nor of bad wages. There is work for all, and in plenty, and as a rule, he prospers greatly, and frequently becomes his own master. Indeed it may be said that, at the start, in a new country, he is

his own master. Now, to-day, the whole world is practically in the position of a new country. There is an infinitude of work to be done, and if output were quadrupled to-morrow, it would still leave us faced with an enormous shortage and an effective demand for more labour.

It seems to me that the supreme need of the moment, from an industrial point of view, is to bring this home as forcibly as possible to the mind of the workman. It would be easy so to focus the facts for him that he could not fail to grasp their significance. Mere exhortations to increase output, mere assertions that work will win—these are not good enough. What he ought to be made to realize is the new situation that has arisen in the world. He should be shown that tens of thousands of workers in his own and other lands are calling imperatively for more goods, and are creating opportunities for more labour. The cinema has recently entered the arena of the propagandist, but so far it has not been devoted to bringing before the worker any of the great opportunities that the new world, born of such dreadful stress and travail, offers to those who have nothing to sell but their labour. Surely here is work of cardinal importance that, perhaps, can only be discharged through this new educational agency that instructs the million day by day.

CHAPTER IV

A NATION ON PIECE WORK

IF we satisfy the workman that increased production, larger output and cheaper prices need not, and will not, create unemployment, we shall have done much, very much, to solve the problem that at present confronts the nation.

Recently Mr. Tawney, of the Miners' Federation, stated in the course of a remarkable article in the "Contemporary Review," that a change of heart in the workers, ensuring their active and cordial co-operation in the production of wealth, would do more to speed up output than a generation of invention or the discovery of fresh coalfields. He was right, though as I need hardly say, I entirely dissent from the proposals which he advanced to ensure the co-operation of his class. I shall later outline my objections to these proposals, which were roughly in the nature of a compromise between Syndicalism

and Nationalization. First, however, I am glad to note my agreement with this able recruit to the Labour Party in his insistence of the importance of the psychological aspect of the industrial questions, and the removal of the spectre of unemployment from the vision of the workman is certainly one step towards a saner outlook on his part.

But it is only one step. Before the workman grasps the cardinal importance of increasing output, he needs to be reassured upon one other matter. He must be made to feel that, with cheaper prices, his wages will not be reduced.

What is the position of the workman to-day who is in receipt of a war bonus and of wages temporarily advanced to meet dear prices and war conditions? Those wages, we know, have been stabilized by the Government. Unfortunately, they have been stabilized under conditions that inevitably suggest to the workman that with cheaper commodities they will certainly fall. One of the worst indirect results of the railway strike was to confirm them in this belief. The Government told the men that their wages would not be reduced unless living got cheaper. The propaganda of the railway men, and the discussion that followed the strike in the Press, brought out this fact very clearly. Side by side with

this pledge of the Government there were published exhortations to the workmen, inviting them to "think in goods," not in money, and urging them to do their utmost to increase production.

What was the effect of these dual pronouncements on the mind of the average workman? Surely this. "The Government," he said, "are going to reduce wages when prices fall, and they now appeal to me to produce more goods in order that prices *may* fall. It is not good enough."

Understand, I am not putting this forward as a conclusive or exhaustive analysis of the present economic situation. Further, I agree that the present high wages, which are in part borne by the tax-payer, are an anomaly, and cannot continue unless production is increased. I go further, and I say that those wages are useless, or largely useless, to the workman so long as he is deprived of the purchasing power of the money by the restriction of commodities. But I say that to tell men, or to allow them to infer, that their wages will be reduced when they have speeded-up production, is to put a premium on "ca' canny" and dilatoriness.

The plain fact is, that the present system of remunerating labour is uneconomic and out of date. I have referred to the remarkable fact that, while in the United States wages are

higher, both as regards their money and their real value, yet goods are cheaper. Why is this? As I believe, it is because, while the English workman is paid largely on a time basis, and is, as he thinks protected by a minimum wage, his brother across the Atlantic in on piece work, and has, therefore, a direct and powerful incentive to produce as much as he possibly can.

Let me take the minimum wage now paid to miners under the Sankey award as a typical instance of the viciousness of our present system. I am, I need hardly say, all in favour of high wages and good payment for miners. My long experience as a Director of Industrial concerns has taught me that the dearest labour in the world is cheap labour, and that there is no greater fallacy than to suppose that business concerns prosper exceedingly, and amass great wealth, when labour is badly paid and inconsiderately treated. Certainly if any body of men deserve a high scale of remuneration it is the miners, who follow an occupation that is, and must be, dangerous in the sense that it involves special risks to their life and limb, risks which no amount of care or technical knowledge or scientific administration can eliminate.

Moreover, the nation depends to a very large extent on the good conduct and prosperity

of the coal industry. The port trade of the country demands cheap coal, and to a large extent our ability to compete successfully in the world's market is governed by its supply.

But what are the facts in regard to the present position of the mining industry? First, the miners are linked up solidly in battle array both against the owners and the Government, and as we have seen they are, according to the "Miners' Next Step," determined to exact from the owners such a minimum wage as will make it impossible to conduct the industry at a profit. It may be that the Miners' Federation will succeed by their strategic policy of limiting output in forcing Nationalization upon a reluctant Government. Even so, I do not think that this will ease the situation. I have before me as I write an extract from a speech of a miners' leader, saying that, though they had been compelled to fight the private capitalist very tenaciously, the fight they had put up in the past would be as nothing to the effort which they would be called on to make when the mines had ceased to be owned by the capitalists and were controlled by the Government. Events confirmed the warning of that speech. To-day the mines are under the control of the nation and industrial peace has *not* ensued in the coalfields, where only recently a long and bitter

strike, costing the nation thousands of pounds, took place in the Yorkshire coalfields upon a trivial question. We may take it that, whereas the miners will continue to chastise the owners with whips, they have scorpions in readiness for the Government in those happy days when profit has been eliminated from the coalfields and officialdom reigns supreme at Whitehall.

Now this is the direct result, as I am going to suggest, of the present system of the remuneration of labour. It is an outcome of the minimum wage. To-day, under the Sankey award the South Wales miner receives some £5 7s. whether he wins much coal or little. I do not object to the figure. I am one of those who would cheerfully see the miner earn £7, £8 or £10 per week or more. Some of the miners are now receiving that sum because they put their back into the business and win a considerable amount of coal. What I object to in regard to this minimum wage, and all such arrangements, is that it assures the workman a return whether he earns it or *not*. I am, of course, aware that in the coal mining industry it is impossible to substitute payment by results immediately for the old system. The miner must receive some allowance when he is engaged upon an unprofitable portion of the mine. Moreover, in the present con-

dition of the mining industry when, as is the case in some collieries, there is a shortage of tubs and equipment, it is necessary as a temporary measure to pay the men some assured minimum wage. But the deficiencies of equipment are now being rapidly made good, and when the coal industry becomes again normal we shall find, I think, that it affords a glaring example of the evil of paying Labour a fixed wage and not by results.

In the first place, it is quite clear that, with a minimum wage of over £5 per week, no miner has any very direct incentive to produce as much coal, or anything like as much coal, as possible. He is assured of a living wage, and more than a living wage, and unless he is a man of unusual character, or unless he has some special inducement for getting more money, he will not work anything like so hard as he would if his remuneration depended upon the amount of coal he won. It is foolish to blame the miner for this, or to suggest that any moral obliquity attaches to him because it is so. Any man who can get money for a slight, or, let us say a moderate exertion, will not put out the same energy as he would if his earnings depended on the amount of work he did, and the result is that absenteeism is rife in the mines; output is restricted; the price of coal is enormously enhanced and, in

consequence, production of other commodities is restricted. In course of time this will affect not only other workers but the miner himself. As prices continue to rise, so the value of his minimum wage will fall, and he will use the power that his supremely efficient Union gives him to obtain a further increase of the minimum wage, thus carrying out, unconsciously perhaps, the programme set forth in the "Miners' Next Step," which was to get the minimum fixed at such a rate that it would be impossible to work the mines without incurring a loss.

Now what is true of the miners holds good, I believe, throughout the entire gamut of industry. When hours were reduced early in the year, partly by Government action, and partly by arrangement with the employers and the Trade Unions, it was pointed out that, given speeding-up and more intense work, a shorter working day spelt increased output. The same argument has been used for many years past in support of the plea for eight hours. Lord Leverhulme, who is, if ever there was one, a capable industrial organizer, has on those grounds publicly proclaimed himself in favour, not of the eight but of the six hour working shift, and we know from experience in America that shorter hours have been directly followed by a larger output. The same phenomenon occurred in munition

factories, when production increased as the working hours diminished. Why? Because during the shorter working day the men and women engaged applied themselves with intense energy and unremitting ardour to the work in hand. They did this because their attention was perpetually being directed to the fact that the fate of our armies in France depended on shells, more shells and yet more shells! They had a direct and most powerful incentive to hustle. Similarly the workmen in the American factories, who are engaged on piece work, have a very powerful stimulus to put their back into the business during the few hours when they are at work, and Lord Leverhulme, we know, has a system of profit sharing with all his workpeople. But for the average workman to-day, protected by a high minimum wage, and with a short working day, there is no incentive whatever for him to put his best into the job in hand.

What is the result? Production and output have indeed increased since the war, but they have not increased anything like enough. To-day, houses are dear—so dear that the luxury of a home is unobtainable to tens of thousands of Englishmen. Boots are such a price that children, even of well-to-do artisans, cannot be properly shod. Milk has so advanced in price that the nutrition

of the coming generation is seriously menaced. We know the remedy of the Labour Party for this and we know it is a false one. According to Miss Vance, whom we may take as a typical spokeswoman of her class, and who has just been returned to the St. Pancras Borough Council, all children are to be fed free, not by their parents, but at the expense of the ratepayers in the schools where they are now educated free. They are to be provided with free milk and the expectant mother is to be given free milk also. That is to say, that one class of the community is to be subsidized at the expense of the other members, and we are to be content to suffer the general shortage in these necessaries, because, be it noted, there will be no inducement to the wage earner to produce them in greater bulk. If there has been one thing made clear in the history of economics it is that doles of this description, which act as a subsidy to employers in aid of wages, is in the long run disastrous to the wage earners.

What, apart from their economic consequences, will be the effect of doles and subsidies like these? Inevitably the home will be destroyed. The parents will be relieved of their responsibility for the welfare and care of their children, which is among the best influences in the formation of the character

of a people. The children, equally, will learn to be dependent on, and amenable to, not the authority of the father or mother, but to that ubiquitous and omniscient State which it is the ideal of the State Socialist to impose upon us; where every man is a proletariat, where there is only one employer, where the individual withers and the official flourishes in an overtaxed land. Under his dispensation it will not only be the home and the family that disappear, but private enterprise, initiative, commerce and property. From feeding children and mothers and regulating industry and retarding trade, the State will go on to usurp other functions until the country has become one vast nursery, "bossed" by an overpaid and irremovable bureaucracy. We shall not have solved the question of poverty, because everybody will then be poor. We shall not have secured a more equal distribution of property, because everybody, but the official, will be propertyless. Above all, we shall have lost the right that we have now—to choose our own occupation, to work at the calling which we ourselves select, to fix within limits the development of our own career as our individual tastes and predilections may determine. We shall become slaves of the State, disciplined, controlled, supervised at every point in our lives, and compelled

to work, to play, to marry and to live, not as free men but as automata—slaves of the State.

To that I oppose another ideal. Instead of letting the average man become more and more dependent upon the State aid in order that he may eke out his insufficient earnings, my programme is to place him in the position of earning for himself and for his family a sufficiency and a surplus. There is nothing Utopian or visionary about that. As I have pointed out, the whole world is at the present hungry for our goods. Never has there been such a demand, not only for raw materials but for finished articles, as exists to-day. At the very time when half a million men and women are in receipt of unemployed pay all the peoples of the earth are short of the very commodities which they might produce. Something like paralysis has overtaken our industrial machine at the very moment when its free and full operation is most needed, and I do not hesitate to say that the main cause of that paralysis is to be found in the restriction of output, which is itself a direct result of the present system of remunerating Labour. If we were to pay the wage-earner, the miner, the steel-smelter, the engineer, and all the other units of the industrial world by piecework—that is, by results—we should not only enormously stimulate production, but we should

compensate the individual workman for much of the intolerable dullness which has of late fallen on industry. A man working at a fixed rate and engaged in an occupation purely mechanical and not in the least creative, is naturally a prey, first to dullness, secondly to discontent; but give him the assurance that the harder he works the more money he has to come at the end of the week, and we lend his labour a zest, a fillip, an excitement, which to-day the workman only finds when he backs horses, or arranges to go on strike for another sixpence an hour.

Unfortunately, Trade Union opinion in this country is at the present moment dead set against piece work, but I am convinced that if the case were put fairly and squarely before the rank and file of the movement they could be brought round to adopt a more reasonable attitude than that which has characterized the utterances of their leaders in the past. The objections on the part of those leaders are twofold. They assert, first, that experience shows that when a high rate of piece work has been fixed enabling workmen to earn large wages, the rate has invariably been cut. Mr. John Hodge, M.P., the secretary of the Steel-smelters' Union, has expressed himself very clearly and forcibly on this point, and he has explained that, whereas in America the

“boss” does not in the least mind his workmen earning wages far in excess of those paid on this side of the Herring Pond so long as his profits are not affected, there has been a fatal disposition on the part of English capitalists to reduce piece rates whenever they found their men were doing well out of it. Personally I believe this attitude to belong to a bygone condition of affairs. I think it should be easily possible for a national Conference of Employers and Employed to hammer out such a settlement, upon piece-rate lines, as would at once give the Unions assurances that the rate would not be cut if output were maintained, and, at the same time, enable capitalists to enter on contracts with the full assurance that there would be no labour troubles. I believe that a return to piece work on these conditions would enable the workman, first, to earn higher wages than he receives to-day, and, secondly, to so increase output that prices would enormously fall. He would thus gain both ways.

There is a further objection on the part of Trade Unions to piece work which deserves consideration. It is of the very essence of Trade Unionism that it protects the weaker brother, the less skilled and less vigorous member of the craft; that, by joining him with the other members in self-defence, it ensures

him the security for earning a livelihood under decent conditions. Now it is clear that, incautiously applied, piece work may drive a dividing wedge into the ranks of the trade combinations, and, by separating them into more and less skilled workmen, break up the unity on which collective bargaining depends. Hence Trade Union secretaries fear that a return to the individual payment by result would lead to discord and jealousy because of the disparity in the individual earnings of the workmen engaged. This is a very real objection which has hitherto been insuperable. But the scheme recently initiated by Messrs. Priestman Bros., of which an admirable account appeared recently in *The Globe*, is free from this defect.

The scheme is so interesting that I am publishing an outline of its provisions.

It is important to note that the standard of output which has to be exceeded before any bonus is paid under the Priestman plan is reckoned in finished machinery, and not in parts of machines or in details of parts. Thus the scheme achieves the object aimed at by all piece-work systems, but not always attained. It secures an increase of output to which all departments contribute, and by which all benefit alike. Conversely, if there were slackness in any department all would suffer, and

the knowledge of this keeps all departments up to the scratch.

So far the experience has been of good trade only, but the system has advantages even in times of bad trade. It is essentially co-operative, and Messrs. Priestman Brothers believe that their workmen would rather have an all-round reduction of hours and wages than that some should be discharged. If overtime were being worked when orders began to fall off, overtime would be discontinued, the standard would be reduced proportionately, and earnings would fall with it. If orders continued to fall off the men would be put on short time, and both standard and earnings would be further reduced.

The question of dismissing men would not arise until the amount paid in wages and excess fell below the level of the day rates in the district. If the output of a forty-seven hour week before the adoption of the scheme can be obtained under the scheme in thirty-three hours, this would not happen until working hours had been reduced to thirty-three per week and output had fallen by 30 per cent. The men would have no temptation, by slowing down, to make the work spin out, for if they could earn a full week's wages at the ordinary day rate in thirty-three hours, the remaining fourteen hours would be extra leisure.

As a means of testing the feelings of the men towards the scheme the firm recently addressed three questions to foremen and workmen, and asked for written replies. The questions and a summary of the replies are given below :

Does our scheme create confidence and goodwill between employer and employed ?

Apart from increase in wages, does it help to raise the tone in the works and assist in increasing the men's and youths' interest in their work, thus making the days pass more pleasantly than when they are paid on the day-rate system ?

Generally speaking, what is the opinion throughout the works of the system, and is it one that our employees can recommend to other firms as a means of allaying labour unrest ?

Replying to these questions, the foreman of the fitters and erectors states that before the scheme was started he had difficulty in getting one man to pick up another man's job. If a man stopped work the job was expected to stand until he came back. Now he can give a man half a dozen jobs during the day, and no objection is raised.

The foreman of the machine department likes the way the books are laid open for the men to look at ; it creates confidence and goodwill. " The opinion of the men throughout the works (and outside) is that the scheme

is the best they have ever heard of, and they would very much like it introduced into other works."

The firm's blacksmiths were an exception to the general rule in that they were employed on piece work, but after they had watched the scheme in operation for a time they asked to be allowed to come into it. The foreman of the blacksmiths, speaking from experience of both systems, says that under the scheme the men "are far happier." There is the spirit of helping each other, but in individual piece-work there is jealousy, which causes bad feeling one towards another."

The foreman of the moulders also speaks of the scheme as an improvement on piece work. The anomalies of the piece-work system absolutely vanish. "We have now had experience of this scheme, and never, I am sure, in the history of labour have employer and employee worked so amicably together under any scheme. We have now a combination of interest instead of individual outlook, and nothing tends to make work a greater pleasure than to think that all of us are helping one another."

The foreman of the pattern-makers says it is the unqualified opinion of everyone that the system—or modifications of it according to local circumstances—would be the means of allaying suspicion and antagonism.

The representative of the engineers states that three questions were read out at a fully representative meeting of the firm's employees, and the unanimous answer to each was, "Yes, certainly." He adds that, as a representative of the men, he finds that the scheme seems to satisfy them to such an extent that they almost forget to ask the old question, "When is our next advance due?"

The representative of the machine men says: "The men are delighted with it. . . . The days pass more brightly than they did under the old system; both men and youths seem to take more interest and pleasure in their work."

The representative of the blacksmiths says: "The scheme certainly raises the tone in the works, as everyone is working towards one common end. In the old days (of piece work) there was always more or less discordance in the smithy, and sometimes the feeling went beyond discord. Now there is a more general feeling of good-fellowship; dissension is a rarity, and the men are far more ready to give assistance to each other. The opinion in the smithy is that the scheme is the very one required to bridge over the difficulties that from time to time arise between employer and employee. As the interest of the employer merges with and becomes the interest

of the employee differences must disappear and confidence be established."

Mr. E. M. Howe, secretary of the Higher Production Council, had an interview with the firm's Works Committee for the express purpose of ascertaining how far the scheme satisfied the workers. No representative of the management was present at the interview, because Mr. Howe desired to obtain the freest possible expression of opinion. His report of the interview, which is in question and answer form, is to be published, and the writer has been permitted to read it in MS.

"What are your objections to the scheme?"

Mr. Howe began by asking.

"We have none," was the reply.

"But surely no scheme is perfect. There must be objections?"

"There are none."

"I still question whether the scheme is perfect. Are there no improvements you can suggest?"

"Not at present. The scheme has from time to time been improved, because where we saw the possibility of improvement we immediately consulted the management, and the adjustment was made."

At a later stage of the interview one objection was developed. It was that the office workers, who were regarded as non-producers, are paid

a flat-rate bonus of 50 per cent., instead of according to the sliding scale. This was an arrangement made by the Ministry of Munitions at the time Messrs. Priestman Brothers were a controlled establishment. It was considered fairer that they should be put on the same footing as the men. On the other hand, the payment of a double percentage to apprentices was approved, because the apprentices do not receive much in wages, and the bonus is a little extra pocket money for them.

Mr. Howe was told that the increase of output was the result of collective effort—the elimination of waste time by steady work and not by high-pressure work. All tried to arrange not to keep others waiting. It was agreed also that in times of bad trade short time all round was better than dismissals.

Finally we may quote from a letter written to Messrs. Priestman Brothers by the branch secretary of a trade union in reference to a recent strike, though the writer's name and the name of the union is withheld, "The members regret" (says the letter), "that action has to be taken in your shop. Had it been a local strike the members would certainly have given your firm preferential treatment on the good feeling existing in your shops and the satisfaction your scheme is giving to our members."

CHAPTER V

A MORE EXCELLENT WAY

IF the effort to reconstruct industry on the basis of a return to piece work is to have a fair chance, then it is obvious that the whole status of the workman must be altered, and it must be altered in the direction indicated in the former chapter by Lord Robert Cecil.

I am not alone in this contention. From all sides and among men as diverse in their views as they are varied in their occupations, from great employers of labour like Lord Leverhulme and Sir Charles Macara, from statesmen like Mr. Balfour and from sociologists of the standing of Professor Marshall, the opinion is perpetually urged on us that the only way in which we can ensure industrial peace in the future is to raise the workman from the status of a hireling to that of a partner.

The tension of the present industrial situation has only served to heighten the energy and to increase the authority of those who have for a long time past preached this gospel in the wilderness, until to-day, so far from

it being an academic counsel of perfection, it is being generally recognized as an urgent and most necessary reform, as practical as it is urgent, and men who have hitherto given no close attention to the Labour question are asking, almost in exasperation, whether it is not now possible to ensure a cessation from industrial warfare by giving the workman some interest in the business he serves over and above the wages he receives.

Before me as I write is a very remarkable letter in the *Daily Express* from Dr. de Vere Stacpoole, who voices this large mass of floating opinion in the following remarkable words :

“ For the last nine months Labour has been talked to by Parliament and the Press on increased production—without result.

“ What else could you expect ? Men won't work hard because they are told to work hard, and, on top of that, Labour has come to look on this formula as a carrot dangled before its nose by the ' capitalist.' ”

“ Machinery has killed the craftsman and reduced the worker to the condition of a slave, driven by necessity.

“ How are you to give him back his interest in production, turn him from a slave pulling a lever into a man absorbed in his occupation ?

“ There is only one way. Give him a mind share in the profits of his own industry.

“ I am not talking of money but sentiment. The ordinary worker in a factory to-day has a money share in the profits of his industry, but the cash in his pay envelope is as cold as charity and as lifeless as death. He feels that it is not his earnings, but a dole paid him by his employer for so many hours of slavery.

“ Make him a partner in the business and you make him a free man whose work has relations to his pay.

“ I hold that the foundation of all these Labour troubles lies in the fact that the majority of workers are held to their work by one tie only—necessity. Their souls are in the process of being slain by rigidity. Their work gives them no warmth.

“ If Dante had been a modern man he might have invented in his Hell an extra circle in which to stick the Guelphs—the circle of uninteresting employment.”

Rhetoric apart, there is no doubt whatever that Dr. de Vere Stacpoole lays his finger in this letter on the weak spot of our present industrial system. It is the detachment of the workman from the business in which he is engaged that, in the first place, prevents him from increasing output, and in the second makes it easy for the enemies of the existing social order to transmute his indifference into active and positive antagonism, which finds

expression in strikes and frontal attacks upon our social fabric. These, as we have seen, are renewed over and over again with increased vigour, and with a complete lack of consideration, and they must, if perpetuated, make industry, if not impossible, at all events so difficult that only men of more than ordinary pugnacity and resolution will engage in its operations. If only because it will ensure industrial peace, which is the first condition of industrial efficiency, it is vital that we should consider some means of giving the workman a partnership in industry. I am aware that this is not easy to arrange. I am aware also that a large number of business men are frankly sceptical of its possibility. The middle-class man is too apt to regard the workman as incapable, because he is, in business matters, uneducated, and he will often tell you that the interference of his "hands" in the conduct of the concern he is managing would spell anarchy and ruin.

A further striking confirmation of this view comes from a correspondent to the *Daily Mail*, who says :

"Give the men who *do* the work a share in the profits and see what they will do. Piecework will revive.

"The British working men are no fools. But not all of them have the brains to

state their own case, so they rely on those who have the 'gift of the gab.' They know that to shoot their employers and burn their factories is not going to give them all the paid agitators promise. But they are not going to expend themselves for the sole benefit of their employers, for whom the war has perhaps not even existed and who profited while others were fighting.

"Give them a stake in the game, pay them by results, and peace and production will follow."

Let us test this belief in the light of hard facts. There are in existence to-day several thriving and important businesses in which the principle of extending a partnership to labour is generally recognized, and the Labour Co-Partnership Association has collected some extremely interesting facts and figures which indicate the progress they have made. The first of these is that of :

MESSRS. J. T. & J. TAYLOR, LTD.,
Woollen Manufacturers, Batley.

Mr. Theodore C. Taylor, M.P., introduced profit-sharing into this business as soon as he became sole partner in 1892, and the scheme was made applicable to all employees in 1896. He adopted the principle that when labour and

capital have each had their wages—the wages of capital being fixed at 5 per cent. interest—then capital and labour should share in the remaining balance of profit at the same rate per cent. The value of labour is taken as its total annual wages.

Thus the first charge on the profits is 5 per cent. to capital, and then for every 1 per cent. more that can be paid to capital, 1 per cent. dividend on wages is paid to labour.

The dividend on wages is paid in share capital, which carries the same rights to dividend and to the assets of the company in case of winding-up as ordinary shares do, but does not confer voting power.

All workers who are not less than twenty-one years old, have been with the company for five years, and own shares equal to half a year's wages, get a double bonus; this includes about 300 of the workers.

This means that if share capital receives 15 per cent.—that is, 10 per cent. more than the standard 5 per cent.—then a dividend of 10 per cent. would be paid on wages, and a further 10 per cent. on the wages of workers fulfilling the special conditions.

More than 1,300 out of 1,900 workers are co-partners; they own more than half the capital of the company, and in their dual capacity as shareholders and profit-sharers

they draw over two-thirds of the profit of the company. In the twenty-two years, 1895-1916, over £180,000 has been distributed to the workers under this scheme.

The following table shows the relation between the dividends on shares and on wages :

In respect of 1895, two fully paid £1 shares were paid to each of the employees who had earned 20s. per week or more, and one £1 to the rest.

	Cash Dividend on shares.	Bonus on Wages given in the shape of shares.
For 1896	7½%	8%
" 1897	nil	nil
" 1898	nil	nil
" 1899	9½%	5%
" 1900	9½%	5%
" 1901	9½%	5%
" 1902	12%	7½%
" 1903	12%	7½%
" 1904	14½%	10%
" 1905	{ 14½% 5% bonus	10% 5% cash bonus
" 1906	14½%	10%
" 1907	12%	7½%
" 1908	9½%	5%
" 1909	12½%	7½%
" 1910	12½%	7½%
" 1911	15%	10%
" 1912	12½%	7½%
" 1913	10%	5%
" 1914	12½%	7½%
" 1915	{ 12½% 5% bonus in Exchequer Bonds.	{ 5% in shares 7½% in 5% Exchequer Bonds.

As to the double bonus to those not less than twenty-one years of age, who had been with the company at least five years and owned shares equal to half a year's wages, this worked out for 1915 at 25 per cent. being 5 per cent. in shares and 20 per cent. in 5 per cent. Exchequer Bonds.

This particular experiment was due in large measure to the personal care and attention as well as the sympathy and administrative ability which Mr. Taylor devoted to the project, and it is only fair to admit that he has been actuated in part, at all events, by motives which we cannot hope will become general among the ordinary run of business men. But the success he has achieved by no means stands alone and I have selected two other typical British firms who, following in his footsteps, have achieved very similar results. The first of these is :

CLARKE, NICKOLLS & COOMBS, LTD.,
Sweet Manufacturers, London.

Messrs. Clarke, Nickolls & Coombs Ltd., have successfully worked an interesting profit-sharing scheme for twenty-six years. The business was founded in 1872, and became a limited liability company in 1887. In 1890 the shareholders sanctioned a scheme of profit-sharing, with their workpeople. After paying the

ordinary shareholders 6 per cent. on their capital, the surplus profits are divided in equal proportions between the workpeople and the shareholders. Under this scheme the dividends to the shareholders have been increased substantially, and the following figures show the result in recent years as to dividends on wages.

		Dividend on Wages.	
		Percentage on Wages.	Total Amount.
For	1890	-	£1,400
"	1895	-	2,760
"	1900	-	9,500
"	1905	-	12,000
"	1910	-	9,500
"	1911	-	13,250
"	1912	11%	10,000
"	1913	15%	14,500
"	1914	10%	9,500
"	1915	12%	12,000

For the twenty-six years the total is over £218,000, giving a yearly average bonus on wages of about 13 per cent. All who have worked one year participate in the profit, whilst the profit accruing on the wages of those who have not worked one year and fulfilled other necessary conditions is carried to a Provident or Superannuation Fund. This Superannuation Fund became available in 1915 for those who have served the company for twenty-five years, and stands at more

than £40,000. During the busy season over 3,000 workers are employed. The bonus is given in cash, but every encouragement is given to the workpeople to acquire shares, and their holding is considerable.

WILLIAM THOMSON & SONS LTD.,
Woollen and Worsted Manufacturers,
Huddersfield.

This private business was changed in 1886, by the owner, Mr. George Thomson, into a society under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act. The assets then were about £39,500, and that sum as the purchase price was paid partly in shares, but mostly in 5 per cent. loans.

By the rules Mr. G. Thomson became general manager for life, subject to removal only by an adverse vote of five-sixths of all the members, and took the right of naming his successor. In later years (1891-3), Mr. Thomson offered to reduce greatly the necessary five-sixths majority necessary for his removal, and to give up much of his power; the members have not accepted either proposition, but on the contrary they have shown the value they attach to his services by raising very considerably his initial salary of £500.

Provision is made for payment of interest, on loans, regular depreciation, and a cumu-

lative dividend on shares limited to 5 per cent. Out of the balance 10 per cent. is used to form a Reserve Fund up to a certain maximum, and the Committee have power to form an Assurance and Pension Fund in accordance with certain regulations. The remaining profits are divided equally between the employees and the customers as a dividend on wages and a dividend on purchases.

The portion allotted to the employees is given in the form of shares. The shareholders have always received their 5 per cent., and on several occasions, in years in which the profits did not suffice to pay this in full, the employees voluntarily made good the deficiency out of their wages, the sums thus given up amounting to £1,400. This was repaid to the workers in 1912. The "Board of Trade Report (1912)" comments :

"It would appear that the position occupied by the workpeople of William Thomson & Sons, Limited, is of such a nature that they identify themselves to a remarkable extent with the interests of the business."

The Committee, whose functions are mainly consultative, consists of Mr. Thomson as president, three workers, three representatives of shareholding co-operative societies, a representative of the Huddersfield Trades Council, and the Secretary of the Weavers'

Association. Of the total share capital, £14,866 in 1916, the employees (120) held £4,078, all having some holding. Since 1893 a 48-hour week has been worked, and only time-wages paid.

From 1886 to 1899 the annual trade varied from £22,700 to £31,000, but by that time the workers had received in the form of shares £2,443 as dividend on their earnings, and the capital had increased to £26,600. From 1907 the Society has made continued progress, as shown in the table given below. In 1916 its capital was £39,025, including a reserve of £3,913; it employed 120 workers, whose wages amounted to £11,011.

	Trade.	Profit.	Dividend on Wages. Amount.	Rate per £.
1907	£32,517	£2,021	£260	1/-
1908	30,604	1,681	264	1/-
1909	39,835	2,895	491	1/6
1910	44,873	3,132	818	2/-
1911	46,932	3,677	842	2/-
1912	49,138	3,942	870	2/-
1913	51,556	4,599	870	2/-
1914	42,440	2,567	-	-
1915	71,366	2,326	895	2/-
1916	59,889	34	-	-

In this year £1,240 was repaid to the workers, which had been voluntarily subscribed by them in previous years, in order

that full interest should be paid on share capital, even though profits were not sufficient.

These are the three British examples which I have selected. Those from the United States are more extensive, but not more interesting :

N. O. NELSON MANUFACTURING CO.,
St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.A.

Mr. N. O. Nelson built up his business, which manufactures brass, lead and iron pipes and plumbers' goods, as well as belting, steam pumps, engines and boilers, and now the capital is £368,000, and there are 1,200 employees. In 1912 goods were sold to the value of £800,000, and a profit made of £126,297.

Mr. Nelson started sharing profits with his employees for the year 1886, on the basis of paying 7 per cent. interest on capital first, and then dividing the surplus proportionally on the total capital and the total wages for the year. One hundred and fifty workmen participated, and more than a hundred chose to leave their dividends in the business. Next year it was arranged that of the surplus, after paying 7 per cent. interest on capital, 10 per cent. should go to a Provident Fund administered by a committee of employees, 10 per cent. to an Interest Reserve Fund, and 2 per cent. to a Library Fund. It was also

arranged that those who had received their dividends should receive a dividend on wages at a rate of one and a quarter. The ordinary dividend on wages was 5 per cent. in 1886, 8 per cent. in 1887 and 6 per cent. in 1888.

In 1905 the customers were taken into partnership as well as the employees, and the scheme became as follows: Interest on share capital, 6 per cent.; adequate provision was made for depreciation and for reserve, but no interest on the Reserve Fund. The remaining profit was distributed by giving 1 per cent. to the staff and $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. to the customers on the gross profit which their purchases had earned. Since 1912 workers and customers have shared alike. Both the dividends are paid in shares in the company's capital.

DIVIDENDS 1905-1912.

				Workers.	Consumers.
				%	%
1905	..	..	..	15	25
1906	..	..	..	25	45
1907	..	..	..	30	45
1908	..	..	..	20	30
1909	..	..	..	20	30
1910	..	..	..	10	15
1911]	..	..	..	10	15
1912	..	..	..	15	15
Total amounts				£90,000	£105,000

From 1905-11 the Provident Fund also received £2,850. Of the 1,200 employees, 800 are stock-holders, owning £80,000, and the employees and customers together own about two-thirds of the capital and reserve, that is £246,000.

In 1890 the company acquired 125 acres of land eighteen miles outside St. Louis. Here a model village called Leclair has been built, where the workmen have their own houses, and sickness and the death-rate have been reduced to figures almost incredible, lower than those prevailing in other American industrial districts.

PROCTER & GAMBLE,
Soap Manufacturers, U.S.A.

This American firm, with businesses at Cincinnati, New York, Ohio, Kansas City, etc., is one of the oldest (founded 1837) and largest makers of soap, candles and glycerine in U.S.A. In 1913 its capital was £2,850,000, and it employed 2,500 workers, mostly unskilled.

Not being satisfied with the existing relations between the firm and its employees, the firm started profit-sharing in 1887. Though the bonuses were large, many workers seemed unaffected, so in 1889 they were grouped by merit into four classes, three receiving bonuses in the ratio of four, two and

one, and the lowest class receiving nothing. This rapidly had the desired effect of getting everybody interested. The business was incorporated in 1890 and this classification was abandoned, and all the workers earning not more than £300 a year received the same dividend on wages as the common stock earned, and were encouraged to use this to purchase stock. Few, however, took up stock, and it was felt that most workers began to look on the dividend as part of their salary or wages, and therefore in 1903 the company made the scheme for profit-sharing dependent on stock ownership. The plan required that an employee to be eligible for a profit-sharing dividend must own common stock of the company equal to a year's earnings. If the employee does not own this amount of stock the company will buy it for him, but the employee must pay $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the cost at the time of purchase, and not less than 4 per cent. more each year until the purchase is completed. The stock is held meanwhile by trustees, and interest is charged at 3 per cent. on the unpaid balance.

The company places to the credit of the employees' purchase account annually (1) all dividends on the stock, and (2) a bonus paid on the wages he has earned during the year. This bonus was originally 12 per cent., that

being the dividend paid on the common stock of the company, but as this rose to 16 per cent. in 1913, so the bonus on wages was raised to 16 per cent. also.

Employees of five and ten years' service may increase their purchase of stock to one and a quarter and one and a half times their annual wages, and then they receive correspondingly increased bonuses on their wages of 20 per cent. and 24 per cent., instead of 16 per cent. This plan works out so that an employee subscribing for £200 worth of stock becomes the absolute owner of it in about four years. The employees in 1913 owned £330,000 stock, about one-ninth of the whole.

NEW YORK GAS CO.

The Consolidated Gas Company of New York, U.S.A., and the affiliated gas and electric companies—including those in Yonkers, Westchester, Queens and the Bronx—have adopted a profit-sharing scheme. All employees, other than those of the executive and administrative staffs, earning not more than £600 a year, are to receive a dividend on salaries or wages equal to the rate of dividend paid to the stockholders of the company. The dividend on the stock of the company is now 7 per cent., and consequently the employees, some 17,000 in number, will

receive 7 per cent. upon their wages. This means that they will receive £200,000 in addition to wages and salaries. All payments will be made by cheque, as no arrangements are made in this scheme for capitalizing the workers' share of profits.

Finally, we have the French schemes, and to France is due the credit, let it be said, of initiating the Profit-Sharing Principle.

MAISON LECLAIRE.

Painters and Decorators, Paris.

Leclair started business in 1827, and his first scheme of profit-sharing dates from 1838, but the present scheme was inaugurated in 1863. The central body of the business is the Society of Mutual Help, which is a sleeping partner, and consists of all the fully competent employees. In 1912 it consisted of 1,306 members, and its capital was £167,500 invested in the business. This "Mutual" elects the managing partners, who have all the powers and responsibilities of partners in a private firm. It also elects a Conciliation Committee, and has other duties, especially the care of apprentices; it arranges for medical service, invalid pay, and pensions for its members, their wives or orphans, but it also provides these in a lesser degree for those employees who are not members. In'

1912 the sum of £9,674 was paid out of the fund to some 230 people in these ways.

The profits of the business are distributed as follows :

- (a) 15 per cent. to the managers.
- (b) 35 per cent. to the Provident and Mutual Help Societies.
- (c) 50 per cent. to the employees, according to their wages and salaries.

From the commencement of the scheme up to 1912, the workers have received altogether £328,029, and the Mutual £180,733.

But to my mind the most inspiring and impressive example of these particular developments of industry, embodying the co-partnership principle, is to be found neither in Britain nor America, but across the Channel, among our eminently practical neighbours the French. Its history reads like a romance, and cannot be too widely known or too closely studied :

GODIN'S IRON FOUNDRY AT GUISE

Godin was the son of a French village smith, who started work at his father's forge at the age of eleven. In 1834, when seventeen, he toured France as a worker, and learned the social ideas of the period, and came face to face with the common destitution of the

workman. In 1840, receiving £160 from his father, he started in business for himself, as a manufacturer of stoves, and in 1846 removed to Guise, with some thirty workmen. He studied the theories of Saint-Simon, Owen, Cabet and Fourier, and from Fourier's "Theory of Universal Unity" he learned the idea of the association or partnership of capital, labour and ability. Godin finally put to himself the problem how to improve the life of the worker, and thereby increase his value as a worker and as a citizen. The conclusion he came to was that it must be done by improved housing and a better organization of all those services of production, trade, supply, education and recreation which make up the life of the workman. It was not until 1859, however, that he started building the Familistère, and his system of profit-sharing was not fully worked out until 1880.

Godin arranged for the business to belong to the workers in its employ, and be managed by them, but he was careful to bring to the direction of the enterprise only those whose minds, if not specially trained, were at least ripened by experience. He divided the workers into four classes :

- (1) The helpers (auxiliaries), who are new or temporary workers.

These benefit only by insurance, and possibly a pension.

- (2) The profit-sharing workers (participants), who receive a share in the profits in proportion to wages
- (3) The associates (sociétaires), who receive at the rate of a share and a half.
- (4) The first-class members or partners (associés), who receive at the rate of two shares.

First-class members, who live in the Familistère, form the general meeting, which has to be consulted for all important matters. The general meeting appoints the Committee of Supervision and elects three of its members to the Committee of Management, and also appoints a new managing director when necessary. The Committee of Management consists of the managing director, the three elected members and ten heads of departments.

Before the war over 2,700 people were employed; the capital had grown to £242,000, and was owned entirely by the employees (including some ex-employees who had not yet been paid out). In 1911 the sales were £340,000, and the wages paid exceeded £144,000

The method of dividing the profits is fixed by the rules of the society. The first charge upon the gross profits, before any dividend is apportioned, are the amounts for :

- (1) Depreciation of buildings and raw material.
- (2) Votes to the various mutual insurance funds.
- (3) The expenses of education.
- (4) The interest payable to the owners of Savings Certificates (or, as we should say, Accumulative Shares).

What remains constitutes the net profits, and is divided as follows :

- (a) 75 per cent. of it is divided upon the wages of labour and the wages (or interest) of capital.
- (b) 25 per cent. of it as the reward of ability : 4 per cent. going to the managing director and 16 per cent. to the Committee of Management.

In this way the partnership of capital, labour and ability is realized. The following table shows the results of thirty-three years from 1879 to 1911. The amounts apportioned to the four different classes of workers into which the employees are divided are shown, and the amounts apportioned to ability :

Total apportionment of the 75 per cent. of the profits divided upon wages and upon the interest of capital :

To first-class members	£115,450
To associates	56,424
To profit sharers	96,765
To helpers (through Insurance Funds).....	62,978
To reserve savings.....	18,935
	<hr/>
Total on wages	£350,552
Total on interest	£33,376
	<hr/>

Total apportionment of the 25 per cent. of the profits allotted to ability :

To Managing Director.....	£28,948
To Committee of Management and the Supervising Committee	65,724
Balance of the 16 per cent. allotted to Committee of Management.....	18,499
Maintenance of pupils in the Government Schools	4,277
Rewards for useful invention....	10,528
	<hr/>
Total to ability	£127,976
	<hr/>
Grand total disbursement	£511,904

Finally, let me quote from a report issued by the Investigators of the Fabian Research Committee, upon a similar co-partnership scheme, the boot and shoe societies at Kettering and Leicester. The Fabians are not very willing witnesses in this cause. They are opposed to all forms of private enterprise, to all business run for profit and not by the State. But *littera scripta manet*. Here is what their skilled investigators put on record :

“ We are struck on visiting several of these societies, and in talking to those intimately acquainted with their working, with the ease, amenity and sense of freedom that prevails among those who are fortunate enough to be employed in them. There is an absence of ‘drive’ and martinet discipline. The men and women, who are all on piece-work rates, can talk and sing at their work ; they may break off to have tea, or linger at meals ; they have no difficulty in getting permission to absent themselves for any cause, or to engage in public work. There is great continuity of employment, because every endeavour is made to keep on all the workers. There is absolute security against dismissal through the caprice or tyranny of a foreman or manager. It is, indeed, a fixed policy that no worker shall ever be discharged, except for grave fault.

A MORE EXCELLENT WAY

The work-places are healthy and well-ventilated, and manners and morals are well above the average. No wonder that the workers are generally anxious to obtain admission, and that there is a long 'waiting list' of applicants."

CHAPTER VI

THE GAINFORD SCHEME

WHAT is the precise significance of these small but remarkable industrial experiments, the details of which I have just set out? It is at once much and little. Their success proves that the principle they illustrate is sound, and ought to go far to destroy the class prejudice that exists in certain circles against raising the status or improving the position of the worker. The fact that all these businesses prospered steadily, while paying the workman a share in the profits and giving him a voice in the management, shows that a real vital partnership between Labour and Capital may still be practised, without ruining the industry or even retarding its success.

If only by reason of the fact that these businesses have been immune from strikes, the advantages secured by, and the new status extended to, the workers must be held to have justified themselves, even on a purely monetary basis. They are successful, and they deserve to attain the flattery of imitation.

But if we look at the matter from a national, or even from a sociological point of view, their achievements are really trifling. They have had practically no effect in determining Labour conditions generally, or in affecting the position of the workers at large. Successful as they have been, they are still brilliant exceptions without influence on the general situation, and their results end with the men employed at the factories, numbering in all a tiny fraction amongst the vast Army of Labour. Nor shall we find the principle that they illustrate a really serious factor in the creation of a new Labour situation until it is applied boldly and *en masse*, not to one or two individual traders, but to the whole of the industry concerned: a transformation that would, I believe, do more to ensure industrial peace than any other proposal yet ventilated.

We have a precedent for this. In 1870 the gas workers of London plunged the city into darkness by a "lightning strike" that nearly caused a panic in the theatres and caused no little inconvenience. Their leaders were prosecuted under the now extinct Conspiracy Law, and were severely lectured by Chief Justice Cockburn at the Old Bailey. It made no difference. Strikes and discontent continued 'rife among the gas workers until Mr. George

Livesey introduced the co-partnership principle into the working of the South Metropolitan Gas Company. It succeeded, and it was adopted by one gas company after another until to-day some forty gas companies—and those the largest in the kingdom—have followed. Such was the result that, so far as gas is concerned, the consumer in the shape of the public has been protected ever since against the menace of the lightning strike.

Is there no other industry to which this remedy could be applied with success? Surely we have it in the Coal Trade.

It is very important that we should pause for a moment to look critically at the position of that industry. It cannot be too clearly insisted upon that unless it is, and without delay, placed on an almost entirely different basis, then eventually anything in the nature of an industrial revival must elude us. To commence with, our export trade is almost entirely dependent on coal. Sir Leo Chiozza Money has pointed out with great force that here coal is of peculiar importance. The outgoing ships, leaving Britain with coal, return laden with goods, and hence we get, or rather in the past we got, both cheap freights and abundant imports. But if the ships leave our ports empty, then, obviously, freights rise and we shall then have to pay for the goods that come to us from

over-seas, not in goods but by increasing our indebtedness to the foreign countries; with the inevitable result that the rate of exchange will go even further against us: prices will inevitably rise and wages as certainly tend to fall. It is hardly possible to exaggerate this phase of the question.

But important as it is, it sinks almost into insignificance when contrasted with the effect of the present coal position on the home market. First, the price of coal determines the cost at which we can produce goods, either for export or our own consumption. Dear coal spells dear steel, dear iron, as well as dear shipping. It means that it will cost more to bake the bread we eat, more to make the light we burn, more to heat the rooms where in the winter many of the poor will huddle, hungry and desolate. The nation is sick for want of coal. And not only does it require more coal, and at a cheaper price, but it is essential that, at the earliest possible moment, coal shall be free from control.

I suppose there is not a trader nor a business man—probably few householders—who have not had occasion, at some time or another, heartily to curse the vagaries and ineptitudes inseparable from officialdom which have marked the activities of the Coal Controller. “The wrong kind of coal” seems likely to

prove as dangerous to British traders as it was alleged that the "wrong kind of shells" proved to our soldiers in the late war.

All over the country manufacturers and traders are complaining that they have, under the existing condition of affairs, to take whatever coal they can get, without any reference to their special requirements, or to go without. Retailers complain bitterly that the orders of the Controller vary sometimes from day to day, and not only add enormously to their difficulties, but actually increase the price of the commodity on whose cheapness and abundance we depend.

Occasionally the Coal Controller insists that coal shall be delivered only in small parcels, say, half a ton at a time; with the result that a coal merchant who has secured the official sanction to supply a customer with, say, two tons has actually to send his carts backwards and forwards four times, or render himself liable to a fine. In the sequel, the unfortunate customer has to pay more.

Again, we find frequently that great industrial undertakings which have been accustomed to use one kind of coal have suddenly been compelled by the arbitrary decision of some irresponsible official to adopt another that is far less suitable for the particular purpose required. The Controlling *Geni* which de-

termine these matters are quite ignorant of business, or engineering details, and the result is that it takes months of worrying correspondence before the heads of the particular business concerned are allowed to use the coal that is best suited to their requirements. Emphatically, the sooner Coal Control is abolished the better—but this cannot be done until coal is considerably, nay enormously, cheapened, and until output has been increased cheapness is impossible.

Now the increased production of coal depends upon two factors: first, better equipment, secondly, a different attitude on the part of the miner.

The first is already in course of being secured; as I write, I read that:

Operations have been begun on a new shaft at a large colliery to be opened by the Powell Duffryn Company at Deri, near Bargoed, South Wales. The new colliery will be worked by electricity, and when fully equipped it is expected to give employment to about 2,000 men and have an output of 3,000 tons of coal per day.

The Powell Duffryn Company are erecting a new power station at Bargoed, and when completed this will be the largest private electrical enterprise in the king-

dom. The Britannia Colliery near Bargoed, which also belongs to the Powell Duffryn Company, is entirely worked by electricity.

From other collieries there comes news of similar developments.

Fresh plant is being laid down, improved methods of working are being adopted; but unless the mine owners can rely on active support of their men, then these efforts to increase output will be largely abortive.

At present there is no gainsaying the fact that the miners are bent obstinately on a policy of restriction. There is no gainsaying this fact, for their leaders themselves admit it. They are determined to compel the Government to adopt nationalization, and the Government are equally determined not to have their dangerous specific forced upon them, and the Government have the bulk of the people behind them. The nation does not want to see the failures of the Telephones, the Railways, the Telegraphs, the War Office and the Ministry of Munitions repeated in this sphere—this vitally important sphere of British industry. In fact, the people will not have Nationalization of the Mines at any price. But the miners remain sullen and obdurate, and with the result the nation does not get its coal.

Under these circumstances it seems to me to be a great pity that more attention has not been given to the scheme which Lord Gainford of Headlam put before the Coal Commission with a view to securing industrial peace in the coal fields. Lord Gainford of Headlam is the Chairman of Pease & Partners, Ltd., and in that capacity he helps to control one of the largest colliery concerns in the country; however, he has not only had a valuable business experience but an important official career. For many years he sat in Parliament and helped the Miners' M.P.'s to pilot various useful Bills through Parliament. Later on he became Postmaster-General, a post he occupied with distinction. Clearly, then, his record entitles his proposals to careful consideration.

Those proposals were designed to achieve three things :

- (1) To protect the consumer against an inflated price of coal.
- (2) To give the men a share in the profits of the industry.
- (3) To ensure their having a reasonable voice in arranging the details of their work.

How was this to be effected? Practically by taking the men into partnership and by arranging that the profits to be shared by

Labour and Capital were dependent on an increase in the output.

For the first time in the history of the Mining Industry, the workmen were to have full access to the owners' books. They were to be invited to appoint a firm of chartered accountants—of course, of their own choosing—who together with a firm representing the owners would go through the books. The two firms would agree first of all upon the selling price of coal to be fixed at such a rate as would give the owners a fair return on their capital, after the miners had received their minimum wage. It should be noted that this return—whether five, six, or seven per cent.—was to be determined by a real agreement with the men's representatives. Once agreed upon, the dividend was to be cumulative; that is to say, that if for any reason, it was not wholly earned one year, the deficit should be paid the next. I may add that not only was the amount of the dividend to be arrived at by mutual arrangement, but the two firms of accountants were to arrange also as to the true value of the capital which had been sunk in the mine, and also as to development and other accounts. In fact, they were to agree everything except wages, which Lord Gainford suggested should be fixed in the first instance by the Industrial

Council consisting of employers and employed, local adjustments being made by District Committees representing both sides.

So far then, the position is clear. The miner would get his maximum wage, and the owner would get a fair fixed return—say five, or six per cent. per annum—the amount named by Lord Gainford. What was to happen to the surplus? This was to be divided in agreed proportions between the owners and the men. Now the larger the output, the higher the profits, and this scheme, therefore, had the supreme advantage of giving the miner a direct personal incentive in increasing the profits of the undertaking, and, given free competition, this could only be achieved by increasing the output of coal. In other words, the larger the output of coal per man the more money the men received, because the larger became the profits to be divided. The miner thus became a partner in the mine, and his whole status and outlook were radically changed.

Instead of receiving a high minimum wage whether he produced much coal or little, the miner would find that large earnings depended entirely on his ability to produce more coal. He would be a partner in concerns that, under normal conditions, pay twenty, twenty-five or thirty per cent. ; which given freedom from labour troubles could easily return double

that amount to the shareholders. Moreover, he would still enjoy the protection of his Union. Lord Gainford's scheme does not abrogate in the slightest degree the Trade Union rights of the miners, as nationalization must. It gives them at once a stake in the wealth of industry, and a pressing inducement to increase that wealth by speeding up output, and thus helping to end the present coal shortage. It is at once a great charter for the miners and a safeguard for the consumer and the nation, and, as I believe, only prejudice and ignorance can prevent its adoption. The miner's demand—a reasonable one, as I think—for a voice in determining the conditions under which his work is done was met by giving him representation on the Pit and District Committees, where there could be adjusted all those minor differences, which, though trifling, in their origin, often develop into a bitter strike.

Let me stay for a moment to point out the immense, far-reaching importance, not only to Britain, but, indeed, to civilization, of arriving at a permanent solution of our industrial troubles in the coalfields. It is upon cheap coal that all our hopes of an industrial revival depend, and without that revival comes, and comes quickly, no man can think of the future without the gravest mis-

givings. We are warned by no less an authority than Sir George Paish, that European credit is within reasonable distance of collapse. If that collapse comes, then the civilization of Europe will break asunder. The Bolshevism that has dominated Russia will pass westward on to Germany, and thence onwards through France and Italy. Britain and Britain alone can save Europe in these days of peace, just as she saved the world in the not more serious days when the Prussian menace threatened civilization. But to achieve that, we must all help her to keep intact the fabric of our credit and the commercial system on which civilization rests, and that system is, I would repeat, in grave peril. Before me, as I write, is a very serious warning, which appeared in a London daily paper.

“ British industry is once more moving round the vicious circle of wages and prices. The award of an increase of five shillings per week to the engineering trades, which was extended yesterday to the shipbuilding trades, is to be followed at once by demands for a similar amount on the part of both skilled and unskilled workers in practically every occupation.

“ The key to the situation is contained in the official prophecy of the Interim

Court of Arbitration that in the near future there are likely to be 'considerable increases in the prices of various important articles of food and commodities in common use.' Already claims have been or are being advanced on behalf of nearly three millions of workers in more than twenty large industries, and it was the view in Labour circles yesterday that in a brief time the extra five shillings will be even more general in its application than Mr. Winston Churchill's famous 12½ per cent."

What is the remedy? The same journal indicates it to us in the following words :

"Mr. W. Brace, M.P., the leader of the South Wales miners, frankly admitted to me yesterday that 'the vicious circle can only be broken by increased production.' He agreed that it is necessary to sweep away the foolish fallacy that—proper safeguards provided—production creates unemployment, but he drew a line of distinction between the mining and other industries.

"'The difficulty about increased production so far as coal is concerned,' he said, 'is that under the present system, private capital is additionally remunerated

to the degree that the men produce more. The workmen, moved by that mentality which has developed so much in consequence of the war, are not disposed to exhaust themselves in order to pile up fortunes for a few people, whereas they would gladly produce to the last ounce of their capacity if the benefit of that production went direct to the nation. This, of course, is the backbone of the nationalization argument.

“ ‘ In other industries,’ said Mr. Brace, ‘ the principle of piece-work should be recognized as essential. The old day-wage system tends to standardize production, whereas piece-work creates a fluctuating process which in the end means the largest possible production. The thing to remember, however, is that piece-rates must never be cut. If that began the whole thing would be doomed to failure.’ ”

That, as we have seen, is impossible under the Gainford scheme.

* * * * *

“ There is no more certain sign of a quack mind,” said George Jacob Holyoake, “ than the belief that one remedy, can cure many evils.” Lord Gainford’s scheme is a remedy for the miners’ discontent in so far as this relates to

his work. It may fairly be claimed for it that it ends once and for all that feeling of resentment, which has been so fruitful a source of industrial strife in the coal-fields; the feeling that the miner is all his days making profits in which he does not share; the feeling that he is only a machine for the creation of dividends for shareholders. The participation in profits accorded the miners under the scheme should end this once and for all, and it should, as I have explained, do much, very much, to speed up output. But it will leave untouched another very powerful source of bad feeling in the coal-fields, which acts, and always has acted, very adversely so far as output is concerned. I refer to Housing.

The miner's housing conditions are and have been for some time past abominable. It is folly to blame their employers, the owners, for this, for clearly the question is a national one that must be settled on national lines. It is not only the miner but the engineer, the iron-moulder, the steel smelter, the railway servant, the shop assistant, the clerk—all workmen, in fact, are victims of the tragic shortage of housing accommodation which we have inherited, partly as a result of the War, partly because of the neglect of previous generations. It is quite true, of course, that the housing shortage in the mining districts

does react with peculiarly disastrous effects upon the trade and commerce of the nation; and for this reason, coal, as I have explained, is the determining factor in the industrial conflict, which must be waged successfully by Britain if the trade war is to be won. That nation which commands the cheapest coal and produces the most of it will dominate the industrial situation—as we did for many years during the Nineteenth Century. Now it would be quite easy for us to increase enormously the output of coal from the mines if they were worked by multiple shifts—say, three, of seven hours each. But see what this involves under the existing order. The miner to-day frequently lives with his wife and family in a two-roomed or three-roomed abode, and it is only with the greatest difficulty that the miner's wife can manage to-day to get ready baths and meals for her husband, and boys when they come home from the mine. If they all return at different hours of the day or night, the difficulty becomes an impossibility. It is not reasonable to expect a woman, who has been working hard all day to get up every night, to heat water and prepare a meal. Nor as matters stand is it possible for the miner's wife to get domestic assistance for the simple reason that there is no room for any servant to sleep. The

result is that her lot is often a bitter one; she complains, not unnaturally, that she has become a drudge and a beast of burden. To ease her lot men often stay away from work for a couple of days in the week. Absenteeism is on the increase and anything like multiple shifts out of the question.

It is folly, I repeat, to blame the owners for this, if only for the perfectly sufficient reason that the men's leaders have objected, and not unreasonably, to their providing houses for the miners to live in. There are, indeed, obvious objections to employers being also the landlords of their work-people, If a strike ensues one of two things is almost certain to happen, either the employer suffers the loss of his rent, or the men are evicted. In either case, feeling is exacerbated, and the situation becomes an impossible one.

It is clear to me that the Housing Problem cannot be dealt with save by the State, acting sometimes through the agency of Utility Societies, sometimes with the co-operation of local bodies; and occasionally by advancing money at reasonable rates of interest to private builders. It is not, I would repeat, the miners alone, who require houses. Almost as important as model mining villages, consisting of houses with sufficient rooms and a bath room with hot and cold water, is the

provision of labourers' cottages in the countryside. It is imperative we should in the near future produce a far greater proportion of the food stuffs that we consume, and this we cannot do unless we provide the tillers of the soil with adequate house room. It has long been notorious among housing reformers that the worst slum of all is the village slum, and we may find to-day overcrowding as bad in East Anglia as in the East End. Moreover, if we are to have a sturdy race of yeoman farmers, nay, if we are to have adequate labour for the land, so as to get as much as possible out of it—as Mr. Lloyd George tells us he intends we shall—we must build tens of thousands of cottages for labourers to dwell in.

Now I may be told that there are difficulties in the way of providing these homes of the future; that such a policy as I have indicated cannot be carried out save at considerable expense. That is true, and the objection has full weight with me because I am all in favour of public retrenchment. But the point that I would like to make is this: that the policy, which I am here advocating, we have already carried out in Ireland. Here we lent the Irish peasant money at 2½ per cent., not only to build and purchase proper cottages, but also to purchase and work his farm or small holding. We did that under

the Wyndham Act and the investment proved a splendid success. Surely what we did for Ireland we can do for the splendid loyal masses in England? For the men, who went out from the empty countryside and the choking town, to take their part in the most terrible war ever waged, and who now when they come back find "no homes—fit or unfit—for heroes to live in." It would pay us and pay us handsomely to give these men the homes that they desire and to see that every decent artisan, every workman, whose wife has bairns pulling at her gown, had that first essential of a decent life—a home. Long and close attention to the labour question has convinced me that in this housing question lies the root of an enormous mass of discontent. There is, of course, nothing new in the slums, and the workmen living in them, at a low standard of life, and at work on casual labour, or labour that does not require any intense application, did not perhaps greatly resent the conditions under which they were compelled to rear their families. But to-day things have changed. Employers are now expending large sums of money in erecting new and improved factories and workshops, which shall be free of bad air, in fitting them with admirably-designed canteens, lavatories, and even bath-rooms, and so offering to the

hands engaged in them the most invigorating and stimulating conditions of employment possible. We may take it, of course, that they are doing this largely as a matter of business, and to increase output, but clearly their expenditure in this direction will be wasted if, at the end of their day's work, the men return to homes uncomfortable, overcrowded and insanitary—homes that, in the phrase of Ruskin "consume them like graves."

Moreover, consider the effect of bad housing on the mentality of the good workman, the skilled artisan, the steady mechanic, who works hard and well and cannot get a decent home in which to bring up his children. Such a man is an incipient rebel and we have made a present of him to the Bolsheviks. It is by making it possible for the workman to live a human, sane, and healthy life that we shall dry up the springs of discontent. Men do not revolt in order to bring upon earth some new and strange dispensation of things; some Utopia, where men need not work, nor women weep. They become revolutionaries only when they are denied the old things—the sane, normal, wholesome essentials that men need and have enjoyed throughout the ages. One of these is a home: the other is rational, wholesome clean amusements, with plenty of opportunity for that social intercourse

which the gregarious nature of man demands. And in this connection, I desire to record my very deliberate opinion that one very irritant factor of our present discontent has been the futile and mischievous policy pursued by the Liquor Control Board. As a writer in a recent issue of "Production" aptly said:

"Let us consider for a moment the part that the tavern, the public-house, still plays in the life of the workman. I may be told, of course, that this does not arise; that it is possible to have a public-house without beer, or spirits, where only tea, cocoa, coffee, and perhaps chocolate are consumed. It is, but the workman will not go to it. He has been accustomed to drink beer for some centuries, and, however wicked and obtuse the choice, he will not revel over cocoa, or get merry over ginger-pop. Still less—and most wisely—he will not consume gallons of tea. For beer he has a natural taste, and, being at bottom a good fellow, he likes to drink it with his fellows at a 'pub'—that is to say, in the only place where he is free to say pretty much what he pleases on any topic that he chooses. It is as natural to the workman to spend an hour in a public-house, after his day's work is done, as it is for his employer to put in perhaps more than that time at his club, there to chat over the events of the day with his social equivalents,

with men much of the same class and of similar taste and ambitions. There is this difference : that the public-house has the added charm of variety. For, while the club is limited to its members, any man may blow into a tavern, either into the saloon bar or the four-ale compartment, and may have some curiously interesting and new points of view, perhaps some strange human experience, to relate. I have spent many hours both in clubs and public-houses, some of them delightful hours. Not infrequently I have been bored in both ; but I have heard some of the best talk that I have ever listened to in my life in taverns. Some of the brightest things I have heard have come from working-men, whose natural genius for ironical illustration and badinage is at its best under conditions that obtain only in his favourite institution.

“Now what happens to-day when a workman leaves his work and cannot get served at the tavern of his choice ? Perhaps it is shut under the regulations of the Control Board ; perhaps it has run dry. He has been accustomed to foregather there for years with his cronies, and to indulge in just that hour’s talk which is frequently the one bright hour of his life. In theory, he ought, finding it closed, to thank God, and to hasten to a Band of Hope meeting. In fact he does not. He becomes

sullen, morose, and critical, and if he goes anywhere it is to a meeting where 'The Red Flag' is sung, and revolutionary speeches made. People have been surprised at the amount of discontent, at the spread of syndicalist propaganda among the miners. But is it really astonishing? Lord D'Abernon, in his wisdom, closed the colliers' public-house at such hours that, in many cases, the miner could not get himself a drink either before he went into the pit, or after he came out. And what followed? Among other things absenteeism. The miner stayed away from work so that he might meet his pals once or twice a week and have a chat, at the only place, be it noted, where it was possible for him to do so. When he did not do that, he went to I.L.P. lectures, and was bored with Karl Marx, but cheered fiercely at the idea of a class war, which seemed to offer him some chance of getting his own back, and of relieving the tedium of life. Also he struck early and often, and behaved generally with a complete lack of his old tractable good-nature. Perhaps we shall never get him back to quite the same degree of sweet reasonableness. But it would be well, very emphatically, not to continue to deprive him of just that little interval of good fellowship and genial intercourse which marks the difference between wholesome sanity and disgruntled aggressive-

ness. Nor will clubs—teetotal clubs—and lectures and P.S.A.'s suffice. He ought to like these things, just as he ought to like lemonade, or cocoa or dry ginger; but in fact he does not; he prefers a glass of beer with his friends at the old familiar public house.

“The following case, reported in the Press, makes this point clear:—

MINERS' LIQUID REFRESHMENT.

When four miners were charged at Church, Accrington, yesterday, with consuming beer during prohibited hours, and the landlord of the Railway Hotel, Huncoat, was summoned for selling the liquor, a letter of protest, signed by officials of Accrington branch of the Lancashire and Cheshire Miners' Federation, was read.

The note asked for the removal of the restrictions, and pointed out that miners suffered a great injustice through not being able to obtain refreshment when their work was finished.

The landlord and his wife were each fined £1 in four cases and the other defendants were fined a similar amount, the chairman intimating they would leave the question of the licensing hours to the licensing justices.

“As with the miner, so with the engineer, the steel smelter, the dock labourer, and railwayman. The insistent demand for a shorter working day is due in no small degree to the fact that, without it, it is impossible for them to get even one drink after a hard day’s work. It is a small boon after all, to vouchsafe to men, whose work is hard and whose lives are pretty drab, and on whose slogging capacity we depend; but that it will go far to ensure industrial peace, I am confident. The tavern is an ancient institution, and it responds to one of the primary needs of men.

“It is very natural that Mr. Philip Snowden should sit on the Liquor Control Board and help to tighten up its edicts, not only for the reason that he does not want his fellow countrymen to go to public-houses, but because he wants to change them in other respects. Bitterness, acerbity, discontent, these may spoil the Englishman, but, allied to his obstinacy and pugnacity, they would suit Mr. Snowden’s book exactly. For it is precisely of that sort of stuff that revolutions are made.”

This view will not appeal to the Labour Party, many of whom, let it be clearly understood, are out, not for reform but for revolution. Sir Leo Chiozza Money, once a sane Liberal, now Mr. Smillie’s trusted lieutenant,

declares in an incendiary sheet "that the only thing to do with the public house is to abolish it."* We have only to remember that Sir Leo is now a revolutionary to appreciate the reason why he urges this recommendation—one more certain to exacerbate the workman, if carried into effect, than any other measure, short, though, of the "industrial conscription" which Sir Leo's Russian comrades—the Bolsheviks—freely employ.

But the abolition of absurd and irritating restrictions of the sale of drink, and the restoration to "the man in the street" of the most ancient of all institutions—the Tavern—is only one of those safeguards against revolution, which ought not any longer to be neglected, and which cannot in safety be ignored. One of the wisest, as well as the most brilliant, paradoxes that Mr. G. K. Chesterton ever perpetrated was the apothegm that men indulge in a revolution, not to achieve some new, fanciful Utopia, some world that visionaries and poets have dreamed of, but, because they want to get back to the old, sane, normal condition of affairs, to the world their fathers knew, and that answered the same vital requirements of their nature.

"That man's the live Conservative
Who lopps the withered branch away,"

* "Daily Herald," Jan. 12th.

wrote Tennyson, in an inspired moment. And it is this Conservatism that we need now. We must restore to the people their lost liberties, their lost possessions—we must get back to the normal. We must sweep away all these restraints, controls, restrictions, necessary during war-time, but now an active source of social irritation. The control that fixes the price of foods higher than that at which traders want to sell it ; the ludicrous restraints that prevent a poor man shopping at the only time when he can shop—that is, in the evening, that prevent him even buying cigarettes after eight o'clock—these war-time measures, small, perhaps, in the item, but galling in the aggregate, ought now to be thoroughly revised. We must get the people back to the old, normal, wholesome, merry England, the England of Dickens and of Shakespeare ; the England of laughter and of song ; when the happy crowds poured in their thousands to the seaside, revelling in the fresh air and sunshine before the blight of control fell on the railways ; the England that gave us the splendid men, who won the war—blithe, keen-eyed, clean-limbed—free men, untouched by Bolshevism, unaffected by the microbe of revolution or the irksome pedantries of a meddling bureaucracy.

I would again insist that, if we are to make a real effort to get back to the normal, we must,

first and foremost, give our countrymen homes—homes without which our race cannot grow up strong, free and contented. This primal requirement of man *must* be supplied, and at all costs. It is useless for Dr. Addison to warn us that his policy is sound, but that it will take a generation to carry it out. If housing is not speeded up, and *at once*, the generation that is growing up will turn, not to Dr. Addison, but to other leaders, and to other methods than he employs.

The plain fact is that every workman, who is a father, every working woman, who has the love of her own children in her breast, and who cannot get a home for those children, is being made to-day into a revolutionary agent, and, if the progress of revolutionary sentiment and feeling is to be checked, we should make a supreme effort to make good the housing shortage *without delay*. That may prove a costly undertaking—the alternative will be even more so. Do not let us forget that the domination of politics by the Labour Party, with a strong majority in the House of Commons, and Direct Action at work outside, means, and must mean, the adoption of Nationalization, which spells death to private enterprise, economic progress, and personal freedom. We shall have repeated on a larger scale all those failures of State management

and industrial adventure, with which the war has familiarized us. There will spring up a newer hierarchy of officials—as dilatory, incompetent, and irresponsible as the old; but far more powerful and against whom there is no appeal. The consumer, dependent on the State monopolies that these officials will control, will be powerless in their grip, and the workman, unless his Trade Unions are strong enough to smash the State, will be dragooned, disciplined and conscripted—as he is to-day in Russia. It is true that we shall have abolished the Capitalists—for obviously, where no property is secure, capital cannot exist. But we shall have allowed to be established one of the most detestable, one of the most “withering despotisms” that ever strangled the free-play of man’s intelligence. Let us choose while there is time, a more excellent way. Let us give the worker personal freedom, a decent home to live in; a share in the business he serves; those things that are normal to a man. Putting it on the lowest ground, it will pay us and it will pay the generations to come.

THE END

Messrs. Hutchinson & Co.

are pleased to give the following particulars of many important New Books for the Spring, 1920, and also a splendid list of New Novels, which, as will be seen by the undermentioned names, are almost all by the Leading Authors.

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GILBERT FRANKAU
RAFAEL SABATINI
UNA L. SILBERRAD
DOROTHEA CONYERS
ELINOR MORDAUNT
PIERRE BENOIT
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DOROTA FLATAU
ISABEL C. CLARKE
MRS. HORACE TREMLETT
HAROLD BEGBIE
STACY AUMONIER
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MRS. BELLOC LOWNDES and
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Peter Jackson. Cigar Merchant

By GILBERT FRANKAU

Author of "One of Them," etc.

Peter and his delightful wife, Patricia, are a typically English couple, whose marriage was merely the ordinary conventional and superficial tie of Society, and who realized too late the passionate depths and needs of their own natures.

It is the truth about a man's soul and a woman's love that Mr. Frankau gives us in this extraordinarily intimate book, and it will find an echo in the hearts of all who have struggled through the desperate years of war to realize that Peace is only a little less difficult.

Count Philip

By PIERRE BENOIT

Author of "L'Atlantide," etc.

The publishers believe that they can congratulate both the public and themselves on the appearance of this most remarkable novel, which has already taken France by storm. At heart the reading public still demands a good plot, and the plot of Count Philip will be readily recognized as the work of genius. But the novel is far more than a most enthralling story. It introduces characters which, for truth and personality, stand out in a different class from the usual puppets of fiction, and, above all, the book is distinguished by that human touch, that all-pervading sense of humour and charm of style which cannot fail to make a deep and permanent impression.

Julian

By ISABEL C. CLARKE

Author of "The Children of Eve," "The Elstones," etc.

A new novel by the author of "The Elstones," and one written with all the power and insight displayed in that story. The heroine, Eunice Dampier, has a strange and eventful career; the development of her character under the care of the Parmeters is sketched with an able pen. Eunice is a real person with human faults and failings, as well as human charm and attraction.

Scaramouche

By RAFAEL SABATINI

Author of "The Trampling of the Lilies," etc.

Mr. Sabatini has the unusual gift of writing history with the aid of a powerful imagination; he inspires the dry bones with new life and takes us back into the romantic past as few of our present-day writers can do. His latest novel, dealing with the ever-fascinating period of the French Revolution, is a thrilling and dramatic story, vivid with the picturesque, adventure of those troubled days.

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Few writers understand the art of marriage and all that it entails better than Mr. Maxwell, who in his latest novel gives us an extremely able interpretation of a question of which most people have, sooner or later, to find the solution. This is an original and deeply thoughtful story, written with the practised ease of the master-craftsman, and dealing with the unfairness of the divorce laws—one of the most vital problems of the day—in a spirit of truly practical philosophy.

The Latest Thing By HAROLD BEGBIE

Author of "An English Family," "Broken Earthenware," etc.

John Dendy, Esq., of Barleyholm, in East Anglia, returns from the war to discover that a number of fussy people among his neighbours are in some sort of conspiracy to rob the land for which he fought of just those very jovial qualities which make it most lovable in his honest eyes. This is a racy novel, full of typically English humour. It is a chronicle of laughter, not noisy laughter, but rich, gentle and kindly laughter, like the land of its birth.

One After Another

By STACY AUMONIER

Author of "Just Outside," etc.

Written in the form of an intimate autobiography, this brilliant novel reveals the life of a man who was the son of a London publican. How he rose in the world through his own exertions, and the various social experiences through which he passed, are cleverly described by Mr. Aumonier with that vivid and illuminating touch which has made him one of the most popular of short-story writers in two continents.

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