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SIXTY YEARS OF TRADE UNIONISM

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HEADQUARTERS OF THE T.U.C.



TRANSPORT HOUSE (SOUTH BLOCK), SMITH SQUARE, LONDON, S.W.1.

Sixty Years of
Trade Unionism

1868 ——— 1928

SOUVENIR

OF THE SIXTIETH
TRADES UNION
CONGRESS



*Published by the Trades Union Congress General Council,
Transport House (South Block), Smith Square, London, S.W.1*

FOREWORD

The Sixtieth Trades Union Congress is an event of importance in the social history of Great Britain. It is a landmark in the development of Trade Unionism and affords an occasion for reviewing the achievements of organised Labour during the last 60 years. Within the compass of these pages the full story cannot be told, but an effort, despite the handicap due to lack of adequate photographic records, has been made to set forth the salient incidents of that story and to show the changes that have taken place under the influence of the Congress between 1868 and 1928.

Congress was born during a venomous attack by the successful Capitalism of the period, upon the workers' organisations. When the preliminary conference was called by the Workingmen's Association in 1867, very few people had the vote. In the Franchise Act, passed in the year before Congress was established at Manchester in 1868, the agricultural workers were not enfranchised. The ballot was not secret. There was no education system. Illiteracy was widespread. The fight for political industrial and social freedom was assisted by the Trades Union Congress, and almost without exception every reform passed since that time was either initiated by the Trades Union Congress or received its full support to the successful end.

It will do our younger folks good to read the story of our Movement and to learn what changes have been brought about by the Trade Union Movement. If it is not presumptuous to say it, even Trade Union officials would be surprised if they went outside their own section of Trade Union history, and read up the work done by our forefathers. The 60 hours per week has been brought down to 48, 47, and 44 hours per week. The rates of pay have risen from 4d. to four times 4d. per hour in many trades, and women's wages have risen 300 per cent. The Franchise has been extended to include all adults and no harder fighter for this claim has ever been known than the T.U.C. Congress made possible a variety of Acts for the betterment of industrial conditions: Mines Acts, Factory Acts; Inspection of mines, buildings, factories, ships; better housing, free education, secondary education, the abolition of sweating, and the half-time system; Trade Boards, Minimum Wage Acts: All came from the Trades Union Congress.

In the preparation of this Souvenir we have had the invaluable help of Mr. Sidney Webb, M.P., Sir H. H. Slesser, K.C., M.P., and Mr. J. J. Mallon, whose contributions appear under their names. The remainder of its contents is the work of our Congress Secretary, Mr. Walter M. Citrine and his staff at the T.U.C. Headquarters, with the assistance also of two members of the Labour Party staff, Messrs. W. W. Henderson and W. G. Hall.

London, August, 1928.

BEN TURNER.

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Sixty Years of Trade Unionism



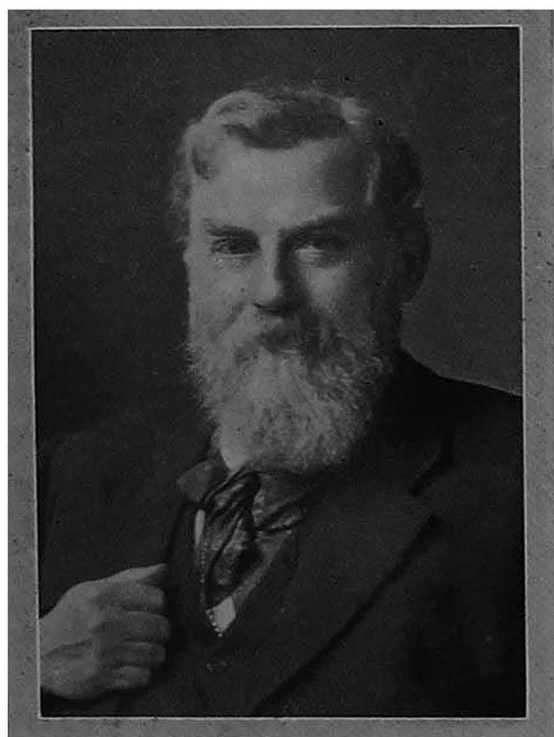
THE foundation of the Trades Union Congress in 1868, marks the real beginning of the modern Trade Union Movement. Throughout the 60 years of its existence, the Congress has exercised a steadily increasing influence upon the development of Trade Unionism. Before its appearance, the organised movement possessed no central organ to direct its activities or to co-ordinate and unify the working-class organisation. Trade Unionism, partially liberated by the repeal of the Combination Laws in 1824—25, had been making considerable progress for more than 40 years before the Congress was founded. In practically every trade and industry of importance, unions had been established, and many of the small local trade societies, weak in numbers, isolated in action, had come to recognise the necessity of uniting to form national organisations. But few of the great national unions which dominate industry to-day were then in existence. There was no central authority, and no national leadership beyond that which was supplied by the little group of able men who served as secretaries of the four or five large unions in what were known as the "amalgamated trades."

From the beginning of its history, the Trades Union Congress assumed this function of leadership. There had been previous national conferences of the Trade Unions, and efforts had been made to establish a permanent organisation of the kind. The United Kingdom Alliance of Organised Trades, which was set up by the Sheffield unions, called three conferences in succession; in 1865, 1866, and 1867. The five Trade Union leaders known as the "Junta"—William Allan, Robert Applegarth, Daniel Guile, Edwin Coulson, and George Odger—formed in 1867, the "Conference of Amalgamated Trades." But these bodies were intended to serve a more limited purpose than the one which the organisers of the Trades Union Congress had in view. Although the Congress was called primarily for the purpose of meeting a special emergency, those who were responsible for

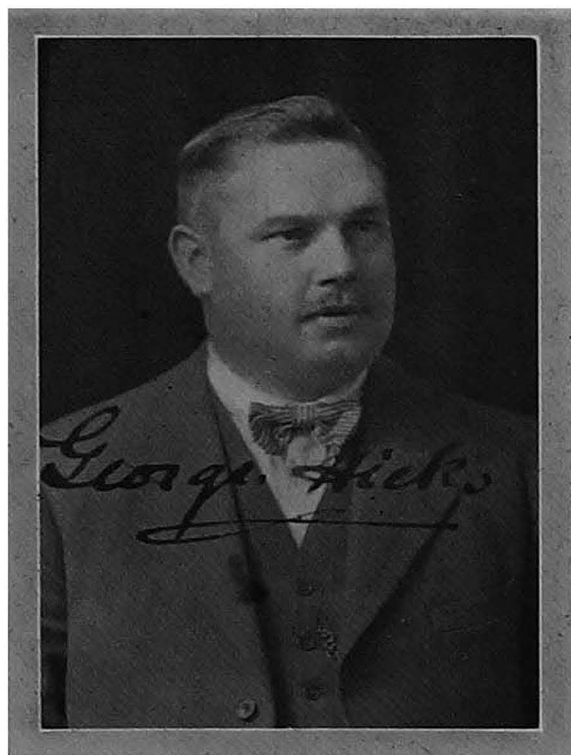
calling it aimed at the creation of a permanent body which was to meet annually for the discussion of Trade Union problems and questions of policy and was to control and direct the action of the unions in dealing with urgent matters, including legislation, affecting the organised workers as a whole. With the expansion of the organised movement, the power and influence of the Congress increased decade by decade. Its authority was enlarged as the unions themselves became stronger and more conscious of a common purpose. Every development of organisation and policy during the last 60 years has contributed to the growth of Congress, and changing social, political and industrial conditions have all tended to increase its authority.

The year in which the Congress was founded opened a new epoch. Though not far removed from us in point of time the England of 60 years ago was very different from the England of to-day. The forces of change were only then beginning to make themselves felt. The fundamental transformation in the economic life of the nation wrought by the Industrial Revolution had been accomplished. Britain had become a completely industrialised community. In coal, iron, cotton and woollen fabrics, British workmen produced for world markets and were beginning to serve the same markets with cheap steel. The railways had been built, and were no longer "visionary schemes unworthy of notice," which they were once thought to be; British steam-driven ships were carrying across the oceans the products of British industry and bringing back more abundant supplies of food and raw materials from the new countries which were then being thrown open to capitalist exploitation. The Suez Canal was finished, thus shortening the route to India by 4,500 miles. Banks were beginning to widen the scope of their functions, and joint-stock activities were multiplying the possibilities of capitalist organisation. Productive industry carried a much smaller burden than it does to-day; the National Debt stood at no more than £700,000,000; the Income Tax was 4d. in the £; the duty on tea was 6d.; and Budgets showed surpluses with monotonous regularity. The tax on knowledge represented by the duties on paper, which added seriously to the

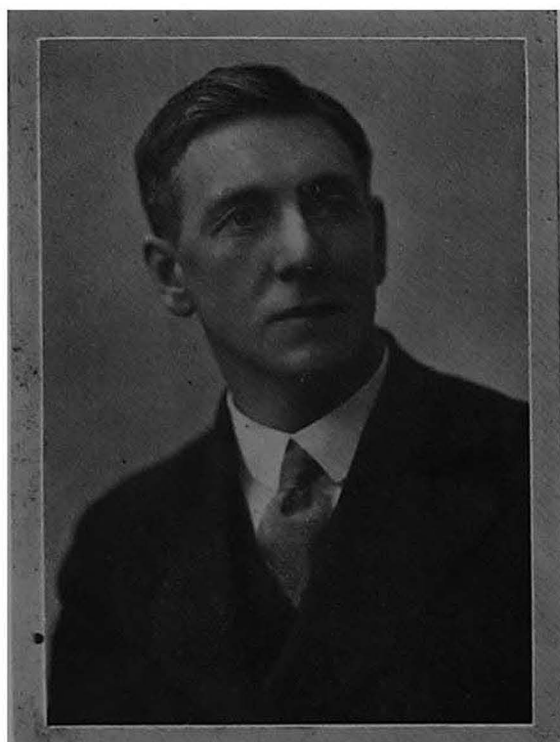
T.U.C. GENERAL COUNCIL.



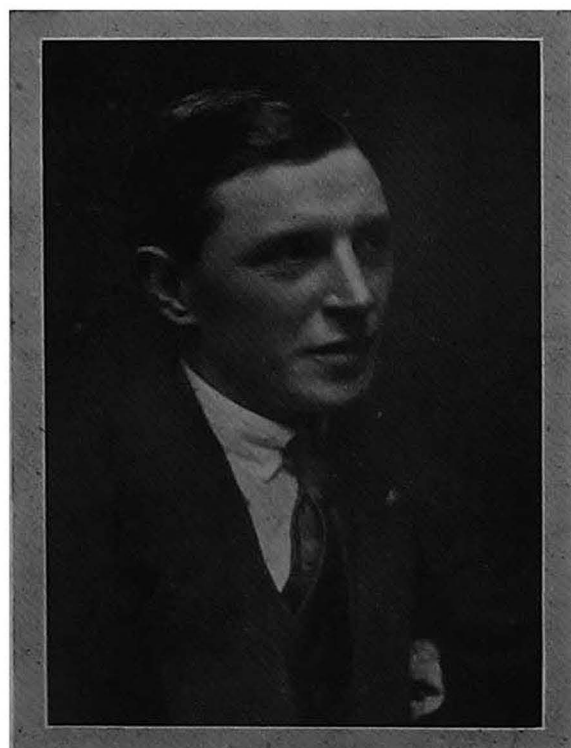
BEN TURNER
(President, 1928)



GEO. HICKS
(Vice-President, 1928)



W. M. CITRINE
(General Secretary)



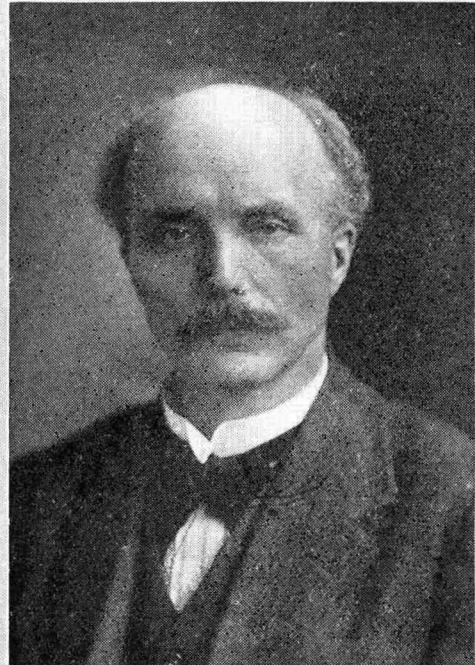
A. FIRTH
(Assistant Secretary)

T.U.C. GENERAL COUNCIL

(PAST PRESIDENTS)



W. THORNE
(Parliamentary Committee, 1894-1920 ;
General Council, 1921-28)



J. HILL
(Parliamentary Committee, 1909-1920 ;
General Council, 1921-28)



J. W. OGDEN
(Parliamentary Committee, 1911-20 ;
General Council, 1921-28)



E. L. POULTON
(Parliamentary Committee, 1917-20 ;
General Council, 1921-28)

production cost of periodical publications had been removed, and thus the last barrier to the establishment of the cheap daily Press was lifted—penny newspapers were becoming plentiful; free popular education, universal and compulsory, was in sight. The electric telegraph had arrived, though not the telephone; gas had come into common use for street-lighting; the Great Exhibition of British Wealth and Industry had come and gone, leaving the Crystal Palace as a memorial.

Chattel slavery had been abolished in British dependencies, and in the United States after the Civil War; but industrial serfdom still remained in England. The gloomy, insanitary slums of the Midland and Northern industrial towns were a stereotyped feature of working-class life. Families no longer divided their labour between home-handicrafts and husbandry; fresh generations had arisen which knew no life more spacious than that lived in the back-to-back houses they called homes, which began daily with the signal of the factory siren and was bounded by the poorhouse. Already those vast and complex problems we know to be inherent in the capitalist organisation of industry were beginning to challenge the resources of statesmanship. Already the doctrine of *laissez faire* was losing its hold upon the minds of politicians: Women and children, by Act of Parliament, were no longer permitted to work in the mines; the age at which children could be employed as half-timers had been fixed at eight years, and the hours of work for women and young persons employed in factories were limited to 12 a day and 69 a week.

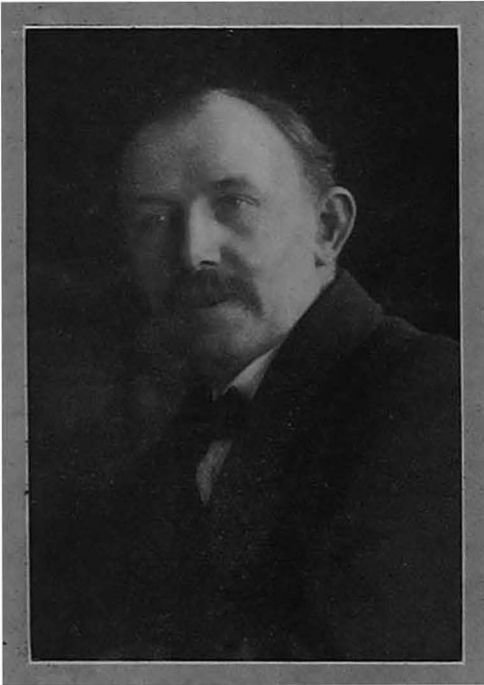
At the General Election of 1868, the first at which the urban workman was entitled to vote, the signs of change were visible for all to see. Both Disraeli and Gladstone achieved each for the first time the Premiership in that year: With the dismissal of the Derby Administration, political power passed from men who had all without exception been born in the 18th century and had all held Cabinet office before the first Reform Act of 1832, to men who had all been born in the 19th century and had reached political eminence since the 1832 Act was passed.

Against this background of social and political change the first Trades Union Congress loomed as less of a portent than it actually was ; yet it was perceived to be an important gathering. Trade Unionism was under a cloud. Employers were alarmed by the growth of its power and were demanding its curtailment. The demand was strengthened by allegations that the unions were using methods of intimidation and outrage, and in 1867, a Royal Commission had been appointed to investigate charges of this character made against the Sheffield grinders and to review the existing law relating to the Trade Unions. This inquiry was welcomed by the Trade Unions, and although it was unthinkable in those days that working men should aspire to a seat on such an august body for one of their own number, the unions were strong enough to secure a nominee of their own on the Commission, in the person of the late Frederick Harrison who, with Professor Beesly, Judge Hughes, Henry Crompton, and others, had always been friendly to the unions. In the same year, a decision of the Courts laid it down that the Trade Unions, though not criminal, were illegal organisations and contrary to public policy. Thus the gains of 40 years of effort and sacrifice seemed to be grievously imperilled, and the position was serious.

It was, therefore, a critical moment in the history of Trade Unionism, and there was urgent need for such a gathering as the Trades Union Congress to co-ordinate policy and to direct defensive action. The initiative, indeed, had already been taken, as we have seen, by the informal committee of Trade Union secretaries representing the Amalgamated Trades, which had taken vigorous measures to secure a fair presentation of the unions' case to the Royal Commission, and were actively organising a campaign of protest against the legislation it was proposed to base upon the Commission's report. This group did not at first welcome the action of the Manchester and Salford Trades Council in calling the Trades Union Congress into being. From the first Congress, which met at Manchester in Whit-week, 1868, they stood aloof. But within two years they reached the conclusion that it was necessary to join hands with the newly

T.U.C. GENERAL COUNCIL.

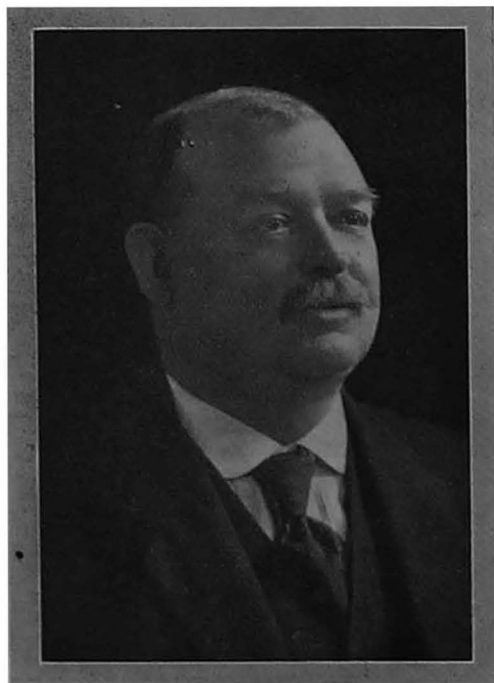
(PAST PRESIDENTS)



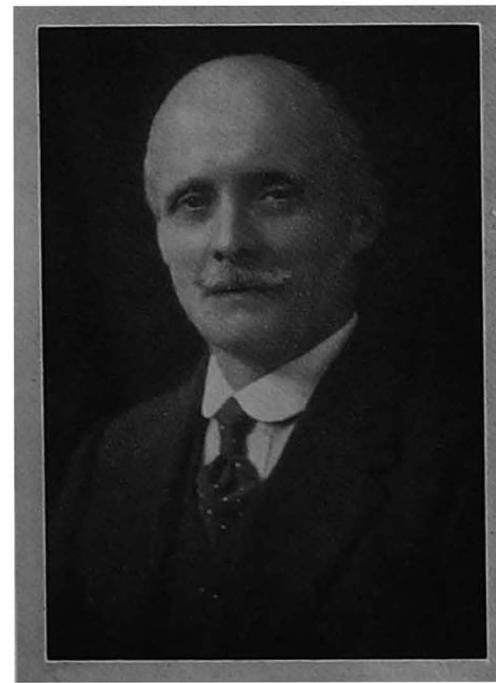
J. H. THOMAS
(Parliamentary Committee, 1917-20;
General Council, 1921-28)



A. A. PURCELL
(Parliamentary Committee, 1917-20;
General Council, 1921-28)



A. B. SWALES
(Parliamentary Committee, 1919-20;
General Council, 1921-28)

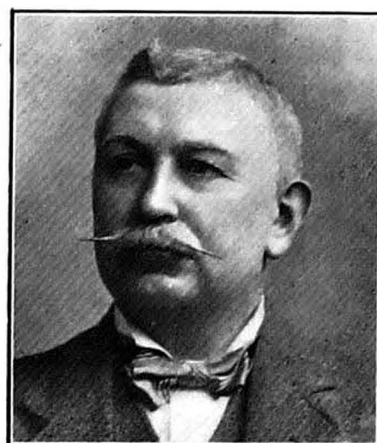


A. PUGH
(General Council, 1921-28)

T.U.C. GENERAL COUNCIL



B. TILLETT
(Parliamentary Committee, 1892-94;
General Council, 1921-28)



H. SKINNER
(Parliamentary Committee, 1915, 1917-20;
General Council, 1921-28)



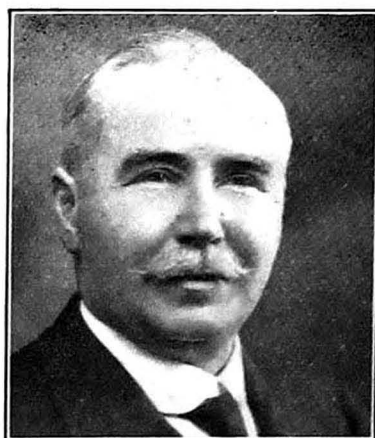
H. BOOTHMAN
(Parliamentary Committee, 1919-20;
General Council, 1921-28)



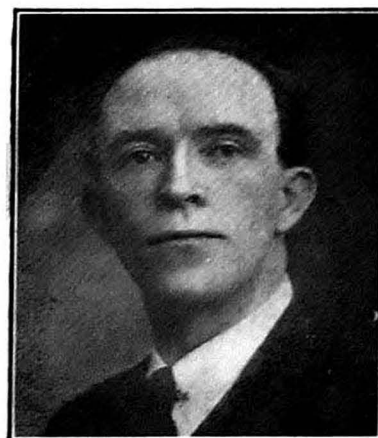
M. BONDFIELD
(Parliamentary Committee, 1917-20;
General Council, 1921-28)



J. BEARD
(General Council, 1921-28)



J. BROMLEY
(General Council, 1921-28)



A. CONLEY
(General Council, 1921-28)

formed Congress, and at a formal joint meeting after the Congress of 1871, the Parliamentary Committee of the Congress and the Committee of the Amalgamated Trades combined to issue the following emphatic protest against the Bill then before Parliament :—

" We, the undersigned, for and on behalf of the Trade Unionists of United Kingdom, authorised and empowered by the Trades Union Congress recently assembled in London, and by the Conference of Amalgamated Trades, do hereby protest against any such legislation as that attempted by the third clause of the Government Trade Union Bill, based as it is on the assumption that acts contrary to law and order are done and sanctioned by the Trade Unions of this country, feeling confident as we do that the common and statute law is sufficient to punish every unlawful act committed by Trade Unionists or any other person. We, therefore, refuse in any way to sanction a Bill that in its provisions presupposes criminal intentions or tendencies on the part of working-men as a class."

This was signed by George Potter as Chairman, and George Howell as Secretary of the Trades Union Congress Parliamentary Committee, and by William Allan (Chairman) and Robert Applegarth (Secretary) to the Conference of Amalgamated Trades. The Joint Committee continued to function in vigorous opposition to the Bill, or rather to this particular clause in it. It nevertheless became law, and in the Trade Union Act, 1871, for the first time in history made Trade Unions lawful, giving to them advantages which had hitherto been denied to them.

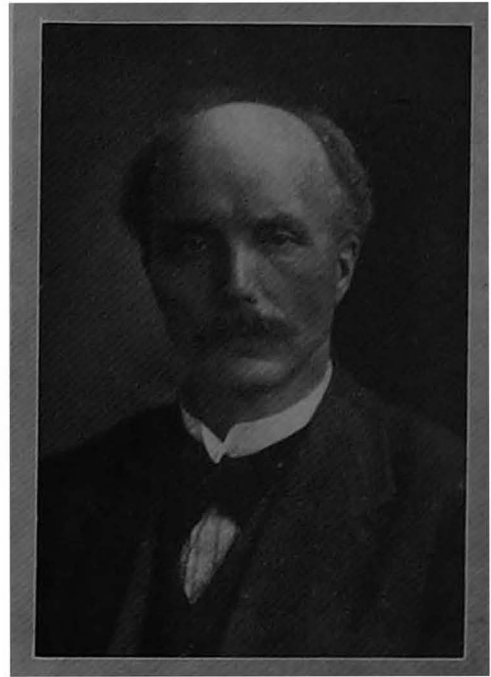
But the organisers of the Trades Union Congress had a wider purpose in view than that of voicing the protest of the organised workers against anti-Trade Union legislation. In the circular convening the Congress it was stated that the Manchester and Salford Trades Council had given serious consideration to :—

" The present aspect of Trade Unions, and the profound ignorance which prevails in the public mind with reference to their operations and principles, together with the probability of an attempt being made by the Legislature, during the present session of Parliament, to introduce a measure which might prove detrimental to the interests of such societies, unless some prompt and decisive action be taken by the working classes themselves."

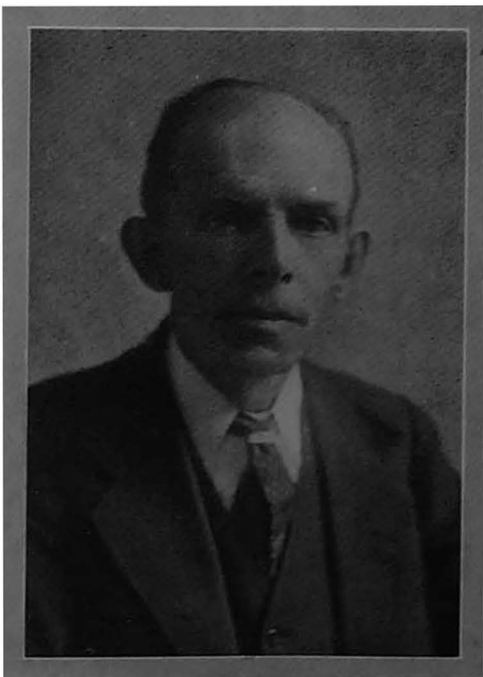
T.U.C. GENERAL COUNCIL
(PAST PRESIDENTS)



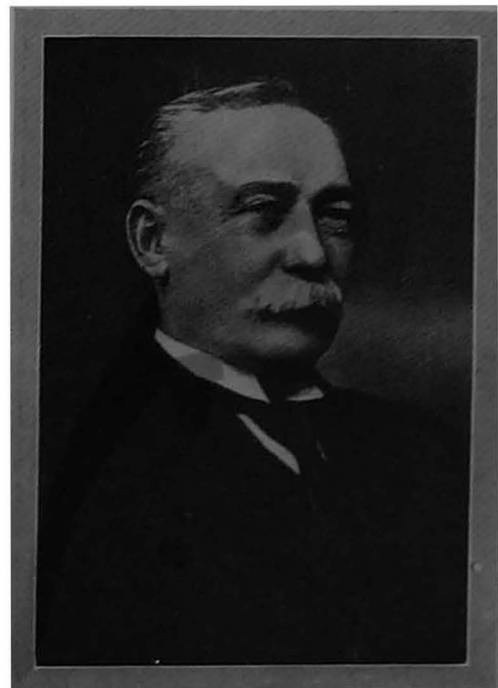
W. THORNE
(Parliamentary Committee, 1894-1920 ;
General Council, 1921-28)



J. HILL
(Parliamentary Committee, 1909-1920 ;
General Council, 1921-28)



J. W. OGDEN
(Parliamentary Committee, 1911-20 ;
General Council, 1921-28)



E. L. POULTON
(Parliamentary Committee, 1917-20 ;
General Council, 1921-28)

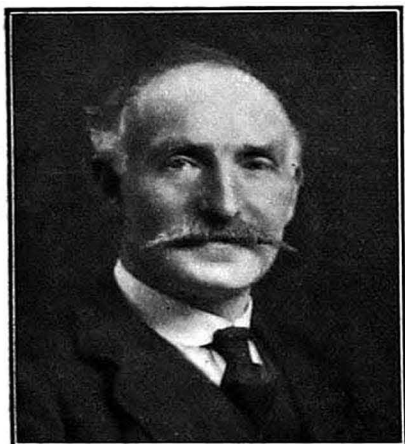
And in the Agenda laid before the Congress there is, in its somewhat academic character, evidence of the desire to educate the public as to the purpose and method of Trade Unionism, as well as to promote co-operation among the unions in respect of general questions affecting Labour conditions and the furtherance of the workers' interests in Parliament.

At the first Congress, there were 34 delegates, representing 118,367 members organised in about a score of organisations, some of them of a distinctively political character. The second Congress, held in Birmingham in 1869, was even less representative of the Trade Union Movement, and a number of political organisations sent delegates; not until later in its history did Congress lay down the principle that delegates to Congress must be either bona fide members of affiliated unions actually working at their trade or permanent paid officials of the unions, or properly accredited representatives of the Trades Councils. From 1873, the composition of Congress and other matters of internal organisation were decided by Standing Orders which remained practically unchanged until the Cardiff Congress in 1895, when amended Standing Orders were adopted which restricted representation to delegates from Trade Unions only, thus excluding representatives of the Trades Councils.

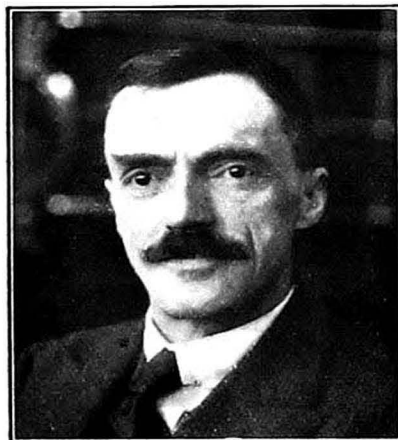
A detailed review of the 60 Congresses which have been held is impossible here. Such a review must necessarily wait until the writing of an adequate history of the T.U.C. is undertaken. Growth in organisation may be illustrated by the following table, showing decade by decade the number of unions affiliated to Congress, the number of delegates, and the total membership represented :—

Year.	Place of Meeting.	Delegates.	No. of Unions.	No. of Members.
1868.....	Manchester.....	34	—	118,367
1878.....	Bristol.....	136	114	623,957
1888.....	Bradford.....	165	138	816,944
1898.....	Bristol.....	406	188	1,184,241
1908.....	Nottingham.....	522	214	1,777,000
1918.....	Derby.....	881	262	4,532,085
1928.....	Swansea.....	600	196	3,874,842

T.U.C. GENERAL COUNCIL



A. A. H. FINDLAY
(General Council, 1921-28)



R. T. JONES
(General Council, 1921-28)



A. G. WALKDEN
(General Council, 1921-28)



J. VARLEY
(General Council, 1921-24,
1926-28)



J. DAVENPORT
(General Council, 1921,
1924-28)



W. KEAN
(General Council, 1921-28)



J. ROWAN
(General Council, 1921-28)

T.U.C. GENERAL COUNCIL



A. HAYDAY
(General Council, 1922-28)



T. RICHARDS
(General Council, 1925-28)



H. H. ELVIN
(General Council, 1925-28)



E. BEVIN
(General Council, 1925-28)



J. J. W. BRADLEY
(General Council, 1928)



J. HALLSWORTH
(General Council, 1926-28)



A. J. COOK
(General Council, 1927-28)

The charts facing pages 12 and 13 illustrate graphically both the actual year to year growth of the Trade Union Movement since the Congress was founded, and the substantial improvement in real wages during that period. In the succeeding pages an attempt is made to deal with some of the salient features of the Congress work and activities. Those brief references reveal the steady acquisition of influence and authority by the Congress, a development particularly noticeable in the last decade.

Throughout the greater part of its history the affiliated membership of the Congress grew by comparatively slow accretions. But there was an astonishing expansion of numbers during the war. In the war years, 1914—1918, the total affiliated membership of the Congress was more than doubled. The aggregate membership reported to the Manchester Congress in 1913, the last pre-war year, was rather more than 2,250,000, whilst the total at the Glasgow Congress of 1919 was over 5,250,000; and in the next year the figures reached high-water mark, the Portsmouth Congress reporting an affiliated membership of no less than 6,505,482.

As will be seen in later pages, this expansion of numbers has been accompanied, especially in recent years, by a steady development of the powers and responsibilities which the affiliated unions through Congress vested in its Executive body. This development was really accelerated after the war, beginning in 1920—1921, with the establishment of the General Council in place of the old Parliamentary Committee: the new body being organised in a manner which made it much more representative of the various groups of trades.

The new machinery then set up has not, however, completed the process of change in the direction of making the Congress an all-embracing Trade Union centre, invested with full authority by the affiliated unions and exercising that authority through its General Council. Ultimately, the Congress may become the repository of many of the powers which are still retained by the affiliated unions. Especially in the field of collective bargaining

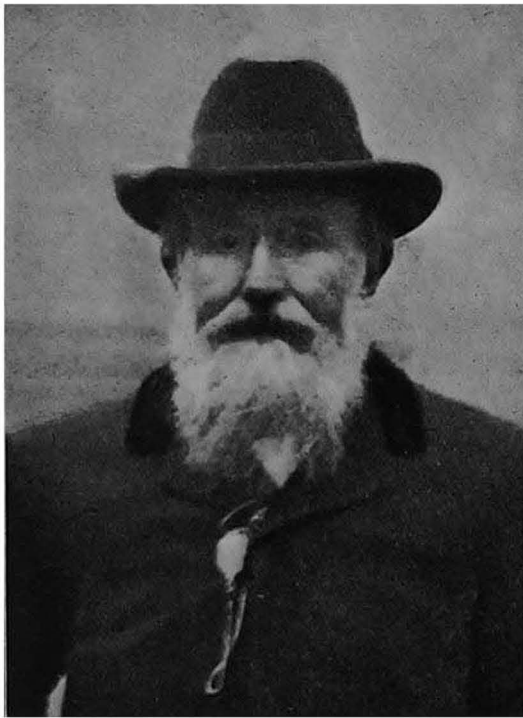
on matters of general policy affecting the Trade Union Movement as a whole, the tendency has been to endow the General Council with enlarged powers, and these developments have by no means reached finality. The present organisation of the General Council, based on the grouping of trades, and with an elaborate machinery of committees, can be extended so as to keep pace with the structural evolution of Congress itself as a union of unions. There is to-day a strong desire to make the Trade Union Movement a unified and more scientifically organised force, directed from a common centre.

In the retrospect of 60 years it is possible to see how events have contributed to a clearer recognition of the necessity of establishing a strong central authority possessed of sufficient executive power to make united action for common industrial ends. From the creation of the Congress in 1868 as a Parliament of Labour to the great deliberative assembly of our day, influencing and guiding our powerfully organised movement through its elective General Council, is a far cry. None of those who took part in the earliest Congresses, none of the members of the first Parliamentary Committee of Congress, could have foreseen these changes in organisation and policy. They represent the steps by which the Trade Union Movement has been consolidated for the achievement of the broader objects which the individual unions cannot attain by themselves but must strive for through the central executive body which Congress called into being and named the General Council. Neither the machinery of Congress nor the organisation of the General Council has reached its final form, but events have demonstrated not only the practicability of investing the General Council with greatly increased powers but that the policy of the General Council has been to exercise these powers with discretion and judgment, without meddlesome interference with the domestic affairs of individual unions.

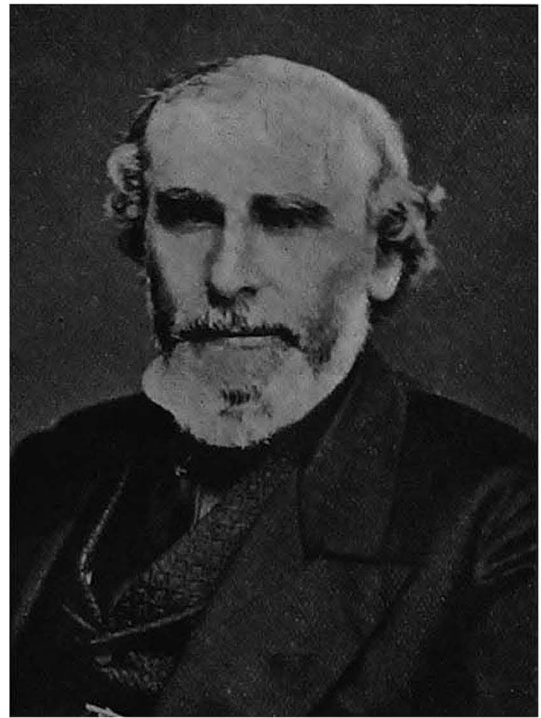
EVENTS IN CONGRESS HISTORY.

The significant events in Congress history have usually, but not always, coincided with the important changes and

FIRST LABOUR MEMBERS



T. BURT, M.P.



ALEX. MACDONALD, M.P.



AT THE MEMORIAL TO TOLPUDDLE MARTYRS
W. P. RICHARDSON A. A. PURCELL, M.P. BEN TILLET

T.U.C. SECRETARIES—1868-1924



GEO. POTTER



GEO. ODGER



GEO. HOWELL



HENRY BROADHURST, M.P.



GEO. SHIPTON



CHARLES FENWICK, M.P.



SAM WOODS



W. C. STEADMAN, M.P.



C. W. BOWERMAN, M.P.



F. BRAMLEY

developments in Trade Unionism generally. Although it is only in recent years that Congress has been a complete index to the tendencies in the movement as a whole yet it is true to say that from the time of its foundation in 1868, Congress has reflected the major changes in Trade Union policy on general social questions. In addition, the developments in the structure and functions of Congress itself must be regarded as highly important, in view of the influential position it now occupies in the world of organised Labour.

1869—1873.

The first big step taken to establish Congress as the annual Parliament of Labour, with a continuity of policy and tradition, was in 1869, only a year after the first Conference was held. It was then decided to appoint a Parliamentary Committee to carry out the decisions of Congress, and it will be clear that until this step was taken it was impossible to regard the annual meeting as being much more than but a great demonstration; useful, indeed, but not a permanent organisation for carrying out the wishes of the Trade Union armies.

It was not until 1872 that the practice started of submitting an annual report of the Parliamentary Committee, but from that date the custom was followed regularly, to the great benefit of orderly and business-like administration of Congress affairs. A year later, at the 1873 Congress, Standing Orders were for the first time adopted and at the same time it was decided to print the proceedings of Congress.

These initial measures of organisation may be regarded together as the first decisive step taken to make Congress that authoritative permanent body, with a tradition and a continuous policy, that it is now recognised to be. It may seem to have taken a long time to work out all the steps in this development, but we must recognise the wisdom and good sense of those pioneers who saw clearly the future importance of the new body they were setting up.

From this time until the 80's, the Trade Union world was hampered by sectional quarrels and there was little progress

made in the organisation and policy of Congress. So great were the divergencies in the Labour forces that it may be said with truth that it was only with great difficulty that Congress surmounted the task of holding the unions together and kept a semblance of solidarity.

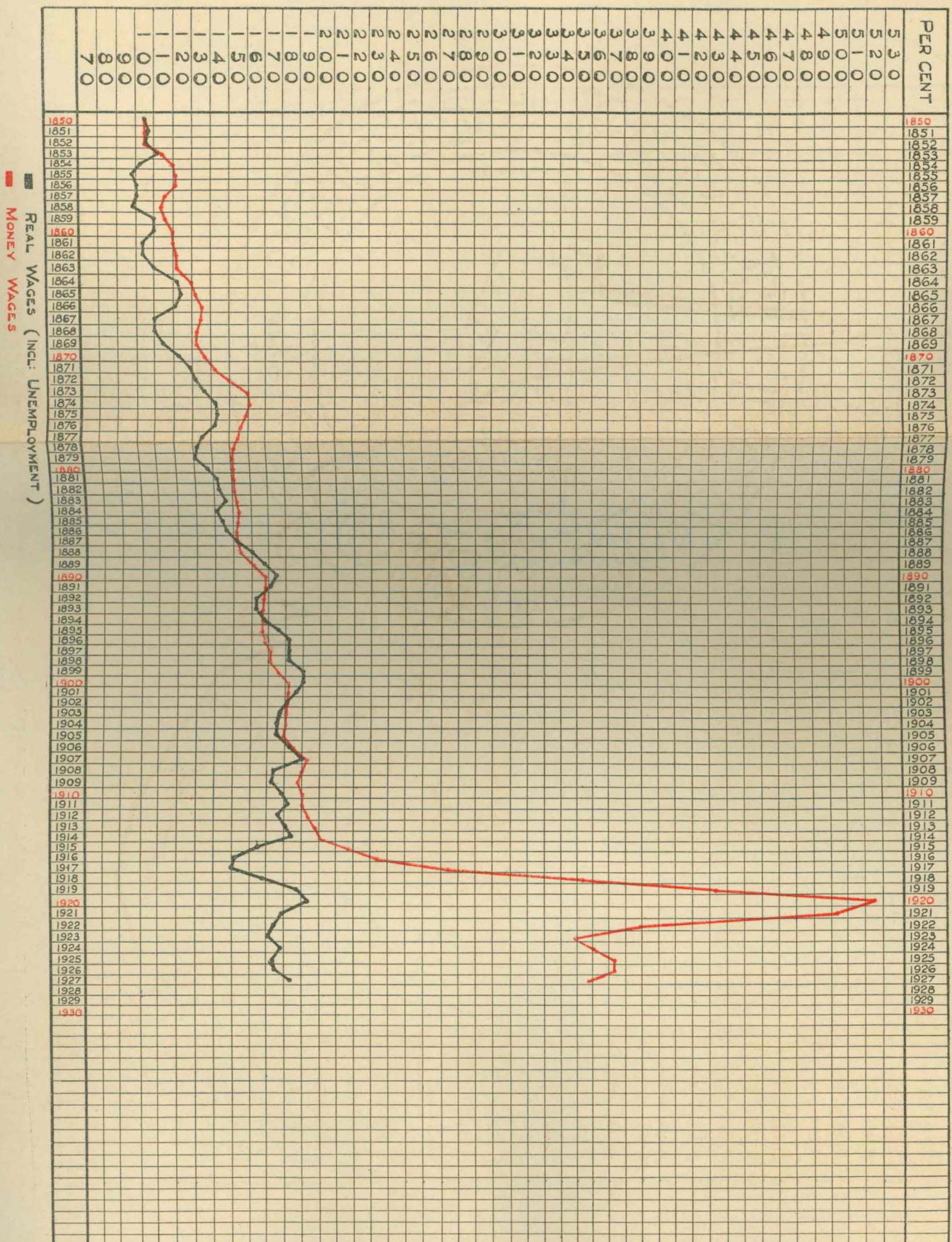
1880—1890.

With the trade depression that started in 1878, there came the amazing revival of Socialist fervour that in a comparatively few years completely converted the leaders of organised Labour. The struggle for the supremacy of the new ideas was, however, by no means a feeble one. It is nowadays difficult to realise that at that period the Trade Union Movement was considerably influenced by the belief in economic individualism. Not a few of the union leaders were firmly convinced of the virtues of *laissez-faire* and were stalwart supporters of the Liberal Party. The new ideas had consequently to fight hard for a hearing, despite the fact that the "Junta" had sat on the Committee of the International Working Men's Association.

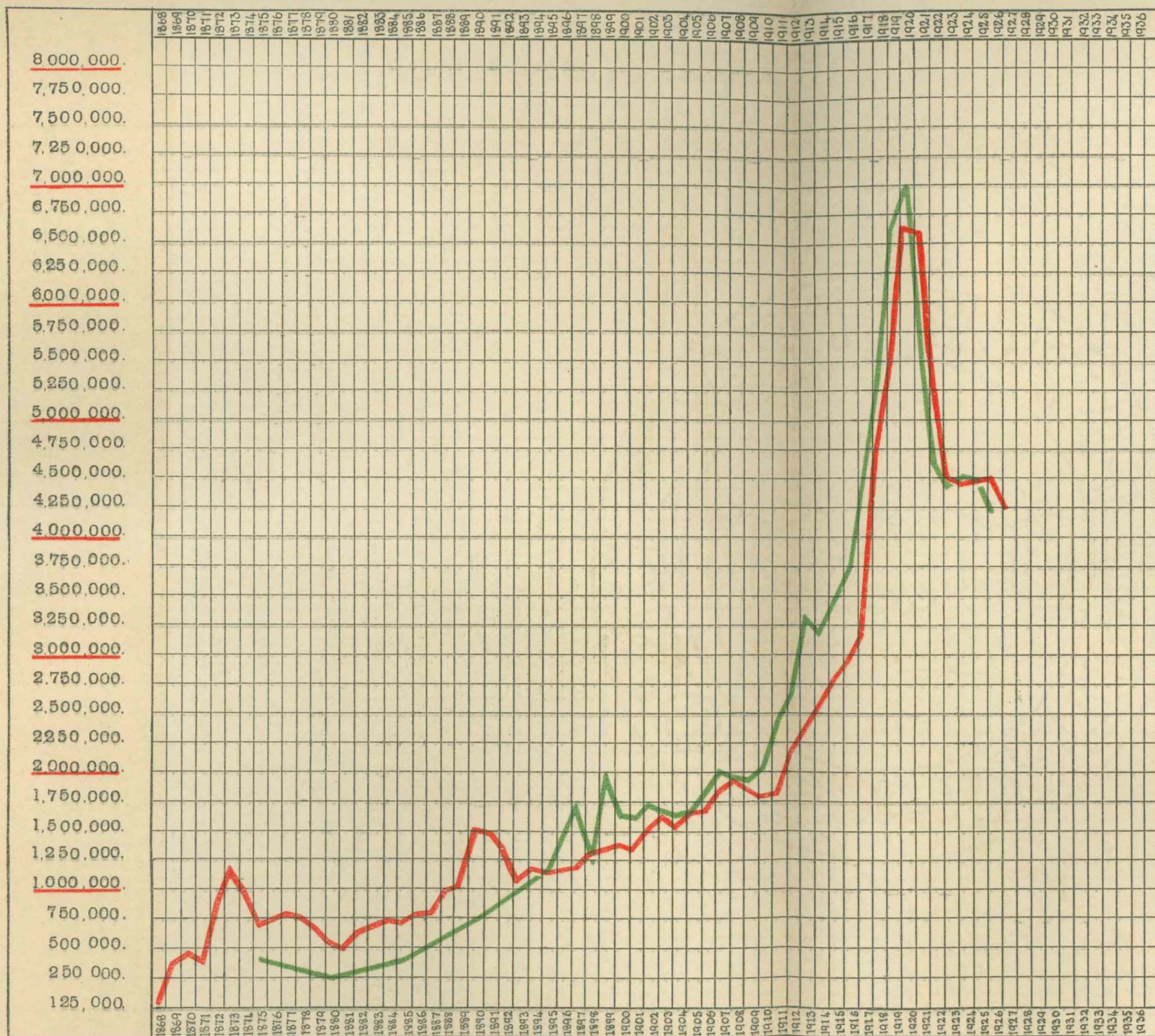
The first noteworthy sign of the coming change was the passing of a resolution in favour of "Land Nationalisation." Defeated on previous occasions, it was carried by 71 votes to 31 at the 1882 Congress. The time was not quite ripe, however, and for several years after 1882 a similar resolution was rejected. In 1887, a motion on the same subject in somewhat vague terms was carried, and in 1888 the principle was decisively endorsed by 66 votes to 5.

The legal regulation of hours was another plank of the advanced school. It was advocated at the 1878 Congress by Adam Weiler, an old member of the International, but not until 1883 was a motion carried in favour of legal regulation. The definite proposal for an Eight Hours Bill was not so well received, but it continued to win support throughout the 80's until finally, in 1887, the Parliamentary Committee was instructed to take a plebiscite of the movement. A second plebiscite was taken in 1888, the project winning

REAL WAGES MOVE UP RISE AND FALL IN REAL WAGES AND MONEY WAGES FROM 1850. (WAGES IN 1850 = 100.)



THE RISE AND FALL IN TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP FROM 1868.



RED LINE.—Membership of Trade Unions affiliated to the Trades Union Congress. From 1868 to 1894, inclusive, the figures for total membership were duplicated by the inclusion of Trades Councils.

GREEN LINE.—Registered Trade Union membership, Great Britain only. In the years before 1911 no deductions were made on account of Federations and Branches.

more votes each time. The final victory came in 1890, when a resolution for an Eight Hours Bill was adopted by 193 votes to 155.

In the international sphere, too, this was an important period. The Parliamentary Committee was dubious of the value of international congresses as then constituted and wished to ignore them, but in 1883, and again in 1886, it was required by the direct instructions of Congress to send delegates. In 1887, a resolution was carried for an international Congress to be held in London, and this was held in 1888.

Thus, all through the 80's the new ideas gathered strength and Congress took the decisive votes already mentioned in the years 1887-90. The great Dock Strike of 1889, which was such a triumph for the New Unionism of the "unskilled" and newly organised workers was the culminating point in the change. Not only did the years 1889-1890 signalise the revival of Trade Unionism, both for the old and for the new unions, but they marked what was perhaps the most important turning-point in Congress history—the definite repudiation of Manchester Liberalism and economic individualism, and the adoption of the Socialist philosophy. On that decision, Congress has never looked back. It was an inevitable development, and without it the entire working-class movement would have been stultified.

1890-1900.

The last decade of the century was important for Congress in many ways. Far-reaching changes in organisation were made in 1894-5, and after that year Congress became more definitely the Trade Unions' own organisation. In the early days of Congress, it is interesting to recall, a large part in the proceedings was played by outside friends of the movement. Lawyers and writers who had greatly helped the Trade Unions, in the difficult days of the 60's took a prominent part in the annual gatherings and papers were regularly read to Congress by one or more of them on various social and economic subjects. Gradually these outside persons were allowed to attend only as visitors, a custom that has ever since been adhered to, and the

last "outsider" to address Congress (except for one or two emergency occasions, as during the war) was Lord Rosebery, who delivered an address at the 1884 Congress on the "Federalism of Trade Unions."

In 1894, it was definitely decided that only Trade Unionists actually working at their trade, or officials of their unions, were eligible to serve as delegates. At the same time, Trades Councils were excluded from membership of Congress, on the ground that dual representation of the members was unnecessary, and finally the system of Card Voting, which has been the rule ever since, was adopted. These important changes in organisation helped greatly to consolidate Congress as the one representative body for the whole of the unions.

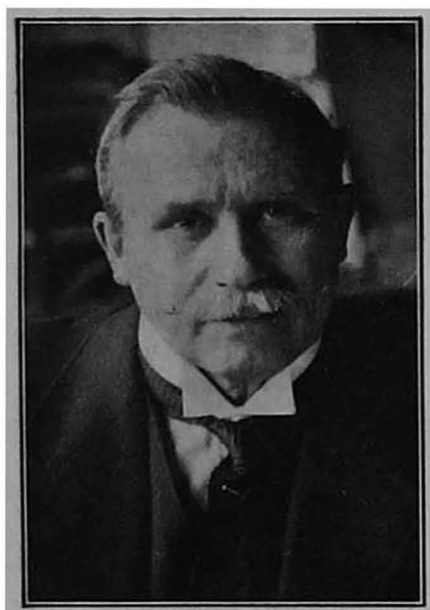
A general review is given on later pages of the important step taken in the '90's on the political field. It was then that Congress laid the foundations of the Labour Party. The movement within the Trade Unions for Labour representation was started by George Potter as far back as 1866, and in 1869 a paper was read at Congress on "Direct Labour Representation in Parliament."

In 1886, a Labour Electoral Committee was appointed by Congress, but this was too much under the influence of the Liberal Party, and it ceased to function in 1893.

In 1893, Congress voted for a special fund to support independent candidatures, and it decided to support only those who subscribed to the Socialist maxim, "Collective Ownership and Control of the Means of Production, Distribution, and Exchange." This was a big step forward, in theory, but actually no fund was set up.

Keir Hardie appealed for independent Labour representation in 1887, but without any immediate result being apparent. The propaganda was doing its work, however, and in 1898, the Chairman of the T.U.C. proposed in his Presidential address that a committee should be set up to draft a scheme of political organisation for the Trade Union world. In 1899, a resolution

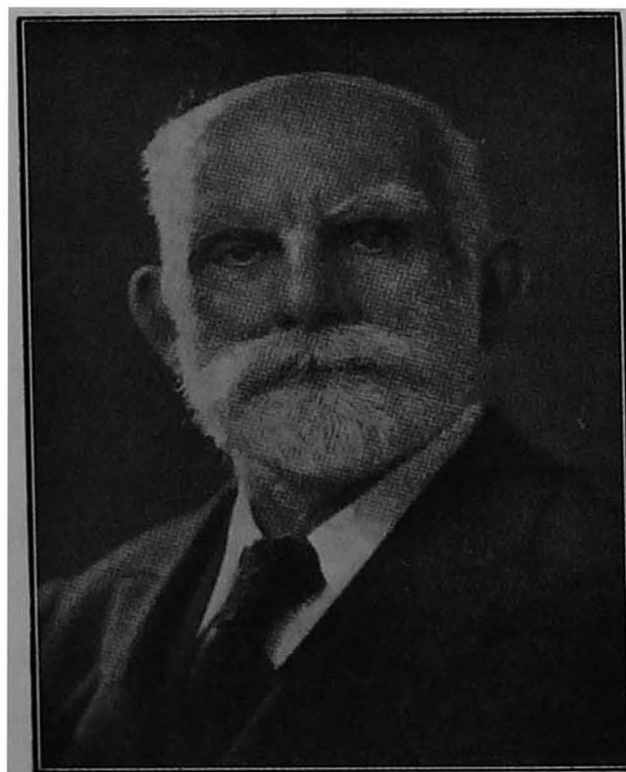
PIONEERS OF THE NEW UNIONISM



TOM MANN

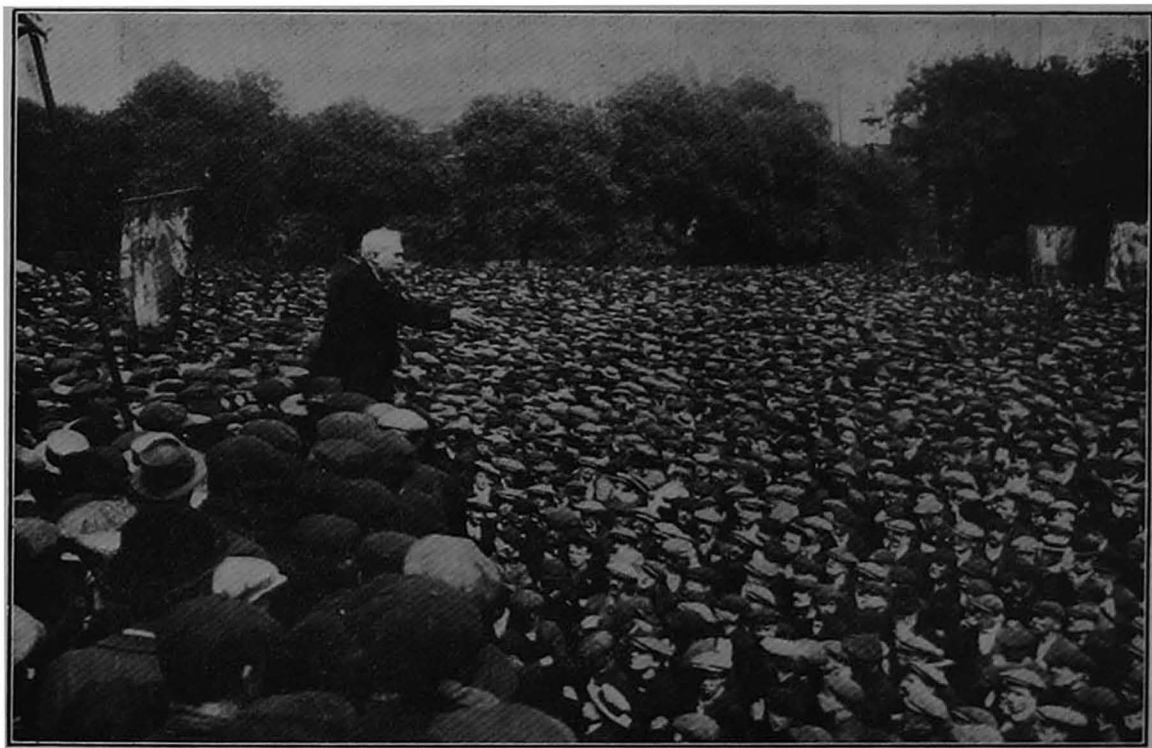


BEN TILLET

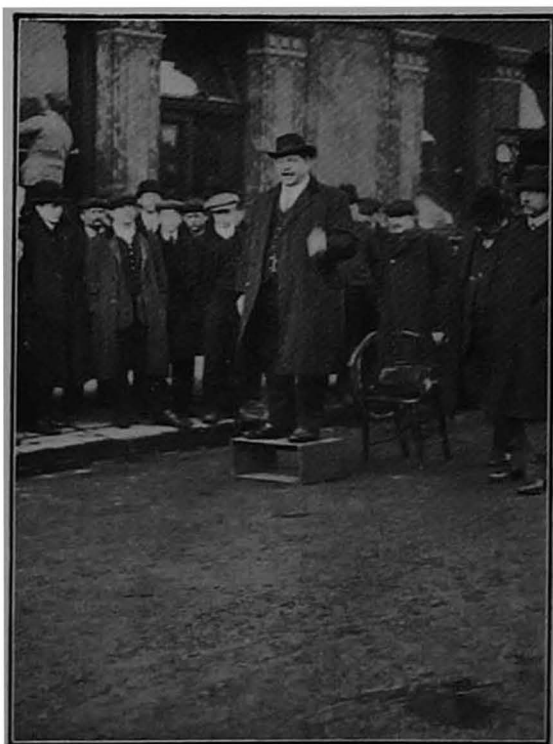


RT. HON. JOHN BURNS

BUILDING THE MOVEMENT



HARRY GOSLING ON TOWER HILL



WILL THORNE AND THE GAS WORKERS



BEN TILLET AND THE DOCKERS

was carried for a special Congress of unions and socialist organisations. The Parliamentary Committee nominated four members (one of whom, Mr. W. Thorne, M.P., is still a member of the General Council) to sit with two members nominated by the Independent Labour Party, two by the Fabian Society, and two by the Social Democratic Federation. Thus the Congress was held and the Labour Representation Committee, which evolved subsequently into the Labour Party, was set up.

At first, the relations between the Labour Representation Committee and Congress were somewhat ill-defined, but at the 1904 Congress, resolutions dealing with the Labour Representation Committee were ruled out of order on the ground that it was outside the jurisdiction of Congress. From that time the political wing of the movement was recognised to be an independent organisation. It was certainly a turning point in Congress history when it was decided to launch an independent political movement.

PRE-WAR.

Between 1900 and 1914, there were comparatively few very noteworthy developments, but the establishment by Congress and the Labour Party of the *Daily Citizen*, in 1912, is worth mention. The *Citizen* did not survive many years, it is true, but this was the first occasion on which the movement had taken the big step of launching a daily newspaper. A great and difficult undertaking at the best of times, it was, in 1912, an heroic achievement for the working-class organisations, then much weaker in every way than they are now. Harassed by legal difficulties, financially embarrassed, and at last a victim of the war, the *Citizen* deserves to be remembered as a pioneer venture. The story of the *Daily Herald* is told on another page.

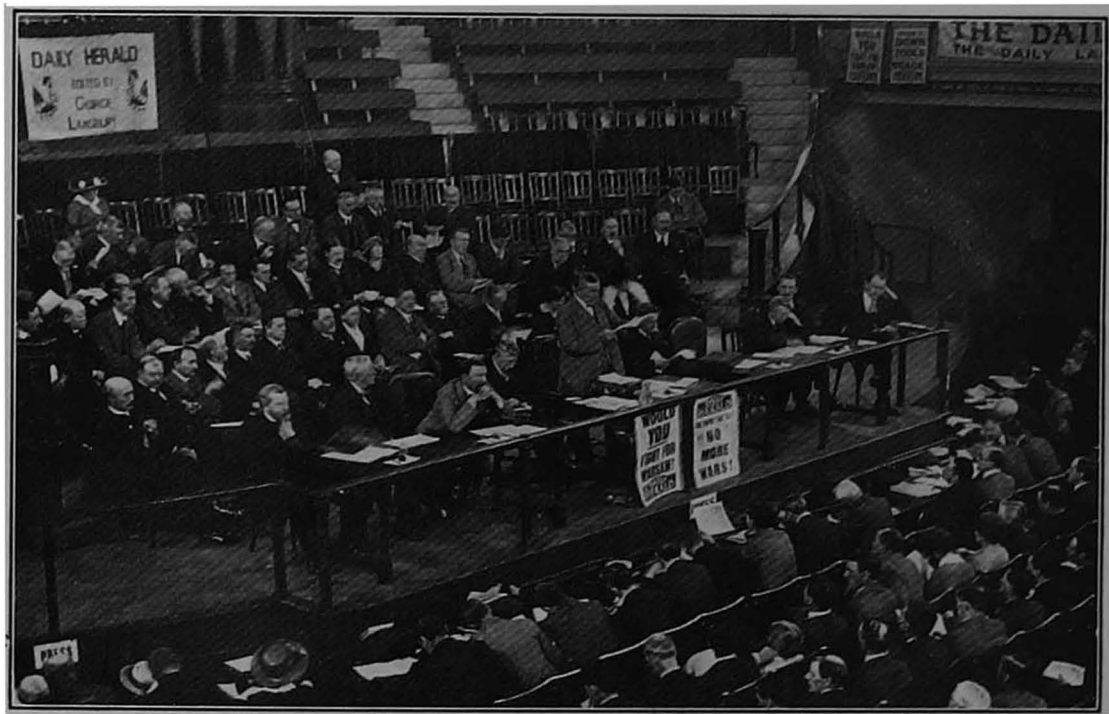
In 1913, too, Congress broke new ground when it intervened in the great Dublin strike. Though not in sympathy with the policy of some of those directing the strike the T.U.C. was so impressed by the plight of the thousands of Irish workers that several delegations were sent over to try to effect a settlement. All the efforts were unsuccessful,

but a more practical result was the despatch of shiploads of food for the strikers and their families. This was arranged by Congress through the Co-operative Wholesale Society, and it aroused the interest of the entire nation. A considerable sum was collected from the affiliated unions and sympathisers for this purpose. The action of Congress in this affair was more important than it may have seemed at the time, for it pointed the way to the use that Congress has increasingly made of its powers to intervene in large-scale industrial disputes for the purpose of mediation and assistance.

THE WAR PERIOD.

The turning-point in the War Period was when Congress decided to take part in the war-time administration of the nation. The decision was of immense importance for it implied a recognition of Congress, and the whole Trade Union Movement, as a higher level of authority and power than they had ever previously been regarded as possessing in the affairs of the nation. The circumstances arising from the war had their reflex in membership also. From an affiliated membership of 2,000,000 in 1913, Congress jumped up to 6,500,000 in 1920, and even the great slump of 1921 onwards left a membership which was double the pre-war record. In prestige and authority, even more than in numbers, the war marked a turning-point. At one time outlawed and despised, the T.U.C. now was universally regarded as a power in the land, consulted by Governments, given functions in the administration of the nation's business, and treated with respect by all. The war period set the seal on Trade Unionism as a public institution, serving the essential needs of millions of citizens, including the soldiers and sailors on active service and their dependants, through the War Emergency Workers' National Committee ~~on~~ an active campaign was set going to secure proper provision for their fighting men and their families, and it is of interest to record the fact that the first Pensions Minister (the Rt. Hon. G. N. Barnes) was a Trade Unionist, a former member of the T.U.C. Parliamentary Committee. For some time the permanent

COUNCIL OF ACTION



SPECIAL JOINT CONFERENCE, 1920

KEIR HARDIE SPEAKING



WOMEN'S DEMONSTRATION IN TRAFALGAR SQUARE

leadership of this great movement was in the balance. Congress did not appear to some to have equipped itself for the task, and other organisations appeared to challenge its authority and position.

POST-WAR.

Fortunately, the apparent differences were reconciled, and in 1921, Congress took one of the most important decisions in its history, when it ratified the scheme for a General Council and for adequate headquarters' administration. This step established Congress, beyond doubt or cavil, as *the* central organisation of the Trade Union Movement, able to speak for Trade Unionism as a whole on the large problems and questions of general interest that confront the workers to-day.

It was a logical development of this tendency that Congress should display greater activity in relation to national affairs. A brief reference is all that is possible here to outstanding events in which the General Council has played a prominent part.

COUNCIL OF ACTION, 1920.

In August, 1920, when it became evident that open war with Soviet Russia was likely to result from the policy pursued by the Allied Governments, the T.U.C. took prompt and decisive action in conjunction with the Labour Party to organise an effective public protest. At a joint meeting of the T.U.C. Parliamentary Committee (as it was then) the National Executive of the Labour Party and the Parliamentary Labour Party, a Council of Action was formed, consisting of five members from each of the three bodies. A national joint conference was also called, which endorsed the action of the three national bodies in forming the Council of Action, and authorised it to "call for any and every form of withdrawal of labour which circumstances may require," in giving effect to the policy of the organised movement in resistance to war on Russia. The joint conference further recommended the T.U.C. Parliamentary Committee to raise a special fund to meet the financial requirements of the Council of Action, by means of a levy of $\frac{1}{4}$ d.

per member on the affiliated membership of Congress. In the report of the Parliamentary Committee to the Cardiff Congress in the following year it was stated that 112 of the affiliated societies had paid a sum totalling just over £9,300 in accordance with this recommendation.

STANDING ORDER NO. 11.

The Standing Orders of Congress defining the powers and duties of its elected council remained materially unchanged during the existence of the Parliamentary Committee, except for the decision which restricted representation at Congress to delegates from the affiliated unions who were either full-time officers of their organisations or actually working at their trade. But after the creation of the General Council, important changes were made in the Standing Orders. The most significant of these was the formulation of Standing Order No. 11, adopted at the Hull Congress of 1924, under which the obligation was definitely imposed upon the unions of keeping the General Council informed on industrial disputes, especially those which were likely to involve large bodies of workers. Power was given to the General Council to intervene in a dispute where the ordinary machinery of negotiation had failed to produce a settlement, or where standards of wages, hours, or conditions of employment were imperilled; and the General Council, in such cases might take the initiative in calling the unions concerned into consultation and in using its influence to effect a just settlement. Where there was a prospect of the unions themselves settling the dispute, the Standing Order No. 11 did not contemplate intervention by the General Council unless its assistance was specifically invited by the unions concerned; but in cases where the General Council acted and where, despite the effort to settle a dispute, a stoppage of work was enforced by the policy of the employers, the Council was instructed to organise all such material and moral support for the unions as the circumstances of the case required. It was in pursuance of this Standing Order that the General Council intervened in the mining crisis which culminated in the National Strike of 1926.

THE NATIONAL STRIKE, 1926



OUTSIDE THE T.U.C. HEADQUARTERS



SCENE AT BLACKFRIARS ROAD

THE NATIONAL STRIKE, 1926



AWAITING NEWS AT DOWNING STREET



FOOD CONVOYS IN THE CITY.

NATIONAL STRIKE, 1926.

No event in its history has been fraught with more momentous consequences than the decision of the T.U.C. to engage in a National Strike of some of the basic industries of the country. It was the culmination of a period of increasing power for the T.U.C. and of increasing economic difficulty for the coal industry. In the Summer of 1925, it seemed that Congress, in its conduct of the miners' case, had won a signal victory by its solidarity, for the withdrawal of notices and the grant of a nine months' subsidy were a direct result of the firm attitude taken up by the T.U.C. in its determination to assist the miners.

In 1926, the whole world was impressed and sobered by the heroic effort made by Congress to bring about a final settlement of the coal industry's long suffering. Over 2,700,000 of workers were engaged and not less than many millions of money spent from the accumulated funds of the unions in that eventful period of 1926. The National Strike did not accomplish that, but it was a great and memorable event in T.U.C. history because of the unexampled solidarity it revealed among the workers, and the moral power there proved to be in a dignified, orderly stoppage of work of such magnitude.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE MINERS' BALLOT, 1928.

A unique incident in the history of Congress was the intervention of the General Council in the dispute in the Nottinghamshire coalfield in 1928. Intervention took the form, for the first time in the existence of Congress, of a referendum of the mine-workers of an entire coalfield on the question whether they wished to be represented in negotiations with the employers by their own old-established Association or a new "breakaway" union. Arising out of the 1926 dispute in the mining industry, a five-year agreement had been made in the Nottinghamshire coalfield between the coalowners and a new organisation of the "company union" species, claiming to be a "non-political" miners' union; and the T.U.C. General Council was informed that the Nottinghamshire coalowners declined to recognise any other Trade Union than the one with which this agreement had

been made. Negotiations were then set going which elicited from the Nottinghamshire coalowners a declaration to the effect that whilst they could not recognise any other organisation than the one with which they were dealing, their Association made no inquiry or discrimination with regard to a man's employment as to his membership of any Trade Union. On the basis of this declaration, the General Council undertook an extensive campaign in the Nottinghamshire coalfield, giving publicity to the employers' statement and inviting the mineworkers to declare by ballot to which union they wished to adhere. The ballot was carefully organised by the T.U.C. representatives, resulting in a total poll of 32,277 in favour of the old-established Nottinghamshire Miners' Association, against no more than 2,533 votes for the new organisation; nearly 82 per cent. of the ballotable mineworkers took part in the voting, and the actual result of the poll was a vote of 92 per cent. in favour of the old Association.

THE PRESENT.

The present year (1928) may also see a turning-point in Congress history. In fact, whatever the decision may be on the new prospects opened up by the Joint Interim Report of the Industrial Conferences that have been taking place, a step will have been taken which, for good or ill, may vitally affect the fortunes not only of Congress but of the entire working class. Vital decisions have been crowded in upon Congress in recent years, but if those to come are made in the same spirit of soberness and responsibility that has been displayed in the past, no fears need be felt for the ultimate triumph of the movement.

TOWARDS UNITY.

Not less remarkable than the significant expansion of Trade Unionism during the last 60 years has been the steadily growing tendency among the Trade Unions to consolidate their organisation and to concentrate their resources. In its early stages Trade Union organisation took the form, in the main, of small localised trade societies and craft unions. Much later came the large-scale organisations of semi-skilled and general workers,

NOTTS. MINERS' BALLOT, 1928



SENDING OFF BALLOT BOXES



COUNTING THE VOTES

NOTTS. MINERS' BALLOT, 1928



TAKING THE BALLOT



THE PROPAGANDA VAN

and the creation of industrial unions. At different times in the history of Congress unions have multiplied very rapidly—faster indeed than the process by which local unions were being absorbed into organisations of national scope. Thus, in 1896, the records show no less than 1,358 unions, with an aggregate membership of just over 1,500,000, an average of about 1,000 members per union.

To-day the situation is very different in this respect. From 1896 to 1916 there was a steady diminution in the number of unions, although the number of Trade Unionists had risen to over 4,000,000. Between 1916 and 1920 the number of unions showed a slight increase, but there was again a decline in the number of unions in the post-war years of trade depression which also reduced Trade Union membership so heavily. This decline, however, is not wholly to be attributed to the winding up of new unions which sprang into existence in the boom years; it is in a still larger measure the outcome of the tendency towards amalgamation which from 1912 onwards has been so noticeable a feature of Trade Union policy and organisation. Between 1912 and 1926 no fewer than 150 registered unions have been concerned with successful amalgamation negotiations, the number of unions combining to form one organisation varying from two to 15.

A brief summary of the most important amalgamations will serve to indicate the nature of the change that has taken place.

SOME AMALGAMATIONS.

In 1913, a fusion was brought about between the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, the United Pointsmen's and Signalmen's Society, and the General Railway Workers' Union. The new organisation was registered as the National Union of Railwaymen.

Probably the most remarkable series of amalgamations is that which has resulted in the present scope of the Transport and General Workers' Union. In addition to the complete amalgamation of some 22 organisations, the Union has a form of amalgamation with four other unions. In these four cases the unions have not relinquished their autonomy,

and the arrangement is in the form of amalgamation for financial and economic purposes.

An amalgamation which was facilitated by the association of unions in the Engineering and Shipbuilding Federation is that of 10 unions, forming the Amalgamated Engineering Union.

Amalgamation has been achieved by no more unique and effective method than that adopted by the unions in the heavy Iron and Steel Industry which combined to form the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation.

Large-scale organisations came into existence also in the building trades, the wood-working trades, the Post Office, the distributive trades, and among the general workers. These developments were facilitated by the Trade Union Amalgamation Act of 1917. Although there are over 1,000 unions maintaining a separate and distinct existence in this country, and only a little over 200 of them are affiliated to the Trades Union Congress, the solidarity and strength of the Trade Union Movement is much greater than these figures suggest: fully 80 per cent. of the total number of Trade Unionists in the country are in the unions affiliated to Congress and the non-affiliated unions are mostly small local bodies whose average membership is counted by scores or hundreds as against the scores and hundreds of thousands in the great affiliated unions.

THE GENERAL COUNCIL'S POLICY.

Efforts on a large scale were made by the General Council in 1923, with a view to promoting amalgamation negotiations in the Metal, Textile, and Printing Trades, amongst unions of Post Office workers and organisations catering for Insurance workers.

In the last two years, the General Council have acted as convenors of conferences in the Building, Furnishing, Leather, Distributive and Metal Trades.

These efforts demonstrated the difficulties to be encountered in amalgamation negotiations and whilst the desired results were not obtained, it is gratifying to know that the building trades have now approved the principle of amalgamation, the

two principal unions in the distributive trades are to renew negotiations on the basis drawn up at conferences under the auspices of the General Council, and in other directions there are attempts being made to consolidate the forces of unions which are industrially related.

INQUIRY INTO ORGANISATION BY INDUSTRY.

A resolution was passed at Hull in 1924 in regard to Trade Union organisation. It read as follows :—

This Congress declares :—

"(a) That the time has arrived when the number of Trade Unions should be reduced to an absolute minimum.

"(b) That the aim should be as far as possible, organisation by industry with every worker a member of the appropriate organisation.

"(c) That it is essential that a united front be formed for improving the standards of life of the workers.

"(d) And accordingly instructs the General Council to draw up—

" 1. A scheme for organisation by industry; and

" 2. A scheme which may secure unity of action, without the definite merging of existing unions by a scientific linking up of same to present a united front."

The report which was made to Congress in 1927 in accordance with this resolution dealt with the general principles of amalgamation and other forms of closer working between unions, and formed an important contribution to the discussion of "organisation by industry."

After relating the various efforts which have been made to further amalgamation in the various industry, the report pointed out that however desirous the General Council may be to achieve amalgamation amongst its constituent organisations, "the real driving force must come from the unions themselves, and no efforts which the Council may make can accomplish its object if they are met in a reluctant spirit. It is not sufficient for unions to give general acquiescence to the principle of amalgamation and then break down on the practical details."

The summary of the report in question read as follows :—

AMALGAMATION AND JOINT WORKING.

(a) The General Council is of the opinion that greater co-ordination in the forces of the movement is essential; that changes which have taken place, and which are constantly developing in industry

make it necessary for the Trade Union Movement to adopt the greatest possible measure of co-ordination; and that the most effective way is by unions with closely related trade interests to seek amalgamation.

(b) The General Council considers the task of submitting any general scheme for amalgamation to be impracticable on account of the fact that the problems confronting the various organisations differ in character. In the foregoing report, however, suggestions are offered as to methods of overcoming some of the difficulties which usually arise.

(c) The advisability of grouping affiliated unions to provide a basis for amalgamation has been considered, but that course was found to be impracticable, owing to the difficulty of defining industrial boundaries. Further, it was felt that amalgamation is more likely to be achieved where the driving force comes from within a group of unions rather than by any theoretical grouping.

(d) Pending amalgamation, the General Council considers that unions with closely related industrial interests should enter into joint working arrangements on all industrial matters, with a view to joint negotiations on questions of rates of pay and working conditions, and also the elimination of competition for members and consequent overlapping.

The General Council, therefore, recommends that each affiliated union should consider its attitude towards greater consolidation and declare to the General Council in writing :—

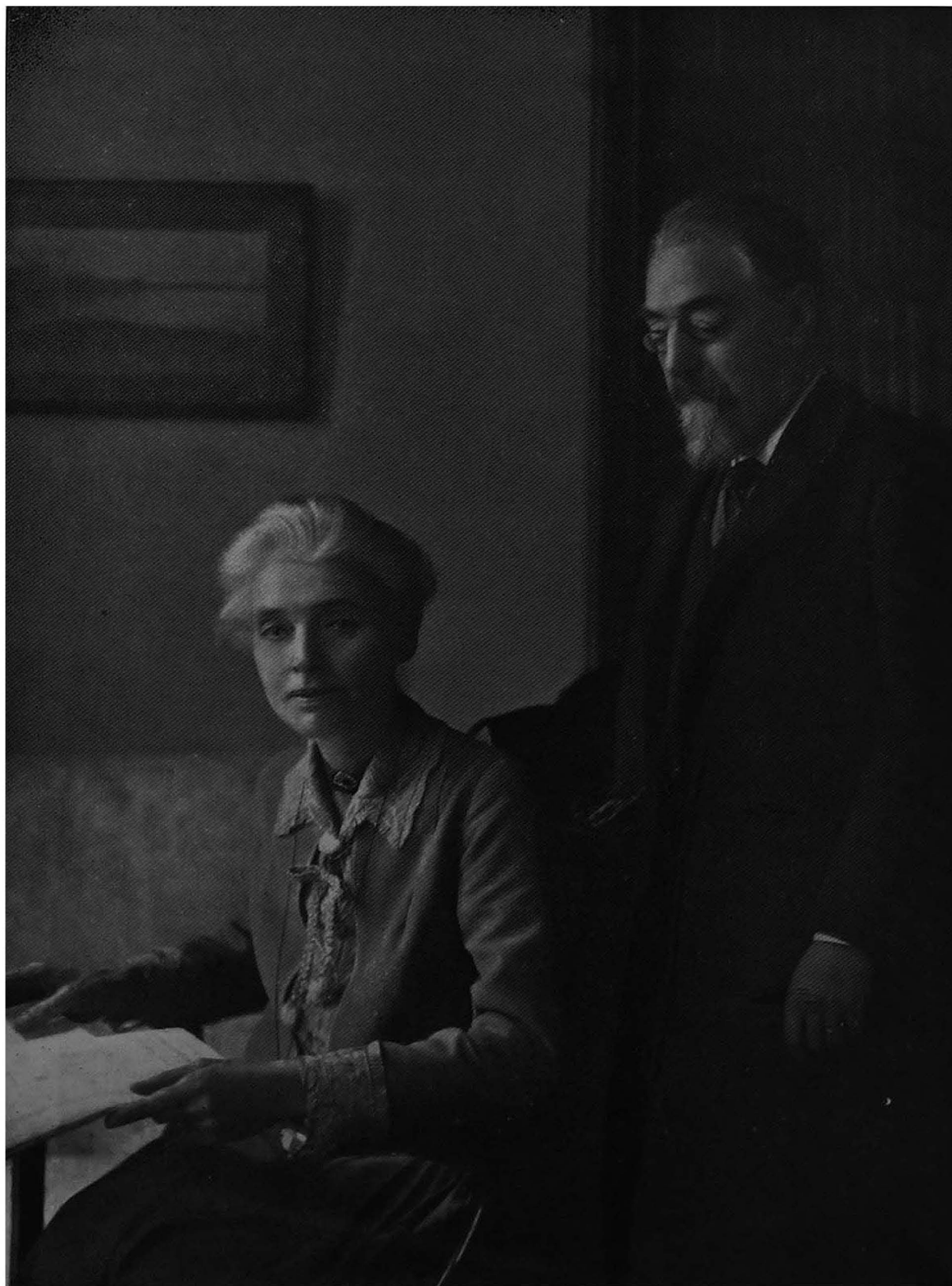
(i.) Whether it is prepared to participate in amalgamation negotiations with other unions.

(ii.) The extent to which it is prepared to agree to joint working arrangements with other unions.

(iii.) With which unions, in its opinion, is there the greatest possibility of progress being made in negotiations on either or both of the above questions.

The next few years will see considerable changes in Trade Union structure. It is not safe to say that any particular theory of Trade Union organisation will determine the form of progress. There is a continually increasing demand in the Trade Unions for greater co-ordination. If the Trade Union Movement is not perfectly logical it is intensely practical—paradoxical as that may seem: and in the gradual transformation to meet this requirement unions will be guided by practical possibilities rather than any set theories.

THE HISTORIANS OF TRADE UNIONISM



RT. HON. SIDNEY WEBB, M.P., AND MRS. WEBB

Congress and Legislation

By SIDNEY WEBB, M.P.



It is not easy, in 1928, to realise how little opportunity there was in 1868 for the British wage-earners to bring effectively to the minds of Ministers and Government Departments even the most serious of their grievances or the most urgent of their needs. There was, of course, no workman in Parliament, a body then composed exclusively of property owners, employers, and lawyers. There was no organisation that even claimed to speak for Labour. By the Reform Act of 1867, the Parliamentary Franchise had just been brought within reach of some of the better-paid wage-earners having durable residences in those parts of the Kingdom that happened to be within the boundaries of any Parliamentary Borough; but even here the complications and imperfections of the electoral registration long deprived most of them of a vote. No daily newspaper deigned to concern itself with industrial grievances. When, in April, 1868, the Manchester and Salford Trades Council invited the "Trades Councils, Federation of Trades, and Trade Societies generally" to send representatives to a Congress to discuss "the various subjects which at the present time affect the Trade Societies," they were, for the first time, equipping the British wage-earning class with a vocational organisation of national scope, which could not fail to have its effect on the legislative and executive government of the country. Those who to-day think the political activities of Trade Unionism a pernicious innovation of the present century may be reminded that it was the second Trades Union Congress in 1869 that appointed a Parliamentary Committee, and expressly directed it to promote legislation and to interview Cabinet Ministers.

But the political effect of the new organisation of labour was not at first manifest; and there were—as there always are—impatient workmen who declared that the Trades Union Congress and its Parliamentary Committee were useless and powerless.

Not for three years could even the faintest traces of impression on the Cabinet or the House of Commons be claimed. The Bill of the Liberal Government of 1871 for the legalisation of Trade Unions included clauses which went far to make any action by Trade Unions a criminal offence. The Trades Union Congress was hurriedly summoned to meet in London in March, 1871. Its members spent the afternoons and evenings swarming in the Outer Lobby of the House of Commons, and indignantly pressing their claims on the legislators for their several constituencies. In spite of all efforts, however, the Congress obtained only an illusory concession which is so characteristic of official trickery as to deserve record. The Cabinet determined not to abandon the obnoxious clauses. All that Ministers would do for the Trades Union Congress of 1871 was to omit these clauses from the Trade Union Bill itself; and, in spite of all protests, to enact them as a separate statute (the Criminal Law Amendment Act). No wonder that delegates to the very next Congress (1872), urged Trade Unions to allocate part of their funds to secure direct Labour representation on local bodies and in Parliament!

It was, however, not with defensive action alone that the Congress concerned itself. The first three Congresses (1868, 1869, and 1871), asked for legislation on nearly all the political issues that the House of Commons found itself driven to deal with in the course of the ensuing generation. From additional Factory and Mines regulation and inspection of novel kinds to universal compensation for industrial accidents; from the prohibition of child labour and the limitation of apprentices, to primary and technical education for all; from the law as to strikes and lock-outs to industrial conciliation and arbitration; from the provision of work for the unemployed in the reclamation of waste land, to the substantial assistance of their emigration; from the prevention of war and the abolition of standing armies to "the international fraternisation of labour"; from "prison-made goods" to the Truck System; from punishment of the criminal negligence that caused a shameful loss of life at sea to the enforcement by law of a weekly payment of wages; from

the unfair incidence of the taxes on food to the reform of the rating system ; from the hours of labour of shop assistants to the assimilation of the Parliamentary franchise in counties and boroughs so that every adult workman should have a vote—all these subjects, with others, are to be found in the records of the first three Congresses and the Parliamentary Committees which they annually appointed ; that is to say, before such subjects were seriously considered (and for the most part before they were even mentioned) in the House of Commons.

It is less than the truth to say that this attempted intervention of the Trade Unionists in public affairs, even in matters that directly affected the wage-earners' life, was welcomed in the House of Commons neither by Ministers nor by ex-Ministers ; and least of all by the governing class generally. On the contrary, the workmen's pretensions were almost universally ridiculed and denounced. As on subsequent occasions, the forward political movement of the Trade Unions of 1868—71 was followed by exceptional judicial repression. The sentence of twelve months' imprisonment on the London gas-workers in December, 1872, for a projected strike, and the equally vindictive punishment of the cabinet-makers employed by Jackson and Graham in 1875, thoroughly aroused the Trade Unions. The workmen's first rejoinder was to run a dozen independent candidates at the 1874 Parliamentary election (including most of the leaders of the Trades Union Congress) irrespective of the convenience of Liberal or Conservative. One of these Trade Union candidates, it may be recalled, found his Parliamentary candidature met by a trumped-up indictment (abandoned after the election) for the crime of conspiracy in connection with a local dispute. He nevertheless polled nearly 5,000 votes. In two cases only did the Liberal Party allow the Labour candidate a clear run. At Morpeth and Stoke, the Liberals accepted what they could not prevent, with the result that Thomas Burt (a delegate to the 1869 Congress), and Alexander Macdonald (Chairman of the Congress in 1872 and 1873, and Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee for 1872—3), with the support of the Miners' Trade Unions, became the first Labour members.

It was undoubtedly the electoral demonstration made by the Trades Union Congress, and its Parliamentary Committee at the General Election of 1874, that first compelled the Liberal and Conservative leaders to listen to the workmen's requests. The Conservative Government, which took office in 1874, simply repealed the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1871, to which the Trade Unionists had objected as strongly as they have since done to the Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Act of 1927; and also repealed the Master and Servant Acts under which so many cruel injustices had been committed. These laws were replaced by the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act and the Employers and Workmen Act, which (though subsequent experience showed that this legislation was not all that was required) represented, as George Odger told the 1876 Congress, "the greatest boon ever given to the sons of toil" down to that date. Scarcely less dramatic was the carrying into law by the Conservative Government in 1875, of the Factories (Health of Women, etc.) Bill, which gave the cotton operatives—if not the Nine Hours Day for which the Congress had been asking—at least a 56½-hour week in practically all the Lancashire cotton mills. The legislation of 1875 was definitely a triumph for the Trades Union Congress and its Parliamentary Committee.

No such dramatic success could be claimed for the next five years, during which the Conservative Government ignored the workmen's requests as completely as the preceding Liberal Government had done. Trade became more and more depressed, and unemployment increased. The two workmen in Parliament earned the respect of the House but got scant attention for their demands. The Conservative Government was secure in its knowledge that whichever of the proposals of the Trades Union Congress were brought forward in Parliament—whether compensation for accidents or the protection of the seafaring population from loss of life, the prevention of sweating or the prohibition of "truck"—the Conservative majority would always be reinforced by the leading capitalist employers on the Liberal benches. In 1877, it could be seriously recorded as a gain that "one Congress question" had been "settled by legislation :

this was the Justices' Clerks' Act, by which fees were abolished and salaries substituted." The Factory Act of 1878 did little more than consolidate previous legislation. This ill-success led the Congress, on the approach of the General Election in 1880, to issue a definite programme of reforms, which were to be pressed on all candidates. Henry Broadhurst at last secured election for Stoke-on-Trent; but other Labour candidates were unsuccessful, though there can be no doubt that the Trade Union vote went, for the most part, against the Conservative Government.

The new Parliament so far responded to the pressure for a measure compelling employers to pay compensation for industrial accidents as to pass into law, in 1880, the first Employers' Liability Act, which—bitterly resisted by most of the employers in both Houses—fell far short of the workmen's demands, and, in fact, left the majority of accidents in most industries outside its scope. The three Labour Members then in Parliament found the way to industrial or economic reform at least as rigidly blocked in the Liberal Parliament of 1880—5 as it had been in the Conservative Parliament of 1874—80. Alexander Macdonald died in 1881, and no by-election sent a Congress member to reinforce Burt and Broadhurst in their exposition of the workmen's claims. In 1882, the practice was adopted of going on deputation to the Ministers to present the Congress resolutions; but this method of approach seemed to have no greater success than Parliamentary action.

It was plainly time that Labour Members entered Parliament in force. At the General Election of 1885, with the acquiescence of the Liberal Party, no fewer than ten of the leading delegates to Congress, most of them members of the Parliamentary Committee, were sent to the House of Commons—all of them, it must be said, as loyal supporters of Gladstone. But the quarrels over the Irish Question disrupted the Liberal Party, and for the next six years the country was governed by a Conservative majority, out of which the Congress extracted practically nothing, unless we can recognise as the result of its pressure the very moderate improvements embodied in the Miners'

Regulation Act of 1887. The brief Liberal administration of 1892-5, with an exiguous majority, produced some useful measures, but not those which the Congress had been demanding. An attempt in 1893 to amend the Employers' Liability Act of 1880, was wrecked by the revolt of Liberal capitalist members in both Houses. Not until Joseph Chamberlain joined the Conservative Government in 1895 was this long-standing grievance effectively dealt with; and the Workmen's Compensation Act—which embodied on this subject a large part of the persistent demand of the Congress for 28 long years—was passed into law in 1897.

Little further progress could be reported to the Congresses of the ensuing years. At last, in 1899, the "pot boiled over." The patience of the delegates became exhausted. It became at last plain that neither resolutions nor demonstrations, neither deputations to Ministers nor Bills introduced into Parliament by a handful of workmen as Members of the Liberal Party, had any appreciable effect on the legislation that only a Government could carry into law. After a whole decade of propaganda, within Congress and without, of which Keir Hardie was the chief prophet, the Congress carried a resolution directing the summoning of a special national conference, representing, in addition to the Trade Unions, also the Co-operative Societies, and the various Socialist organisations, with the express object of increasing the number of Labour Members who would pursue an independent policy in the House of Commons. The Parliamentary Committee entrusted this task to a "Labour Representation Committee" consisting of four of its own members; two from the Socialist society (formed in 1893 under the title of the Independent Labour Party); and two each from the Fabian Society and the Social Democratic Federation. It was the Trades Union Congress itself, which, in 1904, decided, on the recommendation of its General Purposes Committee, that the "Labour Representation Committee" thus established—from 1906 styled the Labour Party—with its separate affiliations and an annual conference of its own, was an organisation independent of the Trades Union Congress; and, that the latter could neither alter its constitution nor reverse its decision.

However discontented the Congress may have been in 1899, at the slowness of the advance of Labour to political influence, those delegates whose memories went back to 1868 realised how great had been the progress in the preceding 30 years. To-day, we habitually forget how great were the obstacles with which the Parliamentary Committees of those years had to contend. We forget even how much they had achieved. Compensation for accidents had been won; the inspection and regulation of mines, factories, workshops and ships had been steadily improved; Trade Unions had acquired what then seemed a secure legal position; nearly every adult workman could obtain both a Parliamentary and a Municipal vote; some of them were Justices of the Peace, and others were at last entering the Town and County Councils. But the pace had been terribly slow, and the gains had always been partial and imperfect. The annual meeting of the Trades Union Congress, and the constant pressure of the Parliamentary Committee on Parliament and Ministers, had their effect. But this pressure needed a spearhead, which was exactly what was supplied by the decision of the Congress of 1899. The consequent reorganisation of the whole machinery, with its division of spheres between the "Industrial Organ" (the Trades Union Congress) and the "Political Organ" (the Labour Party)—with the affiliated Trade Unions supplying the force to each of them, and the two kept in constant communication by Joint Committees and combined meetings—has at any rate resulted in a quickened pace and a wider range of reforms in the second 30 years. These we may deal with more summarily.

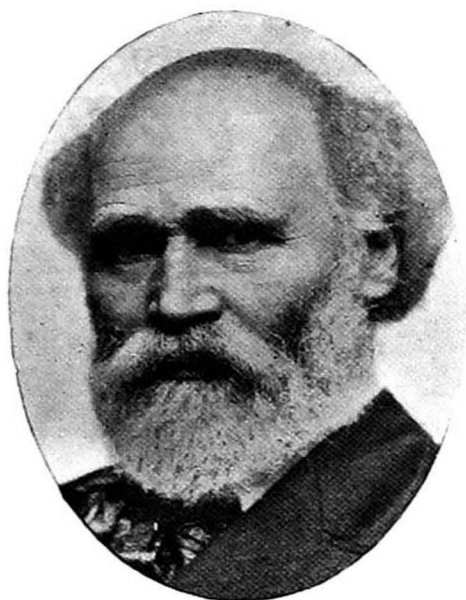
The return of three Labour Members in 1902-4, to join Keir Hardie as a new Party, had been promptly followed by a new departure in the public provision for the unemployed; by the enactment in 1905 of the Unemployed Workmen Act; and by the appointment of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and the Unemployment, to which, on the insistence of the Parliamentary Committee, a Trade Union Secretary was presently added. It needed only the mandate of the industrial constituencies to give the Movement its impetus.

At the General Election of 1906, no fewer than 29 Labour Members were returned as an independent Party in the House of Commons; besides a dozen more, principally miners, who continued to rank as members of the Liberal Party, and who, after a few years, joined the new Party. At once the tone of the House changed. Mr. Henderson (who had been in 1903 the first Labour Member elected in a three-cornered contest) has recently reminded us that "the provision of Old Age Pensions out of State funds; the provision of meals for school children; the payment of Trade Union rates to all Government employees; the prevention of eviction of workmen on strike; the Taxation of Land Values; and the political enfranchisement of women were among the subjects covered by Labour motions and Bills in the First Session of the 1906 Parliament." Social reforms then came thick and fast.

The new Parliament in its very first Session emphatically reversed the Taff Vale Judgment by the Trade Disputes Act of 1906. Meals for children found hungry at school were authorised by the Education (Provision of Meals) Act in the same year. In 1907, the social work of the Education Authorities was further extended by the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act. In 1908, came the Employment Exchanges, and the Old Age Pensions Act. When, in 1910, the Court of Appeal sought to hamstring the workmen's politics by the Osborne Judgment, the Government first conceded (in 1911) the Payment of Members of Parliament; and then (in 1913) removed, by the Trade Union Act of that year, the invidious restriction of Trade Union liberty. In no previous seven years had the Trade Union Movement so great and so varied an influence on legislation and administration as it enjoyed through its joint industrial and political organisation between 1906 and 1913.

Then came the immeasurable calamity of the Great War, with its colossal destruction of men and capital, and its equally disastrous dislocation of productive organisation. Without reciting all the efforts and emergencies of the years 1914-20, we may note that—largely through the work of the Trades Union Congress, the Parliamentary Committee, the Labour

PIONEERS IN PARLIAMENT, 1900-1906



J. KEIR HARDIE



WILL CROOKS



Sir DAVID SHACKLETON



Rt. Hon. ARTHUR HENDERSON, M.P.

LABOUR IN PARLIAMENT



THE FIRST PARLIAMENTARY LABOUR PARTY IN 1906



THE LABOUR PARTY IN PARLIAMENT IN THE YEAR OF THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT, 1924

Party, the representatives of the Co-operative Movement, and the Labour Members, usefully co-ordinated as they were in the War Emergency Workers' National Committee—the Government and the House of Commons found themselves driven to all sorts of expedients for protecting the standard of life of the civilian population. In no previous great war have the wage-earners and their families suffered so little financial hardship whilst the war lasted as in Great Britain between 1914 and 1920. The same years saw the immense extension of the Parliamentary franchise not only to practically every man, but also to women over 30—a measure for which the Trade Union representatives in the Government were, personally and directly, more responsible than is publicly known—the Redistribution of Seats, which greatly increased the representation of the industrial areas; the establishment of the Ministry of Labour; the extension of Unemployment Insurance from one-fifth to three-fourths of all the wage-earners, and much else that the Trades Union Congress had been asking for.

But the short spurt of good trade in 1919–20 was followed by the prolonged slump that set in during 1921, and is not yet over—a slump comparable only with the bad times of 1841 and 1879, each of which shook contemporary Trade Unionism to its foundation. In face of the Unemployment of 1921–8, and of the general reductions of wages on which the employers in every industry have insisted, all the energy and assiduity of the General Council, and of the Congress itself, have, so far, not availed to prevent the political and economic retrogression registered in the serious decline in Trade Union membership and in the passing of the Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Act of 1927. Yet it is worth something that, amid the general fall in money wages, no less than £300,000,000 a year are now being provided, over and above wages, for the children, the sick, the disabled, the aged, and the unemployed in the wage-earners' families—practically all gained during the past 30 years as a result of the increased political power which the organisation of the Trade Unions has given to the wage-earning class.

Changes in Legal Status

By SIR HENRY SLESSER, K.C., M.P.

IT is customary in souvenirs of this kind to encourage ourselves by recounting a consistent progress in the achievement of our ideals; but whatever accession of strength and power may have come to Labour generally during the period which we celebrate, it would be altogether misleading to suggest that the emancipation of Trade Unionism from legal restriction reveals any such unbroken development.

In 1927, there was passed through Parliament the notorious Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Act, and now that the immediate dust of the conflict has passed away we are the better able to appreciate the great set-back which that Act has caused to the lawful freedom of industrial combination and action.

For hundreds of years, ever since the disappearance of serfdom, the law of this country has enabled employers and employed alike by giving notice under their contracts to terminate their engagements the one with the other. Such a right was not seriously interfered with even by the Combination Act of 1800—for that Act dealt only with combinations for altering conditions of labour by preventing any person employing whom he would or preventing workmen hiring themselves or inducing them to leave their work; it did not extend, as does the Act of 1927, to an interference with the right of workers to give notice in combination of the cessation of their contract of service. The right to cease labour has always been a part of the basis of our notion of a free people and this Act, by making it illegal for workmen to leave employment even after giving notice, imposes a servitude upon the worker worse, at any rate in theory, than any which has existed since the advent of the Trades Union Congress. May I be allowed to quote a passage from my speech in the House of Commons on the Second Reading of the Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Bill on this point?

" This Bill," I said, " makes it illegal for any workman
 " to leave his employment even after giving notice that he
 " wishes to leave it. That means that we are reducing these
 " people to a state of servitude. If a man is not free to leave
 " his employment if and when he will, he is a serf, and this Bill
 " with all the smooth phrases and irrelevant remarks about
 " general strikes and the like, in every case where a strike can
 " become illegal, after notice is given, reduces every man to
 " compulsory labour. What is to be the legal position of a
 " man after his notice has expired? He is working on a week's
 " notice. He gives notice that he is about to leave his
 " employment. The week's notice expires. All the other
 " workers in his industry have given notice, and it is an illegal
 " strike within the meaning of this Bill. What is the position?
 " He cannot leave. The contract has come to an end. If
 " one were to cast about for some definition of the position
 " of a man who is thus tied to an employer, one might say he
 " was *adscriptus labori*, tied to his task. The man has told his
 " employer he no longer wishes to work for him, but he must,
 " in spite of the fact that the contract has come to an end.
 " I say again, the position of that man is that of a serf; his
 " legal position that of statutory servitude.

" The definition in the Bill extends not only to persons
 " who have refused to continue their employment, but even to
 " persons who refuse to accept employment. So that not only
 " is the unfortunate man compelled to go on working for the
 " employer when wishing to leave him, but he becomes a
 " criminal if he assists others to refuse to accept employment
 " under this Measure.

" Anyone who 'furthers' such refusal may commit a
 " criminal offence. What does that mean? If a little fund is
 " got up to help the wives and dependents of those people who
 " refuse to work, who is to say whether subscribers are not
 " furthering the strike? There are Hon. Members opposite
 " who, I am very glad to say, were sufficiently generous to
 " subscribe to the fund for assisting the wives and children of
 " the locked-out miners during the recent dispute. They were

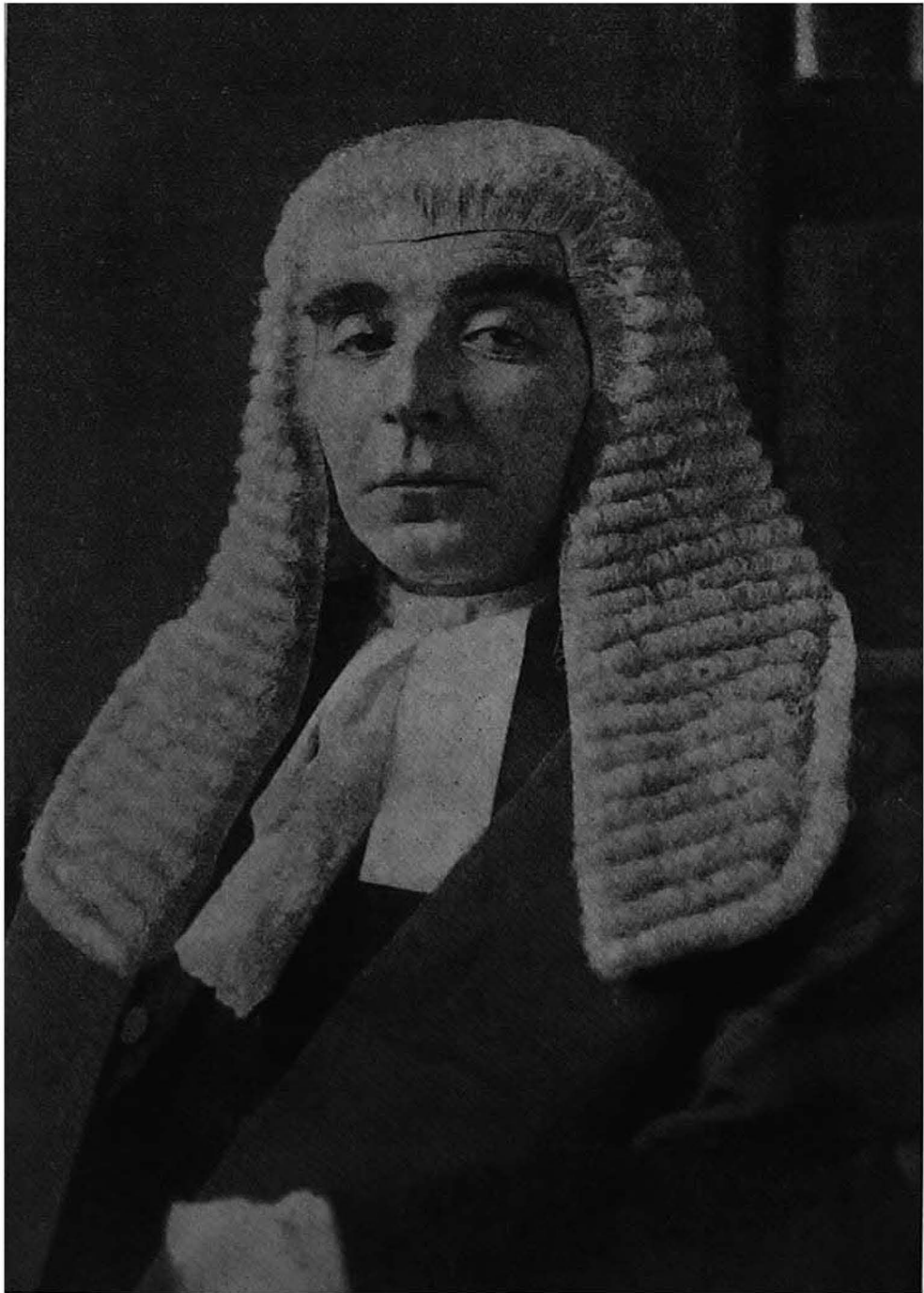
"all furthering the dispute. I am told that a very exalted person, the Prince of Wales himself, contributed. He was furthering the dispute. How could a person who was merely assisting a dispute know whether the strike was legal or illegal within the meaning of this Act? He would find himself a criminal, possibly, for merely sending 5s. to assist the wife or children of an unfortunate striker. Sympathetic newspaper articles may all be criminal. They might all further the dispute."

In the original Bill, the actual striker was also made criminally liable; to-day, those who further him in his strike are still so liable.

The reactionary Act of 1927 is not content with interference with the right to strike; it also makes picketing a highly hazardous, if not an illegal operation. Under the Trade Disputes Act of 1906, it was declared that it was lawful for one or more persons, in furtherance of a trade dispute, to picket for the purpose of peacefully obtaining or communicating information or peacefully persuading any person to abstain from working; but, under the Act of 1927, if in this process a reasonable apprehension to the person picketed that he will suffer injury in his business, occupation, employment, or other source of income, or suffer any actionable wrong, or a similar apprehension to his family or his dependents, is caused, the picketing becomes illegal intimidation. So that, in the result, it is well that Trade Unionists should realise that the Act has substantially made all picketing most dangerous, if not impossible.

Then, again, the illegal strike as defined by the Act extends to any sympathetic strike which is calculated to cause hardship to the community, and, as the recent Birkenhead case has shown, when a local authority, to avert a strike, says that an individual should join a Trade Union, it acts unlawfully. So that, in substance, we may say that the Act of 1927 has imposed serious risk of illegality upon all sympathetic strikes and upon all picketing and all Trade Unionism where local authorities are involved—to say nothing of the restrictions which it imposes upon political action and the liberty of Civil Servants.

LABOUR AND THE LAW



SIR HENRY SLESSOR, K.C., M.P.

ON THE EMBANKMENT



DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE TRADE DISPUTES AND TRADE UNIONS BILL, 1927

We have thus to note not a progress, but a serious reaction in Trade Unionism viewed from the legal standpoint and, though it is true that the earlier developments which synchronised with the growth of the Trades Union Congress have been in the direction of freedom, a great many, alas, of the rights so obtained have recently been filched away. How serious is the extent of the set-back we have yet to learn.

To pass to earlier history, we find that in 1859, before the inauguration of Congress, and through the work of the leaders of those times, there was passed the Molestation of Workmen Act which endeavoured to limit the meaning of the words "threat," "intimidation" and "molestation" in such a manner that they could not be used to be extended any longer to the case of the employer who merely feared loss of work through a strike; for, in such a manner had the early Victorian Judges tried to get round the Combination Repeal Act of 1825, by saying that though combinations were legal, strike action yet remained a criminal threat as a form of intimidation. Yet another attempt to evade the protection of the Act of 1859, was made by Lord Esher in the notorious *Gas Workers' case* in 1872, which declared that a simultaneous cessation of work in the gas works in South London constituted a criminal threat. Again, Parliament was induced by Congress and its Parliamentary Committee to remedy this restriction of Trade Union rights, and in 1875, there was passed the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act which, by declaring that a combination to restrain trade was not criminal when a single striker would not be acting criminally, freed the Trade Unions from all liability except in a few defined cases in breach of contract in public services, which freedom they retained until the passing of the Act of 1927.

Between 1875 and the outbreak of war, the right to strike without criminal liability existed only in this country. All over the world, limitations more or less severe had been imposed, and, as the years passed, culminating with the War Emergency Legislation, it became clear that the libertarian views of the later 19th century were on their trial. So that the Act of 1927

may be regarded as the result of an agitation to protect what are called the "public services," which had not found expression in legislation until that time.

The civil liability of Trade Unions for the acts of its officials continued, however, until 1906, when the Trade Disputes Act declared that no union could be sued, nor could its officials make it liable for strike action by procuring breaches of contract or otherwise. In 1871, the agreements of a Trade Union, other than those between the union and its members, had been given legal force and the union, in a sense, given a legal entity, and this very entity was used in the famous *Osborne case* in 1910, in the House of Lords as a basis for a decision which had for its object the limitation of the expenditure of money on Trade Unions to the narrow limits of the definitions contained in the 1871 Act. Freedom from this restriction was obtained in 1913 by the Trade Union Act of that year, with certain special provisions regarding political purposes; but, again in 1927, these emancipations in the case of the political activity were largely rendered nugatory.

Throughout the period since the Molestation of Workmen Act, all the advantages which have accrued to Trade Unions in the law have been very largely the work of the Trades Union Congress, and, in later times, of the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party acting in combination. The repeal of the Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Act, 1927, would defeat the last attempt to impose these unworthy limitations on the right of individual men and bodies of men to work how and when they will, and its achievement would mark the end of an epoch of contention.

It must never be forgotten in considering the rights of Trade Unions in law that so far as the sale of goods and other contracts are concerned, no attempt has been made in any way to interfere with them by laws similar to the 1927 Act. There is nothing in law to prevent the manufacturer holding up his goods for a rise of price to an indefinite extent, and the Courts have very recently decided that it is within the power of a

manufacturing association to use the stop or black list to almost any extent—even to the point of being allowed to demand the payment of a sum of money from an individual employer as a means for not being placed upon such a stop list.

Despite the belated insertion of the word "lockout," as well as the word "strike" in the 1927 Act, the combine and the trust are in English law to all intents and purposes unfettered in action by the law.

As late as 1855, a learned Judge expressed the view that a combination to maintain the price of goods was an illegal if not a criminal act; but the whole tendency of the last 60 years has been to liberate the trust and the combine. To some extent, the Trade Union benefited from this tendency; as we have seen, the earlier Trade Unions Acts were of an emancipatory character.

During the period of the Trades Union Congress, there have been undoubtedly great advances, but there have also been set-backs. The set-backs have mostly occurred as the result of judicial decision; the advances have been achieved by legislation. The Act of 1927 is the first in which Parliament, so far from varying the case law in the direction of freedom, has itself taken an active part in fettering the rights of Labour.



The TRADE UNION COVENANT

WE, Trade Unionists & members of the working-class, custodians of the heritage of Freedom & Right of Association & of Organisation won by our forefathers, the pioneers of Trade Unionism, thousands of whom underwent transportation, imprisonment, victimisation & punishments of all kinds to win that Freedom, **HERE & NOW PLEDGE OURSELVES TO SAFEGUARD THAT HERITAGE**

no matter what the consequences to ourselves, with all our strength & to the utmost limit of our power.

REALISING the gravity of the attack now being made upon Trade Unionism by the Tory Government, we take upon ourselves the obligation never to cease from striving to keep our Trade Unions intact, & to strengthen them so as to guarantee to them the fullest freedom of action; so handing on to those who come after us a powerful & invincible Movement to defend their rights & maintain their liberties.

J.F.H.

1927

MASS MEETINGS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY DURING THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE TRADE DISPUTES AND TRADE UNIONS BILL IN 1927 ADOPTED THE ABOVE DECLARATION WITH UNANIMITY AND ENTHUSIASM.

The General Council

Methods and Machinery at T.U.C. Headquarters

UNLIKE the national Trade Union centres in most other countries, the British Trades Union Congress originated as a deliberative assembly, and it is only in comparatively recent years that it has developed effective machinery for the exercise of executive authority. As a purely voluntary association of Trade Unions, existing for the purpose of formulating and expressing the common will of the affiliated unions, Congress meets only once a year for a week's session. It is obvious, therefore, that it cannot execute its own decisions. Nor can it leave to the affiliated unions the responsibility of carrying out individually decisions which involve all the unions together. An executive authority set up by the Congress itself is, therefore, essential, and from the earliest days of Congress such an executive body has existed.

For more than 50 years the Executive Council of the Congress, which was then only regarded as a sub-committee, was known as the Parliamentary Committee. This body was appointed at the Birmingham Congress in 1869, and presented its first report to Congress in 1872.* At the next Congress, in 1873, nine members were appointed to the Parliamentary Committee and their names appear in the official records of Congress as follows :—

ALEXANDER MACDONALD (Chairman).	PETER SHORROCKS.
DANIEL GUILLE (Vice-Chairman).	JOHN KANE.
WILLIAM ALLAN (Treasurer).	WILLIAM OWEN
GEORGE ODGER.	THOMAS PLACKETT.
GEORGE HOWELL (Secretary).	

* No Congress was held in 1870, and although the Parliamentary Committee was active in organising a campaign on the Government's Trade Union Bill it does not seem to have made any report to the 1871 Congress. To fill the gap caused by the failure to summon Congress in 1870, it was decided at the Liverpool Congress in 1875 to hold another Congress that year, and this was duly summoned to meet at Glasgow in October, 1875. Thereafter Congress was held regularly every year with the single exception of 1914, the year of the outbreak of war.

The duties of the Parliamentary Committee, as defined at the Birmingham Congress in 1869, were to watch legislation in the interests of Labour generally, and especially to promote Labour legislation by drafting Bills and to secure for them the support of Members of Parliament, as well as to interview Cabinet Ministers on questions of the day and generally to voice the opinion of the organised trades. At the Leicester Congress in 1877, it was decided that the Parliamentary Committee should be elected by ballot of the whole Congress. In 1875, the number of members on the Parliamentary Committee was increased from nine to eleven. It remained at this number until 1894, when it was increased to 13. In 1906 it was raised to 16, and remained at that number until the Parliamentary Committee was superseded by the General Council at the Cardiff Congress in 1921.

The General Council replaced the Parliamentary Committee, with greatly enlarged functions and responsibilities, as a consequence of discussions which arose after the railway strike of 1919. It was widely felt in the organised movement that the experience of the Committee of 14 who acted as mediators in that dispute confirmed the opinion that a central co-ordinating body representative of the Trade Union Movement, and capable of dealing with the growing number of problems affecting the whole of the unions, should be set up. A Trade Union Co-ordination Sub-Committee, representing the Parliamentary Committee, the Mediation Committee, and the Trade Union side of the National Provisional Joint Industrial Committee, was therefore appointed, and at the special Trades Union Congress in London, in December, 1919, this sub-committee presented an interim report on the question of co-ordination, along with a resolution.

In its interim report the Co-ordination Committee expressed the general desire that existed for the development of more adequate machinery, pointing out that the Trade Union Movement had outgrown the central administrative machinery which had been inherited from a past generation. It urged that the new executive body must develop out of the existing organisation of

SIGNS OF CHANGE



THE LAST PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

CARDIFF CONGRESS, 1921



THIS CONGRESS CREATED THE GENERAL COUNCIL

T.U.C. HEADQUARTERS STAFF



OUTSIDE 32, ECCLESTON SQUARE, 1928

GENERAL COUNCIL OFF DUTY



EDINBURGH CONGRESS, 1927

the Trades Union Congress and out of its closer co-ordination with other sections of the working-class movement. The Standing Orders of Congress, it pointed out, did not permit the Parliamentary Committee to do the work that required to be done: its functions, as they were then defined, were in great measure a survival from a previous period, when the chief duties of Congress were political, and there existed no separate political organisation to express the policy and objects of the Labour Movement. It was suggested that the whole of the functions and organisation of the Parliamentary Committee required to be revised, and a resolution was put forward for adoption by the special Congress, which stated (in part):—

“That in view of the imperative need and demand for a central co-ordinating body representative of the whole Trade Union Movement, and capable of efficiently dealing with industrial questions of national importance, the Parliamentary Committee be instructed to revise the Standing Orders of Congress in such manner as is necessary to secure the following changes in the functions and duties of the Executive body elected by Congress—

(1) To substitute for the Parliamentary Committee a Trades Union Congress General Council to be elected annually by Congress.

(2) To prepare a scheme determining the composition and methods of election of the General Council.

(3) To make arrangements for the development of administrative departments in the offices of the General Council, in the direction of securing the necessary officials, staff, and equipment to secure an efficient Trade Union centre.”

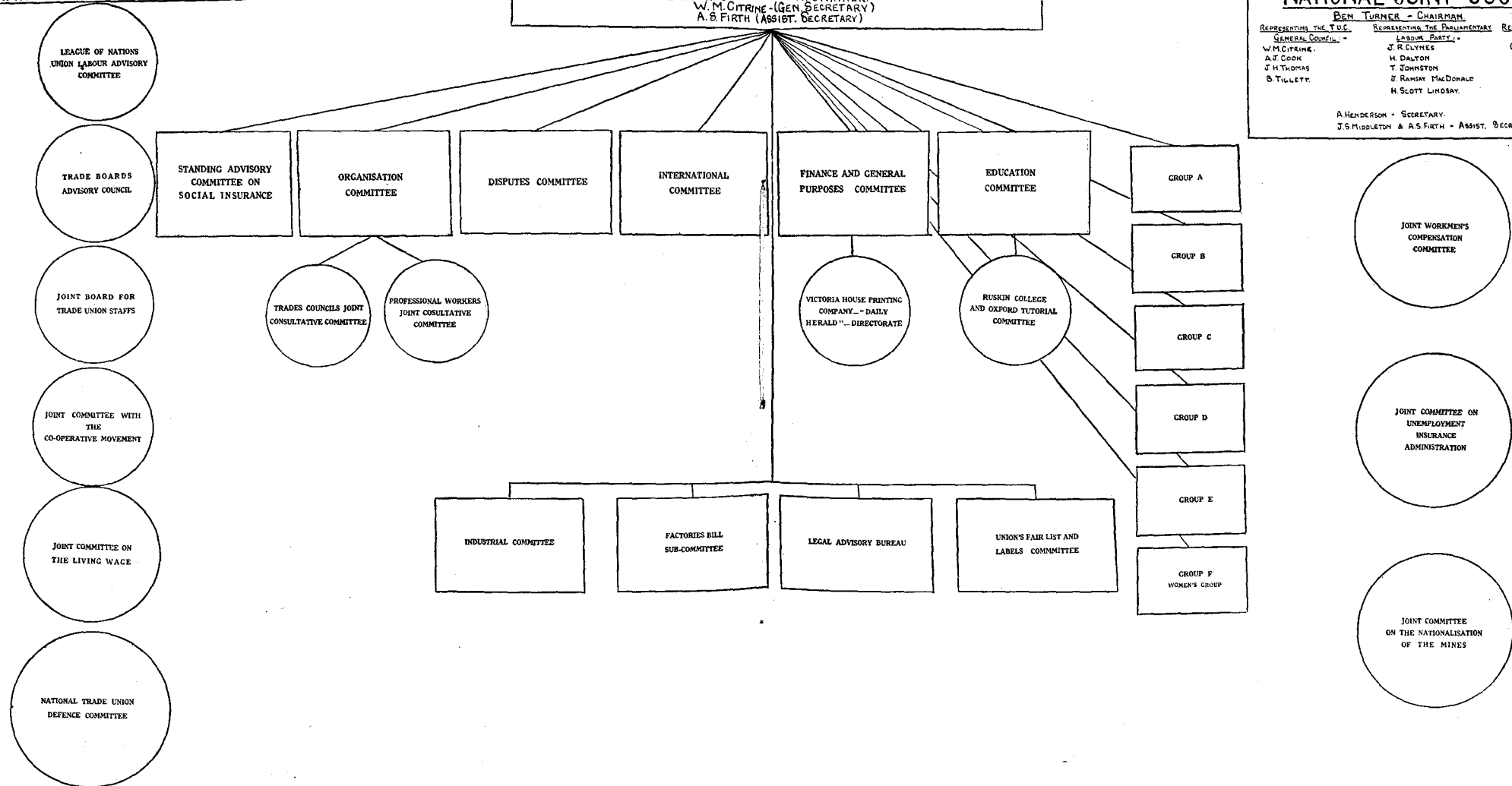
This resolution the Special Trades Union Congress adopted, and the Co-ordination Committee continued its work in framing a complete scheme on the lines thus laid down. Definite recommendations were placed before the 1920 Congress at Portsmouth by the Parliamentary Committee, and at the Cardiff Congress in 1921 the new body came into existence. It has continued to develop as an active, co-ordinating authority, dealing with Trade Union problems as they arise, and taking

TRADES UNION CONGRESS GENERAL COUNCIL. 1927-28.

JOINT COMMITTEES WITH OTHER BODIES

BEN TURNER - CHAIRMAN.			
J. BEARD	J. DAVENPORT.	W. KEAN	A. B. SWALES
E. BEVIN	H. H. ELVIN	J. W. OGDEN	J. H. THOMAS, M.P.
M. BONDFIELD, M.P.	A. H. FINDLAY	E. J. FOULTON	W. THORNE, M.P.
H. BOOTHMAN.	J. HALLSWORTH	A. F. BUSH	B. TILLET
J. W. BRADLEY	A. HAYDAY, M.P.	A. A. PURCELL, M.P.	J. VARLEY.
J. BROMLEY, M.P.	G. HICKS.	T. RICHARDS	A. J. WALKDEN
A. CONLEY	J. HILL	J. ROWAN	R. B. WALKER
A. J. COOK	R. T. JONES	H. SKINNER	
	W. M. CITRINE (GEN. SECRETARY)	A. S. FIRTH (ASSIST. SECRETARY)	

NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL.		
BEN TURNER - CHAIRMAN.		
REPRESENTING THE T.U.C.	REPRESENTING THE PARLIAMENTARY	REPRESENTING THE LABOUR
GENERAL COUNCIL -	LABOUR PARTY -	PARTY -
W. M. CITRINE.	J. R. CLYNES	C. T. GRANT
A. J. COOK	H. DALTON	G. LANSBURY
J. H. THOMAS	T. JOHNSTON	S. LAWRENCE
B. TILLET.	J. RAMON McDONALD	H. MORRISON
	H. SCOTT LINDSAY.	
A. HENDERSON - SECRETARY.		
J. S. MIDDLETON & A. S. FIRTH - ASSIST. SECRETARIES.		



the initiative on questions upon which Congress has laid down either definite decisions or general guiding principles.

The General Council is composed of 32 members representing 17 groups of trades and to each of these groups representation is given on the General Council in proportion to their numbers. Within the General Council itself grouping also takes place. The Council is divided into five groups in accordance with the following classification :—

GROUP A (8 Members).

	Members.
Mining	3
Railways	3
Transport	2

GROUP B (8 Members).

	Members.
Shipbuilding	1
Engineering	3
Iron and Steel	2
Building	2

GROUP C (5 Members).

	Members.
Cotton	2
Other Textiles	1
Clothing	1
Leather	1

GROUP D (6 Members).

	Members.
Glass, Pottery, Distributive, etc.	1
Agriculture	1
General Workers	4

GROUP E (3 Members).

	Members.
Printing	1
Public Employees	1
Non-Manual Workers	1

T.U.C. OFFICES AT TRANSPORT HOUSE



GENERAL COUNCIL'S BOARD ROOM



SECRETARY'S ROOM

T.U.C. OFFICES AT TRANSPORT HOUSE



TYPISTS' ROOM



STAFF REST ROOM

THE WORK OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL.

The work of the General Council is carried on mainly by means of committees. In addition to the General Council itself, there are the following Standing Committees :—

1. Group Committees.
2. Finance and General Purposes.
3. Disputes.
4. Education.
5. Organisation.

Together with Joint Committees with other bodies, and *ad hoc* committees set up from time to time to deal with specific questions. The chart given on pages 44 and 45 shows the extent of the Committee system. The actual detailed executive work of these committees is carried out by the Council's staff, which is organised on Departmental lines.

In addition to the Secretary's Department, the work of the General Council is carried on through the following Departments :—

1. Finance.
2. Organisation.
3. International.
4. Trade Boards.
5. Research and Information.
6. Publicity.
7. Social Insurance.

Each of these departments is under the control of an officer who acts as Secretary to the various Committees whose work relates directly to the work of his department. Regular consultation is provided among the departments through the department of the General Secretary.

CONTACT WITH AFFILIATED UNIONS.

Every attempt is made to keep in close contact with the affiliated unions, and applications for advice and information from individual unions are promptly dealt with either departmentally or through the agency of a Committee of the General Council where a question of policy is involved.

On all important matters affecting the Movement as a body, circulars are issued to each affiliated society, whilst on general matters, the Publicity Department through the medium of the *Industrial News* (weekly), and the *Industrial Review* (monthly), keeps the unions and Trades Councils in touch with current Trade Union matters.

Another useful service performed is that of the publication, jointly with the Labour Party of *Weekly Notes for Speakers*, whilst general organising literature is rendered available for affiliated unions and Trades Councils.

THE ANNUAL CONGRESS.

Preparations for the annual Congress begin almost immediately after the preceding assembly has finished its labours. The arrangements now follow a fairly well-established procedure, but a good deal of detailed work has to be done throughout the year in organising the discussions in Congress itself.

A preliminary notice is sent out to the affiliated unions early in the year, with the necessary forms for sending in nominations for offices, names of delegates, resolutions for the agenda and other matters, and a date is fixed for receipt of these data. At the same time, steps are taken with the Trades Council in the town where Congress is to be held to find accommodation for the delegates and to make local arrangements for the meetings, a task involving a great deal of detailed work. Not less than twelve weeks before Congress is due to assemble a preliminary draft of the agenda is circulated to the unions, and amendments to the resolutions are received up to the fourth week before Congress opens. The complete and final agenda, with the report of the General Council, must under Standing Orders be in the hands of the unions at least 14 days before Congress opens; and in the week preceding Congress the General Council meets on the scene to make the final arrangements.

The General Council's Report to Congress is compiled on a strictly subject basis, and is discussed at Congress on those lines, the resolutions appearing on the agenda, which are

associated with the matter of the report, being taken at the time when that particular section of the report is under discussion. This system has the advantage of concentrating discussion on each particular subject and thereby prevents any tendency to discursiveness which might otherwise arise. Resolutions on the Congress Agenda, which have no bearing on any section of the General Council's Report, are taken after the Report has been dealt with.

The business of Congress is also further advanced by the system of grouping of resolutions. Where resolutions and amendments appear on the Final Agenda of Congress, it is the practice of the General Council to call together the representatives of the unions responsible for placing the resolutions and amendments on the agenda with a view to the Committee arriving at one composite resolution and at most, one composite resolution and amendment.

Such composite resolutions and amendments are usually completed on the Saturday morning before Congress opens. In the old days such Grouping Committees did not meet until the actual opening of Congress on the Monday, and at many Congresses business was impeded by the delay in arriving at composite resolutions, which are printed whilst Congress is in Session.

The actual work of running Congress, as delegates who have been present well know, is unostentatious and hardly noticeable except to the keen and close observer. Obviously every detail of the work of the General Council cannot be set forth in its Report to Congress, but nevertheless the General Council has to be in a position to answer any query that may be asked, in spite of the fact that Congress is meeting very often more than 100 miles from Congress offices. Behind the scenes, therefore, there is always an active staff in charge of files and documents which may be required.

The arrangement of the Agenda, and the actual conduct of Congress through the General Purposes Committee, need careful attention and unremitting zeal. Every effort is made to

see that not one minute of delegates' time is wasted : even the details of the work of tellers are worked out before Congress opens, and the tellers are so organised that a minimum of time is taken up by voting, and their figures can be checked without a recount. It is known exactly how many votes there are to be cast in each tellers' block of seats.

The sole aim is to enable Congress itself to be as efficient as a deliberative assembly can possibly be.

NEW OFFICES AT SMITH SQUARE.

The General Council Offices at Smith Square are situated in the South Block. The Board Room is apart from the general offices which occupy the whole of the fourth floor and part of the fifth floor. The arrangements and equipment of the offices are thoroughly modern and efficient ; departments being grouped for convenient relations with one another and easy access to the Secretary's office.



Congress and Trades Councils



O small part in the development of the Trades Union Congress has been played by the local Trades Councils. Indeed, the first Congress, held at Manchester on June 2, 1869, was called on the initiative of the Manchester and Salford Trades Council, and seven of these bodies sent accredited delegates to the first assembly; for the second Congress in 1869, the Birmingham Trades Council was responsible; but for the third Congress, in 1871, and every succeeding Congress from that year onwards, the Executive body of the Congress itself issued the summons.

Yet the historical records of the Trades Council Movement are fragmentary, and there is little authentic information available regarding these highly important local organisations. The story of the Trades Union Congress would be incomplete without an account of them. For nearly a generation, from 1868 to 1895, a period of 27 years, representatives of the Trades Councils sat in Congress side by side with the delegates from affiliated unions; and throughout the 60 years of struggle and effort which constitute the life-story of the Congress, the Trades Councils have borne an active part in the development of Trade Unionism. In the early days the event created the Trades Council rather than the Trades Council the event. The London Trades Council, for instance, originated from the Strike Committee composed of London representatives of trades whose purpose was the assistance of the building operatives in their struggle of 1860. Other Councils apparently superseded Committees which were called into being for some special purpose, and the specific function of which was the organisation of the support of the workers in a locality for some particular attempt to improve working conditions, either by the support of strikers or by proposed legislative enactment.

The work of Trades Councils between 1860 and 1875 for the amendment of Labour Laws was of vital importance.

In 1869, the London Trades Council and the Conferences of Amalgamated Trades considered a Bill to amend the law relating to Trade Unions. The Bill drafted up by Mr. Frederick Harrison and introduced into Parliament by Mr. Mundella and Mr. Thomas Hughes, received the support of the workers at meetings held in various parts of the country organised by the Trades Councils. Finally, it was abandoned on condition that early provision should be made for the protection of Trade Union funds, pending a new Bill being drafted. In 1871, when a new Trade Union Bill was brought forward which, whilst protecting the funds of Trade Unions and preventing the unions from being prosecuted in courts of law, prohibited all forms of molestation and endangered the personal liberty of Trade Unionists, the Trades Councils in Dublin, Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle, Glasgow, and Nottingham all held meetings of protest against this danger.

In 1872, certain London gas stokers were sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment on account of the alleged danger threatening the community by the strike of these workers. The Maidstone Trades Council met the stokers on their release and provided means to assist them in returning to their homes. About this time the London, Glasgow, Manchester, Walsall, and Wigan Trades Councils were prominent in an agitation against the Criminal Law Amendment Act and other "class-made laws which favour employers and punish workmen." At the end of a long struggle in which the Trades Councils played a considerable part, the Criminal Amendment Act of 1871 was repealed, definite limits were set to the law of conspiracy, as applied to trade disputes, and "freedom of contract" made applicable to employees as well as employers.

CONTACT BETWEEN TRADES COUNCILS.

Though earlier conferences of Trades Councils from various parts of the country had been held, probably the largest national assembly of these bodies took place in London in March, 1867,

PERSONALITIES AT CONGRESS



U.S.A. FRATERNAL DELEGATES: JOHN P. FREY, SAMUEL GOMPERS, B. A. LARGER



MINERS' DELEGATES: T. ASHTON and W. E. HARVEY

MINERS' LEADERS



W. ABRAHAM (Mabon, M.P.) T. ASHTON, M.P. ENOCH EDWARDS, M.P. ROBERT SMILLIE, M.P.

called by the London Workingmen's Association (a body under the leadership of George Potter). This conference was called to consider matters vitally affecting the status of trade societies, and was attended by representatives of 77 trade societies and Trades Councils of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Sheffield, Liverpool, Manchester, Wolverhampton, Preston, Halifax, and Nottingham.

A further national conference was also called in September of the same year.

CHANGE IN CONGRESS REPRESENTATION.

Until 1895, representatives of Trades Councils attended Congress. The following table shows the number of delegates attending Congress in the three years prior to the representation of Trades Councils ceasing :—

Year.	Total Delegates.	T.C. Delegates.
1892	495	51
1893	380	38
1894	378	34

The change in the constitution of Congress which permitted the attendance of delegates from Trade Unions only was occasioned by the rapid growth of the unions and the feeling that the attendance of delegates from Trades Councils resulted in a duplication of Trade representation.

RECOGNITION OF TRADES COUNCILS.

The growth of the unions, the exclusion of Trades Council representation at Congress and the subsequent growth of the Labour Party resulted in Trades Councils becoming more and more political in character. Nevertheless, they still remained the only local co-ordinating body of Trade Union branches.

In 1924, steps were taken by the General Council of the Trades Union Congress to secure closer co-operation with Trades Councils. In this year, a conference of representatives of the principal Trades Councils in the country was convened, arising from which a Consultative Committee consisting of six representatives of Trades Councils and six representatives of

the General Council was appointed to consider the most suitable method of co-operation, and the following proposed terms of reference :—

1. That local Trades Councils should act through their secretaries as the Labour correspondents for the Trades Union Congress General Council, and forward to the same regular reports of their local proceedings, together with such general information regarding movements amongst the organised workers as may be of value to the Council.
2. To make arrangements whereby the local Trades Councils are informed by the issue of special monthly statements regarding the activities of the Trades Union Congress General Council, and copies of reports, circulars, or other statements issued, dealing with general questions of Trade Union policy and activity.
3. The Trades Councils to act as the circulating agencies for all special propaganda publications issued by the Trades Union Congress General Council.
4. When necessary to issue joint statements regarding Trade Union and Labour policy for general circulation, subject to their adoption by the Trades Union Congress General Council.

These terms of reference were adopted, the Trades Councils Joint Consultative Committee has continued to function since its inception, and each year a conference of representatives of Trades Councils is held.

CONTACT BETWEEN THE GENERAL COUNCIL AND TRADES COUNCILS.

Whilst the position created by the recognition of Trades Councils by the General Council is not a reversion to the relationship existing prior to 1895, it is certainly effective. Trades Councils are not directly represented at Congress, nor have they direct representation on the General Council. The Annual Conference of Trades Councils affords the opportunity of the representatives of Trades Councils meeting the representatives of the General Council to discuss questions concerning Trades Councils, when six members are elected to the T.C.J.C.C. In this way a more complete expression of Trades Council opinion is afforded than would be possible through an individual representative becoming actually a member of the General Council.

Under present circumstances, the country is divided into six areas, and at the Annual Conference of Trades Councils one T.C.J.C.C. representative from each area is elected by vote of all delegates present.

Within each area Federations of Trades Councils operate as co-ordinating bodies, but this does not affect direct approach between the T.C.J.C.C. and individual Councils.

Through the columns of the *Industrial Review* and by circular, all Councils are kept in touch with General Council policy and matters of general interest, while Trades Councils are able by correspondence to submit their difficulties and receive advice. The effect of this is that at the present time there is a greater degree of co-ordination amongst Trades Councils than at any time in their history.

The closer relationship between the General Council and Trades Councils commenced in 1924. Since that date there has been a steady improvement in the efficiency of its operation.

There are varying ideas as to the course of future development. It is clear, however, that Trades Councils should be developed in their local spheres on lines similar to that of Congress nationally.

The greater the percentage of local Trade Union branches affiliating, the more effective will be the work of a Council; the more effective its work the less likelihood there is of Trade Union branches remaining unattached. The more Trade Union branches associated with Trades Councils, the greater will be the need to recognise Trades Councils as an integral part of our form of industrial organisation, with a consequent improvement of status.

So maximum affiliation, effective functioning and extent of recognition are interdependent. The General Council are rendering their own quota. In accordance with the extent to which Trade Unions will encourage their branches to affiliate to the local Trades Council, and in proportion to the constructive efforts made by the Trades Councils, will more effective co-ordination of our industrial machinery be accomplished.

Women in Congress

By J. J. MALLON

NOT the least significant testimony to the influence of Trade Unionism during the lifetime of the Trades Union Congress is the change in the status of the women workers. Trade Unionism among women is largely the outcome of propaganda and organisation within the last 30 years, though women delegates have been attending the Trades Union Congress practically from the beginning of its existence and efforts were made as early as the "30's" of last century to enrol women wage-earners as Trade Unionists.

Representatives of the working women made their voices heard first at the Glasgow Congress in 1875. A feature of the Congress programme for many years has been the meeting for women workers, with which the names of the late Lady Dilke and Mary Macarthur, as well as Miss Gertrude Tuckwell, and others are associated. Lady Dilke, like her husband, Sir Charles Dilke, took a keen interest in Trades Unionism; she appeared at Congress first in 1889, and from that year until her death in 1904 she was a regular attendant. On her death, Congress expressed deep regret and voted a sum of £50 to the Lady Dilke Memorial Fund.

In the history of Congress the work of organising the women wage-earners is closely linked with the long and skilfully directed agitation which established in this country the legal minimum wage system, through the operation of the Trade Boards. There is dispute as to which of the political parties may claim most credit for the establishment of the system. But the truth is, of course, that the "father" of systems of legal minimum wages is Sidney Webb. Mr. Webb's brilliant and original work on "Industrial Democracy" revealed the "parasitic trade" as a deadly element in economic society—subtly and steadily undermining alike the foundations of Trade Unionism and Free Trade.

Mr. Webb showed the legal minimum wage as the real remedy for the pest of parasiticism, and in doing so, he effected the direction of legislation in the young and adventurous Parliaments of Australia and New Zealand. Minimum wage systems in these countries resulted and in turn, encouraged Sir Charles Dilke—so much ahead of the politicians of his time and the genuine fore-runner of the Labour Party—to introduce his Wages Boards Bill to the House of Commons in the early 90's. But in the wilderness, the voice of Dilke cried alone nearly for a generation.

The Liberal Government were not necessarily hostile to the Sweated Industries Bill. Indeed, the *Daily News* (which was responsible for the first Sweated Industries Exhibition) had espoused the measure. Moreover, the Trade Unions and the Labour Movement generally were pressing vigorously for its adoption. But the Government were afraid of it and saw in it a possible connecting link with principles of collective action to which orthodox Liberals were understood to be invincibly opposed. So they temporised. A commissioner was sent to inquire into the operation of the minimum wage systems of Australia and New Zealand. A committee of the House of Commons was appointed and if it did nothing that was noteworthy, it provided Miss Mary Macarthur with an opportunity for placing before it a vivid and startling statement on the conditions of the employment of women of which she had first-hand knowledge. Deputations were sent away with evasive answers and the ferment in the country, as far as possible, ignored. At length, procrastination came to an end and in 1909, Mr. Winston Churchill—then the President of the Board of Trade—was bidden to apply himself to the job of putting the proposals into Parliamentary shape. The result was the Trade Boards Act, 1909, a measure which was frankly experimental and in many ways unsatisfactory, but which would have been much less good had not the Labour Movement maintained, behind as well as in front of the scene, a constant pressure on Mr. Churchill. Surely in the light of this historical note it will not be denied that the policy of the minimum wage both

as regards its inspiration and its practical application owes everything to Trade Union and Labour influences.

Now let us consider the nature of the problem with which the Trade Boards Act was intended to deal. One would like to pause here in order to offer a word of remonstrance to those impatient souls in the movement who find fault with its political achievement. The truth is, of course, that in every respect in which measurement is possible, social progress is immense. Compared with the pre-Labour Congress Party world, the world of to-day is almost Arcadia. It is not my theme to compare the social code of to-day with that of more than 20 years ago. But it is germane to my case that the rates of wages which existed a generation ago were not supplemented or rendered less cruel by the scheme of insurances which to-day are a factor in the well-being of the wage-earner. Slightly more than 20 years ago, a worker had his wage and nothing else whatever. In old age, in unemployment, in sickness, in widowhood, the wretched worker was left to beg or to starve.

As for the rates of wages which were current in this earlier period, it has become hard even for those who knew the industrial circumstances of the time to believe in them. Who, for instance, can believe to-day without an effort that in 1906, the average adult woman earned less than 12s. for a week of whole-time occupation; that the majority of the women employed in certain trades earned less than 10s., and that in every "women's trade," numbers of women, often a substantial percentage of the whole, earned less than 5s. These facts would be indeed incredible if they rested upon evidence less weighty than the "blue books" and other official compilations of the period. And remember that the women so far referred to, were employed in factories and workshops, that is to say, in premises easily open to the inspection of the representatives of Government Departments and the local authorities.

What about the home workers—tens of thousands of whom with or without dependants, lived somehow and carried on their industry in slummy attics or cellars or in other such unfit places

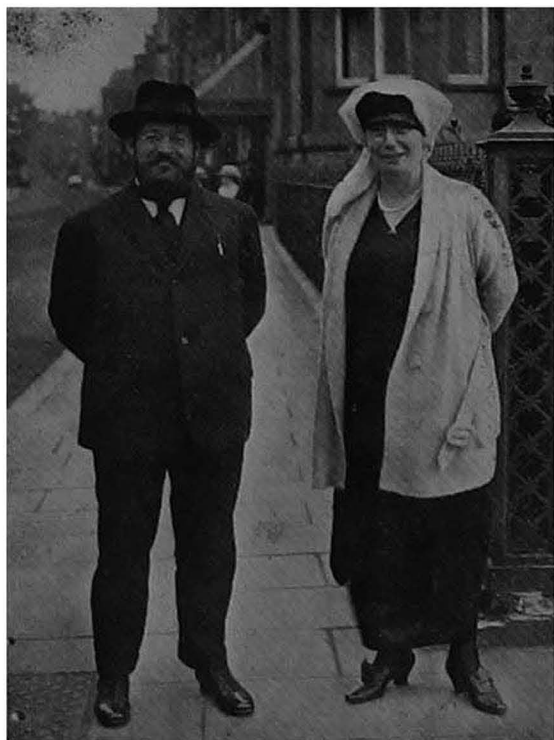
WOMEN AT CONGRESS



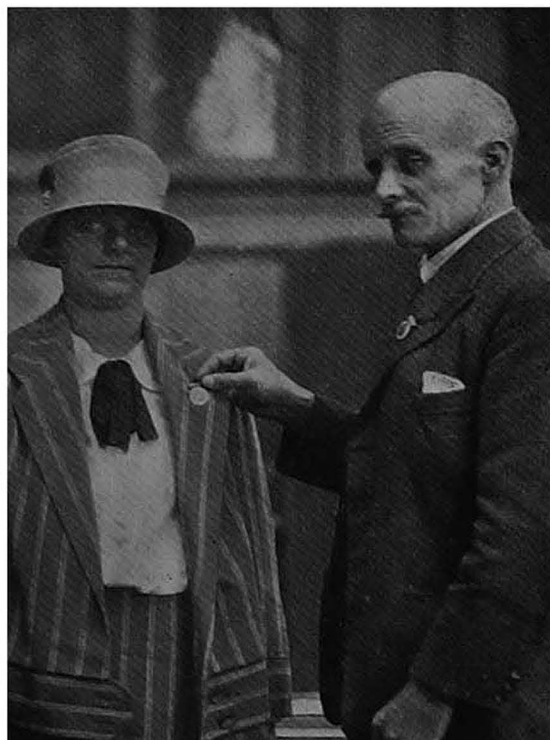
LADY DILKE



MISS GERTRUDE TUCKWELL



ALBERT THOMAS and MARY MACARTHUR



**FIRST GOLD MEDALLIST AT BOURNEMOUTH
CONGRESS, 1926**

for human habitation? Many moving pictures of the sorrow and degradation of these workers have been painted to which it is not intended here to attempt to add. It is enough to say that vast numbers of such women were living in pain and wretchedness so dire, that the beholder could only marvel how such a lot should be endured. The trades selected for first treatment, paper-box making, lace finishing, the making of certain types of chain at Cradley Heath, and the manufacture of ready-made and wholesale bespoke clothing, contained only too many cases of industrial conditions at their lowest and foulest. The story of how, in these trades, the Trade Boards were able dramatically at Cradley Heath, and more quietly and gradually in other places to raise by a little the meagre standards of life which they found in existence, is well known.

But it would not be just to a great figure in the Labour Movement to miss a chance to praise again the immense and enduring work which Mary Macarthur accomplished for the workers in these trades. It was perhaps at Cradley Heath that her striking gifts of leadership and advocacy had their greatest opportunity and were seen in boldest relief. After months of tusselling with obdurate employers on the Chain-making Trade Board, the representatives of the workers were able to secure piece rates which in some cases were 100 per cent. higher than the rates which they substituted. Since these rates applied to groups of male chain-makers as well as to all the women in the trade, they added substantially to the incomes of many families in Cradley Heath. There were cases in which the family income under the new rates were to increase by 15s. or by £1 per week—very large sums in that poverty-stricken portion of the "black country." But a defect in the Act threatened this prospect of better days. Under the Act, workers might sign agreements to permit their employers to continue to pay at the old level for six months. Certain of the middle-men at Cradley Heath were quick to avail themselves of this door of escape. They compelled their employees to "contract-out" and their doing so was offered by the other manufacturers as an excuse for the adoption of the same policy. The cruel subterfuge

delivered the employers into Mary Macarthur's hands. She took up their challenge with gusto and audacity. The workers at Cradley Heath who refused to sign the detested agreements were promised strike pay for such length of time as might be necessary. Mary Macarthur's more cautious colleagues protested against this daring policy. Where was the money to come from? The women's leader laughed at their lack of faith. "The people of England," she said, "will give it me." And they did. Money rolled in in hundreds—in thousands of pounds. The locked-out women had the time of their lives and might be excused for regretting the too-soon termination of a struggle out of which colour and adventure as well as a little "money for nothing," had come into their hum-drum existence.

The fight at Cradley Heath had consequences which went beyond the victory of the badly-treated chainmakers. It focussed attention on the industrial conditions of the "black country." Great writers like John Galsworthy, visited the district and wrote with indignation of what they had seen. Half-a-dozen depressed communities were moved for the first time to put up a fight for something better than the dog's life to which they had been content to submit. Not long after the victory at Cradley Heath some 20,000 unskilled workers were the subject of an agreement in which one of the great general Labour unions secured for the first time for them a minimum wage above the "poverty line" of Seebohm Rowntree.

A ferment at Nottingham where, for the same reason, the lace-finishers were treated as the chainmakers had been, followed. At street meetings in the Nottingham slums, Mary Macarthur gained new laurels and subjugated another realm. The poor quarters of Nottingham were in those days a social cess-pool, and it required a moral as well as a physical courage to spend time in those grimy and sordid streets and alleys. But not the most squalid or repellant slum was left unvisited in the course of a campaign which was continued for many weeks. As in Cradley Heath, a Trade Union was established during the struggle. As in Cradley Heath, much was done to advance the political education of the district.

At this stage, the scene might very well shift to Ireland—to Belfast or Dublin or Cork or Limerick, in each of which places poverty was even more extreme than in Nottingham or Cradley Heath. In Ireland, as in the "black country," the minimum wage campaign led to renewed Trade Union activity. Jim Connolly was concerned to obtain a Trade Board for the rope-workers of Belfast and he visited the factory doors and rope-workers' homes in incessant effort to organise a cowed and underfed population. It is likely that the effect on Connolly of the Belfast peripatations was enduring, and that his memory of the hopeless slums and habitations with which he had to do with, contributed to the holy wrath which led him in desperation into the Dublin rebellion. In Ireland, as in Great Britain Trade Boards, so far as their work could be measured, did well.

To the trades first included in the Trade Boards Act, others were added in 1913, so that in Great Britain and Ireland, 13 Boards were in being prior to the war. Only one other figure need be given in further proof of the exiguous rates of wages with which Trade Boards have had to deal with: For women employed in the sugar confectionery trade in Ireland, a minimum wage of 13s. weekly was fixed in 1913. The application of this wage involved increases of earnings for upwards of 80 per cent. of all the women in the trade.

During the Great War, after some initial confusion, workers were at a premium, and Trade Board rates of comparatively small importance. The Special Arbitration Tribunal fixed wages for women on munitions and general economic conditions insured that in all trades, wages tended to rise. For some time after the war, these wage rates were maintained or increased through the machinery of the Wages Temporary Regulation Act. The industrial depression made an abrupt end of the "golden age" of the woman worker, but before it had completely passed, many new Trade Boards had been created. To-day, in factories and workshops, women are no longer unprotected. They are looked after either by the great unions in the textile trade, or

by Trade Boards in some sort of conjunction with unions less strong than those in the textile trades. It is true that the minimum rates of wages fixed by these Boards are not high or satisfactory, but it is no less true that these rates are out of relation with the infinitesimal payments which were women's portion 20 years ago. Take one illustration only—admittedly the most favourable which could be chosen : 20 years ago, the *average* earnings of women of 18 years of age or over in the tobacco trade slightly exceeded 10s. for a week of about 54 hours. To-day the legal *minimum* rate in the same trade for a week of 48 hours is 38s. 6d. 1

It is well known that the improvement in the conditions of women in industry since the war compares very favourably with the improvement in the conditions of men, large numbers of whom indeed have not as regards wages improved at all. In this greater improvement, the Trade Boards have certainly done their share. Nothing need be said of the effect of Trade Boards upon the wages and conditions of male workers, but where Trade Boards exist they have generally jurisdiction over both sexes and in many trades they have brought substantial gain to men as well as to women.

Unhappily, the distributive trades are practically untouched. The unions in these trades have struggled long and heroically among workers to whom the practice of collective bargaining is new or repellant and who are deficient in the courage and the democratic independence which makes good Trade Unionists. Mr. Tom Shaw and Miss Bondfield did what was possible in their short tenure of office at the Ministry of Labour to remedy this regrettable state of affairs. It will be put right no doubt, when they or two of their colleagues resume responsibility for that department in the next Labour administration.



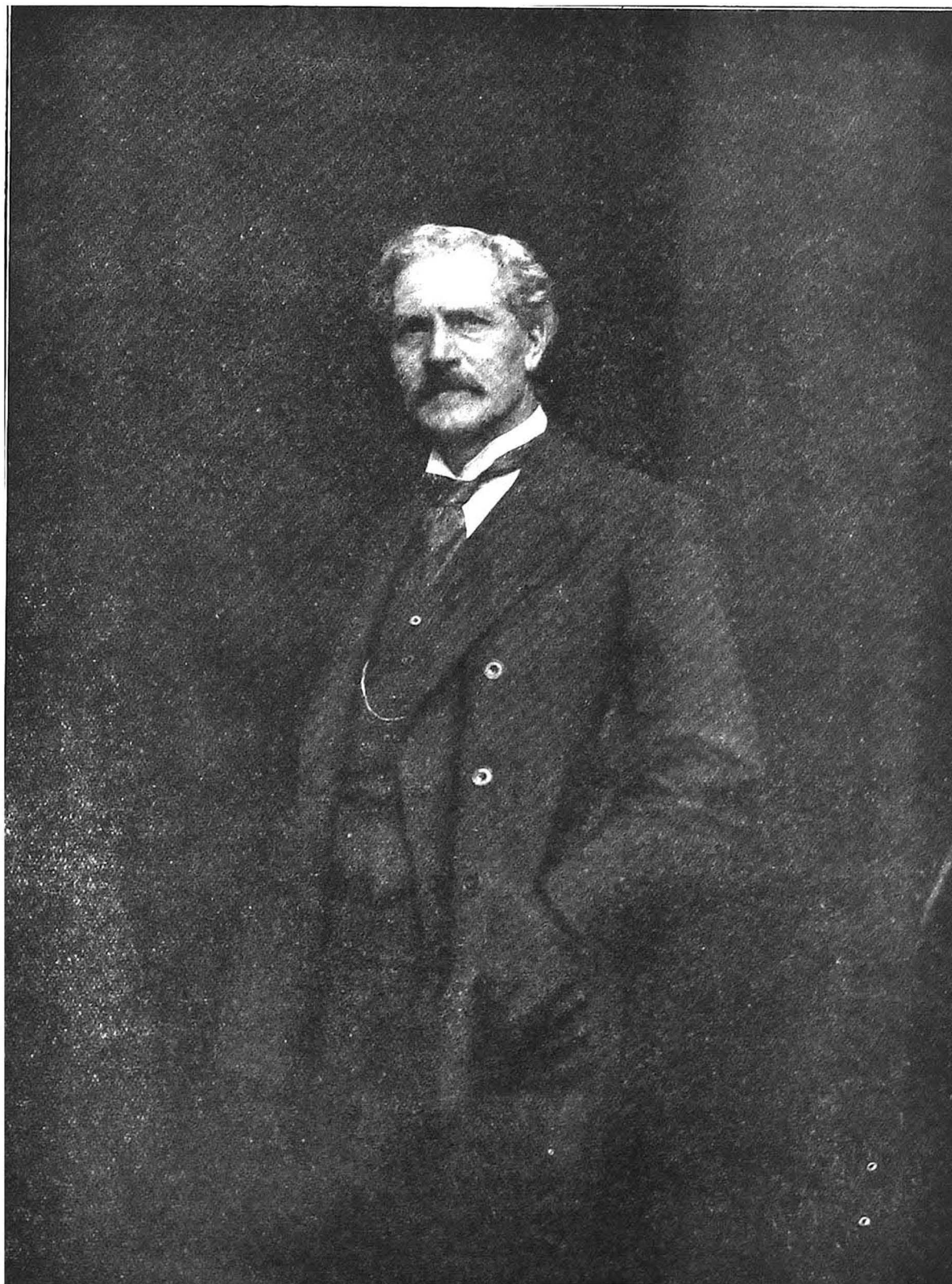
THE FIRST LABOUR CABINET



Standing : C. P. TREVELYAN, S. WALSH, LORD THOMPSON, LORD CHELMSFORD, SIDNEY WEBB, LORD OLIVIER, J. WHEATLEY, N. BUXTON, F. W. JOWETT, COL. JOSIAH WEDGWOOD, VERNON HARTSHORN, T. SHAW.

Seated : WM. ADAMSON, LORD PARMOOR, PHILIP SNOWDEN, LORD HALDANE, J. RAMSAY MACDONALD, J. R. CLYNES, J. H. THOMAS, A. HENDERSON.

THE FIRST LABOUR PRIME MINISTER



RT. HON. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD, M.P.
(Secretary of the Labour Party—1900-1911)

The Congress in Politics



NO record of the history, development, and influence of the Trades Union Congress would be complete which ignored the creation and the growth of the Labour Party. Trade Unionism was the mother of independent Labour political action. The Labour Party is the child of the Trades Union Congress. It was the industrial solidarity of the organised workers which gave life to the idea of direct working-class representation in Parliament and expanded it into the larger and more ambitious aim of establishing an independent political party that would be capable of governing the country.

Sixty years ago, the Trades Union Congress itself came into existence. Thirty years later the Labour Party (known in its early years as the Labour Representation Committee) was founded. Twenty-three more years passed and the first Labour Government was in office. No working-class movement in the world has so remarkable a record to its credit. In the history of political democracy the almost sensational progress of the Labour Party stands unequalled by any other political party of any country.

It would perhaps be safe to date the serious beginnings of the demand for Labour Representation back to the formation of the London Working Men's Association on February 16th, 1866. This appears to have been the first organisation to attempt a national movement having as one of its principal objects the election to Parliament of working-class candidates. But its efforts at the 1868 General Election produced very disappointing results. In the following year was founded the Labour Representation League, whose aim was to organise the strength of the working class as an electoral power, in order that it might be effectually used to influence such questions as involved the interests of the working class, and whose principal aim was to secure the return of working men to Parliament: "persons who, by character and ability, are competent to deal satisfactorily

with questions of general interest, as well as with those in which they are especially interested."

It will thus be seen that organisations which aimed at furthering Labour Representation in Parliament had come into existence prior to the establishment of the Trades Union Congress in 1868. There can be no doubt that the influence of the Labour Representation League was largely responsible for the slow progress made by the Trade Union Movement in the direction of *independent* political activities. The majority of the outstanding Trade Union leaders, while in favour of direct representation, were Liberals or Radicals in politics and were associated with the Liberal Party. The dominating view was that there should be a working-class element in Parliament.

But progress was indeed slow. On the eve of the 1874 General Election we find a resolution in favour of forming a definite Parliamentary organisation was negatived, and a resolution carried in which the opinion was expressed that it was unwise and undesirable to pledge the Congress to any course of action in respect to Labour Representation, and that each representative should be at liberty to take what action he thought proper in the town or city in which he resided. Yet during the same week at the Annual Congress Demonstration, Mr. Henry Broadhurst was to be found declaring that "If Labour Representation is worth anything, it is certainly worth paying for," and calculating the number of Trade Unionists at 1,000,000 a shilling levy would produce £50,000, and if only one-half the number contributed, it would raise a fund of £25,000.

Four more years passed and then came the Labour Electoral Association, which was formed to act in conjunction with the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, the Labour Representatives in the House of Commons, who numbered 10 in 1886 as against 11 in 1885, and the friends of Labour Representation throughout the country. This new body was given its official start at the Swansea Congress in 1887. It was at this Congress that the battle for independent Labour Representation was opened, for Swansea was Keir Hardie's

first Congress. Hardie attended as a delegate from the Ayrshire Miners, and Frank Rose, in his "The Coming Force," records that the opening sentences of Hardie's first speech struck the note of independence :—

"I object," he said, "to Labour representatives identifying themselves with one political party. We must have men in the House of Commons who will not go to constituencies just because they called themselves Liberals, but were in direct antagonism to the working classes."

And so opened the long fight between the old Trade Union leaders of the Liberal-Labour school and the "new outlook" men who were bent on securing independent representation for the workers.

In 1891, a proposal was made that the Trade Unions should so alter their rules as to admit of their subscribing to a Parliamentary Fund to be placed at the disposal of Congress to secure Labour Representation based upon the decisions of Congress. This proposal was defeated. In the following year, MacDonald and Quelch failed in their efforts to secure the adoption of the Social Democratic test that "no candidate shall receive the support of the working classes unless he is in agreement with the principle of complete national control of the means of production and distribution." In 1893, the test was accepted by Congress. Yet having agreed to the Social Democrat test, the Congress rejected a resolution by Hardie, "that in the opinion of this Congress the claims of Labour in Parliament should be asserted irrespective of the convenience of any political party, and to secure this it is necessary that the Labour Members in the House of Commons should be unconnected with either the Liberal or Tory Party, and should sit in opposition to any Government until such time as they are strong enough to form a Labour Cabinet." Hardie had been elected to Parliament the same year as the first *independent* Labour Member. Yet it is safe to assert that perhaps even he, with all his enthusiasm and vision, did not dream that 30 years after he had moved a resolution that mentioned the possibility of a Labour Cabinet in the future, a Labour Ministry would actually have been installed.

The birth of the Independent Labour Party provided a new platform and an effective national organisation through which to carry on the struggle in favour of Labour's political independence. In 1899, the Plymouth Congress carried the following resolution which was moved by Mr. J. Holmes, of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, and seconded by Mr. James Sexton, of the National Union of Dock Labourers :—

“ That this Congress, having regard to the decisions of former years, and with a view to securing a better representation of the interests of Labour in the House of Commons, hereby instructs the Parliamentary Committee to invite the co-operation of all the Co-operative, Socialistic, Trade Union, and other working-class organisations to jointly co-operate on lines mutually agreed upon in convening a Special Congress of representatives from such of the above-named organisations as may be willing to take part, to devise ways and means for the securing an increased number of Labour members in the next Parliament.”

This resolution was carried by 546 votes to 434, and a small Committee was appointed consisting of two representatives each from the Trades Union Congress, the Independent Labour Party, the Social Democratic Federation, and the Fabian Society, with Mr. Ramsay MacDonald as Secretary, to prepare an agenda for a special Conference which was to be called to implement the decision. This special Conference met at the Memorial Hall, London, on February 27th, 1900. There were 41 Trade Unions represented, with a membership of 353,070 ; 7 Trades Councils, with a combined membership of 101,000 ; and 3 Socialist Societies, with a membership of 22,861, giving a total affiliated membership, exclusive of Trades Councils, of 375,931. Mr. W. C. Steadman, President-elect of the Trades Union Congress, was elected Chairman, and Mr. J. Ramsay MacDonald, Secretary of the Conference. Two important resolutions were carried, the first moved by Mr. R. W. Jones (Upholsterers), and seconded by Mr. Gowel (Waiters' Union), being as follows:—

“ That this Conference is in favour of working-class opinion being represented in the House of Commons by men sympathetic with the aims and demands of the Labour Movements, and whose candidatures are promoted by one or other of the organised movements represented by the constitution which this Conference is about to frame.”

Mr. Keir Hardie moved the second resolution in favour of establishing a distinct Labour group in Parliament. Out of these two resolutions was born a new independent political organisation which was first known as the Labour Representation Committee, and afterwards became the National Labour Party as we know it to-day.

The importance of political action by Trade Unionists then took on a new significance, and we find that in 1901, the Miners' Federation, which had remained apart from the new organisation, decided to establish its own Parliamentary fund and to collect 1d. per month from its members for this purpose. In 1902, Mr. David Shackleton was returned unopposed for Clitheroe, and in the following year Mr. Will Crooks was elected for Woolwich, and Mr. Arthur Henderson for Barnard Castle, the latter winning the first three-cornered fight for Labour; it was the first decisive proof that Labour was capable of winning in a fight against both the Liberal and Tory parties. In 1906, the General Election was held, and this found the new party ready for the fight; 50 Labour candidates went to the poll, of whom 29 were successful.

Year by year the membership rose steadily, and in 1909, following the affiliation of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, it stood at just under 1,500,000. It is impossible in a brief review to detail the different stages of development, but the following table indicates both the steady advance of the Party's membership and its sustained progress at successive general elections :—

General Election.	Seats Contested.	Members Returned.	Labour Vote.	Party Membership.
1900	15	2	62,698	375,931
1906	50	29	323,195	921,280
1910 (Jan.)..	78	40	505,690	1,430,539
1910 (Dec.)..	56	42	370,802	1,430,539
1918	361	57	2,244,945	3,013,129
1922	414	142	4,236,733	3,311,036
1923	427	191	4,348,379	3,155,911
1924	514	151	5,551,549	3,194,399
1927	—	—	—	3,605,000

In 1923, the first Labour Government was formed. At the 1924 General Election, the Government was defeated, but Labour's aggregate vote was increased by nearly 1,250,000. The Labour Party is a national party, for, as Frederick Harrison said: "The working class is the only class which is not a class. It is the nation." To-day, the Labour Party in the House of Commons, with a membership of 157, is the second largest party in the State, and occupies the position of the Official Opposition, and is generally recognised as the only party capable of providing an alternative Government to the present Conservative Government. Such is the position at the end of exactly 30 years from the passing of the resolution at the Plymouth Trades Union Congress which led to the formation of a new independent political party.

With the solid accomplishments that lie to the credit of independent political action as the result of the decision of the Trades Union Congress, Mr. Sidney Webb deals elsewhere in these pages. By their decision at the Plymouth Congress in 1898, the representatives of the unions began the forging of an instrument which was an essential complement to their industrial organisation for securing their economic emancipation, and the coming of the Labour Party has changed the whole face of British politics. Political democracy is an accomplished fact, but the fight continues for the establishment of industrial democracy. In that fight, the Trades Union Congress, the political Labour Party, and the Co-operative Movement, are working in close association, each fulfilling its own special functions in such a way as to ensure co-ordination of effort and aim.



INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNIONISM



PARIS CONGRESS, 1927



BRITISH DELEGATION I.F.T.U. CONGRESS, PARIS, 1927

International Relationships



THE history of the British Trade Union Movement shows that many of its leaders have always been conscious of the need of uniting the workers internationally as well as organising them nationally. Before the Trades Union Congress itself was formed, prominent men, such as Mr. Applegarth and others, were participating in the International Association of Working Men, which was established in London in 1864. This organisation had for its fundamental aim the union of working men in all countries for the emancipation of labour, and declared that "the subjection of the men of labour to the men of capital lies at the bottom of all servitude, all social misery and all political dependence." The influence of the Trade Union leaders in that association was shown on the occasion of important struggles in which the workers were engaged. When in 1871, the workers in the engineering shops in the North were engaged in a long drawn-out struggle for a nine hours' day, it was through the agency of the International Working Men's Association that the immigration of strike breakers was stopped.

Fifty years ago, in 1878, Mr. George Shipton and some of his colleagues went to Paris to confer with French workmen on industrial questions. The French law was then unfavourable to any form of international association and the meeting was broken up, the French representatives being thrown into prison. In 1883, an international conference was held in Paris, consisting of British, Spanish, Italian, and French delegates. The Nottingham Trades Union Congress sent delegates to that conference, among them being Mr. H. Broadhurst. In August, 1886, French Trade Unionists organised an international conference on the occasion of an Exhibition that was being held in Paris. At that conference there were seven British delegates, among them being Mr. J. Mawdsley, the then Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee. In 1888, the Parliamentary

Committee of the Trades Union Congress organised an International Trades Union Congress, which was held in London from the 6th to 10th November, the subjects of debate including the following : (1) The most efficacious means for removing the obstacles to free combination in foreign countries ; (2) The best methods of combination among the workers in various countries ; and (3) The reduction of the hours of labour. A total of 116 delegates were present, representatives attending from France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, and Italy.

In regard to this international Congress the Parliamentary Committee issued a report, the tendency of which was unfavourable to holding another international conference for some time. Differences in the points of view of British Trade Union leaders and the Continental leaders were manifest, some of the latter preaching the efficacy of State aid rather than Trade Union organisation, and others, as Anarchists, advising universal strikes. Suspicions were also abroad as to the bona fide Trade Union character of some of the representatives attending international conferences. Later, international meetings were held in Paris, but the Parliamentary Committee did not take part in them, as bodies other than Trade Unions were allowed to participate.

For many years after this Congress, international Trade Union work was carried on by those societies which were associated with the various International Secretariats. Two years later, in 1890, the International Federation of Miners was formed, its office being established in Manchester. The late Mr. Thomas Ashton was the secretary and it held International Congresses annually at various towns on the Continent. In 1893, the International Metal Workers' Federation was set up, Mr. Charles Hobson of Sheffield being the secretary for the years 1896—1904. In the same year, the International Clothing Workers' Federation was established, and a year later the International Association of Textile Workers, the Secretariat of which organisation has always been in England. Mr. Tom Shaw, M.P., is now Secretary.

As time went on, other international secretariats were formed, until to-day there are 26 of them, with a total membership of more than 13,000,000. The majority of the members of the British Trades Union Congress are affiliated with these international trade secretariats.

Simultaneously with the work which was being carried on by individual unions of the Congress through their international secretariats, the T.U.C. Parliamentary Committee in its corporate capacity took every available opportunity of manifesting its belief in the principles of international working-class solidarity. It has given expression to these principles in many ways. Whenever it was possible, it has aided the working class of other countries financially. For instance, in 1907, when the men in the mines at Johannesburg struck against the introduction of cheap labour, it collected money from the affiliated Trade Unions in order to send financial assistance to the men in their struggle. In 1913, when the Transport Workers came out on strike in Dublin, the Parliamentary Committee sent, through the Co-operative Wholesale Society at Manchester, a ship-load of food every week to them and their families. During the war, the Parliamentary Committee collected money for the Belgian Trade Unionists, which was conveyed secretly through the German lines at opportune moments by one of their comrades. After the war, the Parliamentary Committee sent assistance through Co-operative Societies to the starving women and children in Austria. Money was sent to the famine districts in Russia and to the German Trade Unions when these organisations lost their funds in the currency debacle.

But not only in a financial manner has the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress served the cause of International Trade Unionism. It has participated in various international gatherings called in the interests of the working classes—in Peace Congresses, in meetings called to promote social legislation, in conferences on economic questions. In 1908, it sent representatives to Germany for the purpose of studying the social insurance systems in that country. Many times has the Parliamentary Committee sent deputations to the

Prime Minister and other members of the Government in order to promote some object affecting workers in other countries. For instance, in February, 1917, a communication was received from the late Mr. Sam Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor, drawing the attention of the Parliamentary Committee to a law which had been passed by the legislative Council of St. Christopher and Nevis in the West Indies prohibiting the formation of Trades and Labour organisations. Arrangements were immediately made for an interview with the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and an assurance obtained that immediately the war ended the law would be revoked. Within recent years there have been deputations to the Prime Minister with regard to trade with Russia and interviews held with the Secretary of State for India with regard to freedom of association and the settlement of disputes in that country.

From the year 1894, there has been an annual interchange of delegates between the American Federation of Labour and the British Trades Union Congress, and within recent years the British delegates have also paid a visit to the Confederation of Labour in Mexico. From 1913, fraternal delegates have attended the Congress of the organised Canadian Movement and delegates from the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada have spoken to the delegates at the British Congress. In this way the Labour Movements of America and Great Britain are brought every year into contact with each other, and by means of the reports of their respective representatives helped to overcome the difficulties that arise in industrial organisation.

In 1913, the Parliamentary Committee, pursuing its policy of keeping as much as possible in close touch with organisations abroad, sent invitations to the German and French Trade Union centres, to send representatives to the British Trades Union Congress. The invitations were accepted. The French Confederation of Labour sent Mr. Leon Jouhaux, who is now one of the most prominent of international leaders. From Germany came Herr Karl Legien, the President of the German Federation of Trade Unions and the Secretary of the International

Trade Union Bureau, which was afterwards to become the International Federation of Trade Unions. They made a great impression upon the delegates assembled at the Manchester Congress. The report of the proceedings states that at the conclusion of the German delegate's speech, there was a scene of remarkable enthusiasm and that the assembly rose *en masse* cheering lustily for several moments.

WAR PERIOD.

During the period of the war the British Trades Union Congress co-operated with the Executive Committee of the Labour Party in endeavouring to keep in touch with the workers abroad, and succeeded in formulating a common basis for peace, as embodied in the well-known memorandum on "War Aims." In August, 1920, the Congress and the Labour Party feeling certain that war was being engineered between the Allied Powers and the Soviet Union, warned the British Government that the whole of the organised power of the working-class would be used to defeat war. The Executives of the affiliated organisations throughout the country were summoned to hold themselves in readiness to proceed to London to attend a conference, and were advised to instruct their members to "down tools" on instructions from that Conference. A Council of Action was also constituted and funds raised by levy to enable it to function. As is known, the activity of this Council of Action saved the workers from the terrible calamity of another unnecessary war.

In 1923, in view of the fact that the Labour and Socialist International had been re-established, the Parliamentary Committee reported to Congress that they were of opinion it was no longer necessary to be affiliated to that international body. The Committee considered that there should be a clear delimitation of the political and industrial forces, by the Labour Party affiliating with the Labour and Socialist International and the Trades Union Congress with the International Federation of Trade Unions.

When the war came to an end, the Parliamentary Committee had immediately taken steps to re-build the International Trade Union Bureau, which before the outbreak of the war had functioned in Berlin. In taking this course, the Committee had in mind the instruction given to it by the Blackpool Congress of 1917, to develop internationally as well as nationally the work of the Congress. A conference was held at Berne in 1919, where it was definitely decided to reconstruct the organisation, and later in the same year, from the 28th July to 2nd August, meetings were held at Amsterdam, at which the Parliamentary Committee were represented and the rules of the I.F.T.U. were formulated.

The management of the organisation was vested in a Bureau, a Management Committee, and a Biennial Conference. To enable effective work to be done, it was agreed that an affiliation fee of £1 per 1,000 members should be paid by each affiliated centre. The rules were accepted at the British Trades Union Congress held at Glasgow, and since that time the British Trades Union Congress has taken a leading part in the work of the organisation. In recent years it has endeavoured to bring about the affiliation of the Russian Trade Unions, and for this purpose, and also to assist the Russian workers, the Anglo-Russian Joint Advisory Council was formed in April, 1925. This Council was discontinued in 1927 because of interference by the Russian Union in the affairs of the British Movement.

The General Council of the Trades Union Congress also played an important part in the establishment of the International Labour Organisation. The Supreme Allied Council on the 31st January, 1919, appointed a Commission on International Labour Legislation which consisted of two representatives of each of the Great Powers, and five representatives elected by the other Powers. The terms of reference of the Commission were as follows :—

“That a Commission, composed of two representatives apiece from the five Great Powers, and five representatives to be elected by the other Powers represented at the Peace Conference, be appointed to enquire into the conditions of employment from the international

aspect, and to consider the international means necessary to secure common action on matters affecting conditions of such employment, and to recommend the form of a permanent agency to continue such enquiry and consideration in co-operation with and under the direction of the League of Nations."

Soon after the appointment of the Commission, members of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress were summoned to consider with representatives of the British Government, proposals affecting Labour conditions from an international aspect. Their recommendations were submitted to the International Commission and with slight modifications eventually adopted.

The following methods and principles were included in the annex to the Constitution of the International Labour Organisation as being of special and urgent importance :—

First.—The guiding principle above enunciated that labour should not be regarded merely as a commodity or article of commerce.

Second.—The right of association for all lawful purposes by the employed as well as by the employers.

Third.—The payment to the employed of a wage adequate to maintain a reasonable standard of life as this is understood in their time and country.

Fourth.—The adoption of an eight-hours day or a forty-eight-hours week as the standard to be aimed at where it has not already been attained.

Fifth.—The adoption of a weekly rest of at least twenty-four hours, which should include Sunday wherever practicable.

Sixth.—The abolition of child labour and the imposition of such limitations on the labour of young persons as shall permit the continuation of their education and assure their proper physical development.

Seventh.—The principle that men and women should receive equal remuneration for work of equal value.

Eighth.—The standard set by law in each country with respect to the conditions of labour should have due regard to the equitable economic treatment of all workers lawfully resident therein.

Ninth.—Each State should make provision for a system of inspection, in which women should take part, in order to ensure the enforcement of the laws and make regulations for the protection of the employed.

Without claiming that these methods and principles were either complete or final, the High Contracting Parties to the Treaty were of opinion that they were well fitted to guide the policy of the League of Nations; and that, if adopted by the Industrial Communities who are members of the League, and safeguarded in practice by an adequate system of inspection, they would confer lasting benefits upon the wage-earners of the world.

At each Annual Conference of the International Labour Organisation, each State member undertakes to nominate non-Government delegates and advisers, in agreement with the industrial organisations which is the most representative of employers or workpeople. As the Trades Union Congress is regarded as the most representative body of workpeople in Great Britain, the Government has always sent to the Annual Conference of the International Labour Organisation, workers' delegates and advisers nominated by the General Council. In this way the Council has assisted in framing the numerous conventions and recommendations adopted by the International Labour Conference, many of which have passed into law.

The General Council has likewise always had one of its members, Mr. E. L. Poulton, J.P., serving on the Governing Body of this institution.

The Annual Conference affords an opportunity for the workers of the various member States to meet together and form a Workers' Group—which is the largest and most representative body of organised workers in the world. Recently, the General Council has taken the opportunity of calling together the representatives in this Group coming from the nations of the British Commonwealth, in order to discuss matters of common interest. On July 2nd to 6th, 1928, under the auspices of the Labour Party Executive and the General Council, they met together with delegates from political organisations and held the

British Commonwealth Labour Conference, when the following subjects were discussed :—

1. Racial Problems and Problems of Government.
2. Inter-Commonwealth Relations : Political.
3. World Peace.
4. State Trading within the British Commonwealth.
5. Migration.
6. Inter-Commonwealth Labour Relations : Industrial and Political.
7. Social Insurance Schemes : Reciprocity.

In conclusion, the immense economic problems facing the world caused the League of Nations to convene an International Economic Conference in May, 1927. At that meeting, Mr. A. Pugh, of the General Council, voiced the views of the organised workers of Great Britain. The same member represents them on the Economic Consultative Committee which has been formed to give effect to the recommendations of the Conference.



The Congress and its Newspaper

By ROBERT WILLIAMS



HE parent of the present *Daily Herald* was a four-page strike sheet issued by the printers during the printing strike and lockout early in 1911, to controvert the lies and misrepresentations of the Press. The first issue appeared on January 25th, 1911, with a committee in charge of the editing, very little money, and a very scratch staff.

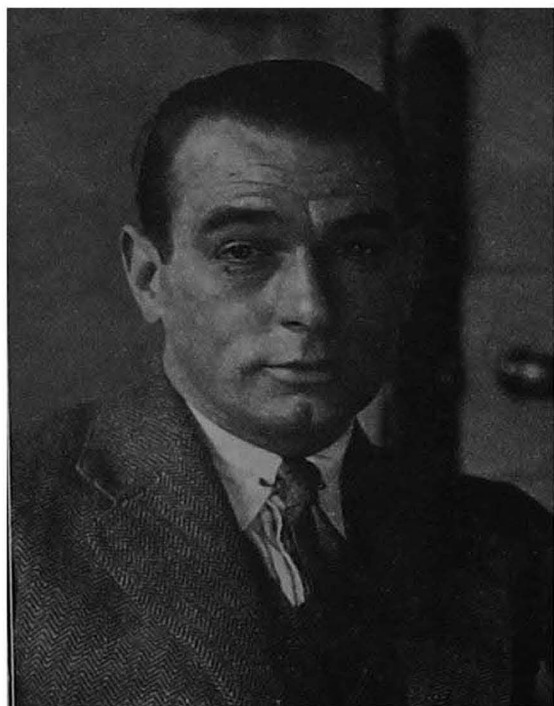
At the end of January, there was a threat of a national printing lock-out. By February, the paper had increased its size and its circulation, and great hopes were entertained of being able to transform the strike sheet into a permanent Labour daily; but on April 28th, 1911, shortly after the ending of the strike and lock-out, the paper had to close down. It had achieved its main object with the success of the strike.

The idea of a permanent *Daily Herald*, however, had taken strong hold, and a provisional committee was set up to negotiate its re-starting. The personnel of the committee changed from time to time, but amongst the various members were G. A. Isaacs, T. E. Naylor, T. G. Newland, H. H. Slessor, W. F. Rean, H. W. Hobart, J. F. Green, R. Morris, J. F. McRae, W. H. Seed, J. E. Pierce, J. T. Hayward, David Walls, C. Callaghan, A. Evans, W. Scoggins, J. C. Gordon, H. A. Beazley, and Tom Scanlan. To this number later on were added Ben Tillett, George Lansbury, C. W. Bowerman, William Matkin, and others. I was co-opted during the London Dock Strike, 1912.

By March, 1912, The Daily Herald Printing and Publishing Society Limited had been formed, and on April 15th, 1912, the first issue of the *Daily Herald* appeared. It was a twelve-page paper, slightly larger in size than the present *Daily Herald*, under the editorship of W. H. Seed.

Our editorial policy was independent and "unofficial Labour," the combined newspaper experience of the directors

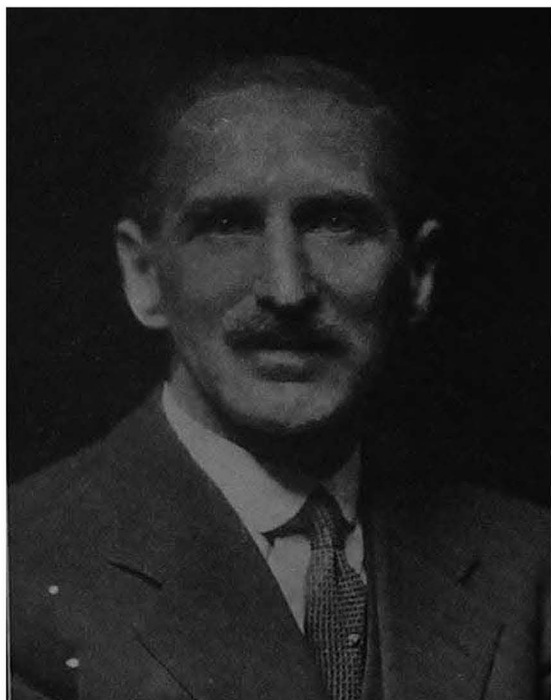
"DAILY HERALD" MANAGEMENT.



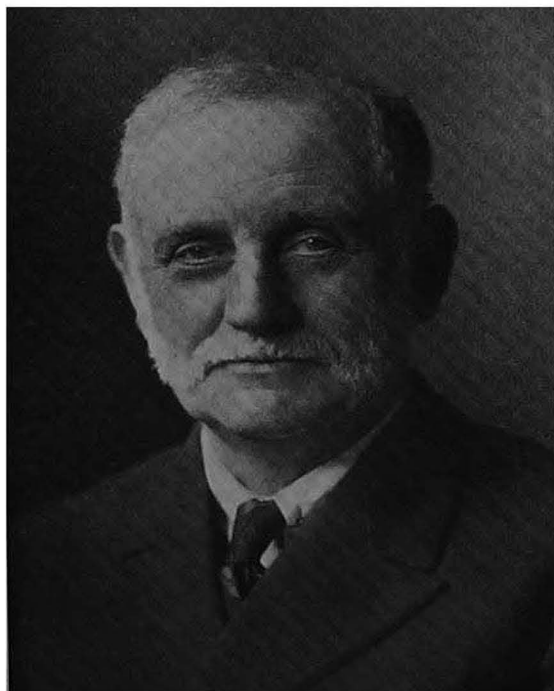
W. MELLOR
(Editor of the "Daily Herald.")



R. WILLIAMS
(Manager of the "Daily Herald.")



W. ACHESON BARROW
(Manager of Victoria House Printing Co.)



GEO. LANSBURY
(Late editor of the "Daily Herald.")

THE "DAILY HERALD"



PUBLISHING OFFICE



LINOTYPE OPERATOR



**A CORNER OF THE COMPOSING ROOM
SETTING THE PAPER**

nil, and our capital £300 ! But our faith was audacious and our optimism incorrigible.

Our first Board Meeting after the paper started was held in a public house in Fetter Lane. From thenceforward, life was a series of financial crises, but there was never a whisper of giving in. Time after time, the generosity of friends—rich and poor—who believed in the paper, saved us from bankruptcy. The occasion I remember best, was that on which for three days we brought out the paper with the brokers actually in possession of the office. When the vans came to take away our furniture, George Lansbury, Ben Tillett, and I, stood in the door and parleyed, and once more, just in the nick of time, the money turned up from somewhere, our tables and chairs were bought back again, and the title and copyright of the paper were sold to George Lansbury by the Official Receiver for £100.

"Through vicissitudes many and often," we carried on until the outbreak of war in 1914 compelled us to close down as a daily.

From the day of our first issue, our printers, The Victoria House Printing Company Limited, in which Lansbury was a director and shareholder, were our splendid friends, time and time again helping us out of almost insuperable difficulties.

The *Daily Herald*, always an advocate of progress, naturally played a very large part in the Women's Suffrage Movement. On May 2nd, 1913, *The Suffragette* was raided by the police with the idea of preventing further publication. An appeal was made to us to assist, and Mr. Drew, the manager of Victoria House, undertook to print the paper. Its reappearance and ready sale in the streets turned the laugh against Scotland Yard, but for his sins Mr. Drew was sentenced to two months' imprisonment.

From August, 1914, until March, 1919, the *Herald* appeared as a weekly, and financially it was the easiest time in our history. We continued our policy of championing forlorn hopes and the cause of the downtrodden and oppressed. Unions in dispute always came to us for the fair statement of their case which they could get from no other daily organ of the Press. When

on one memorable occasion, we met our "Carterloo," reciprocal treatment from the Trade Union Movement quickly came to our rescue.

We proposed starting again as a daily in March, 1919, and wanted to tell the world. We engaged the Albert Hall and planned a huge demonstration. Four days before the day on which the meeting was to take place, the authorities of the Hall cancelled their contract with us, and refused any discussion of the matter. Lansbury approached the Home Secretary and the Prime Minister who intimated that the Government had no power to intervene. The Electrical Trades Union, however, informed the Albert Hall authorities that unless the *Herald* was allowed to hold its meeting, the electric supply to the Hall would be cut off, and eventually the authorities gave way.

We received application for 30,000 tickets and held two meetings instead of one!

Throughout the war period, the weekly *Herald* worked continuously against war, conscription, Secret Treaties, and all the doctrines of hate. We fought against profiteering and made the bravest show in increasing the separation allowances of all Service-men. We welcomed the two Russian revolutions because we believed they meant peace for the Russian people.

On March 31st, 1919, we re-started as a daily. An attempt was made to run the paper without racing tips—an idealistic experiment we found it impossible to continue.

We denounced the Treaty of Versailles; we continued to advocate, as we had always done in the weekly, peace between Russia and Germany and the rest of the world. The Government complimented us by issuing on June 23rd, 1919, the following Secret Army Order to officers commanding in the

Rhine districts. We were able to print the text of the Order on July 19th, 1919 :—

"To all units.

"Bundles containing copies of the Daily Herald newspaper are being received at railhead. If addressed to units under your command will you please ensure that no copies are issued to the troops, and give instructions for them to be collected and burnt at your Brigade Post Office under the supervision of an officer.

"It is important that the collecting and burning of these papers involve as little publicity as possible.

"H.Q.

(Sgd.)

".....Division. ".....Major Divison."

From 1919 to 1922, the problems of finance became a veritable nightmare. Owing to the war, all production costs had increased enormously. Debentures were issued and were taken up by Unions, Labour Party branches, Co-operative Societies, and private individuals, but at no time did the money come in fast enough to secure the capital necessary for putting the paper on a safe footing. In 1920, Councils of Action were formed by the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party to prevent the participation of Great Britain against Russia in the Russo-Polish war. The *Herald*, of course, threw its whole weight against intervention, and the Government retorted categorically that the *Herald* was being financed by the Soviet Government. As a matter of simple fact, not a penny of Soviet money was ever received or used by the *Herald*.

Early in 1922, it was felt that everything which could be done to enable the paper to carry on on independent "unofficial" lines had been tried, and that the one method of ensuring its continued existence lay in handing it over to the official Trade Union and Labour Movement.

In July, 1922, therefore, The Daily Herald Limited Company was wound up by resolution of the Debenture Holders, and the paper was taken over by The Victoria House Printing Company,

the Debenture Holders either relinquishing their debentures as a gift to the paper, or taking up Preference Shares in Victoria House, in exchange.

At the Labour Party Conference in Edinburgh in June, and at the Trades Union Congress at Southport in September, 1922, it was resolved by an overwhelming majority in each case, that these two bodies should take over the *Daily Herald* on behalf of the organised Labour Movement. Congress resolution ran :—

“That in order to enable the Labour Movement to acquire and run its own newspaper and any other publications considered necessary by the two National Committees,

“The annual affiliation fee be increased from 1d. to 3d. per member, such increased fee to be paid quarterly.”

The Ordinary Shareholders in The Victoria House Printing Company surrendered all their cash claims against the Company and all their shares in the Company to Lansbury, in order that all the shares, including his own, might be handed over with the paper to the Movement. In assuming responsibility for the paper, the Movement did not take over any liabilities other than such as are represented by Preference Shares held by Trade Unions and other friends in The Victoria House Printing Company.

When in September, 1922, the paper became the property of the official Labour Movement, Lansbury, who had been editor since October, 1913, resigned, and, on his recommendation, Hamilton Fyfe was appointed as his successor.

Our financial troubles were not yet over, and by August, 1923, the end of the paper seemed once more imminent. The General Council and the Labour Party financed us until Congress met at Plymouth in September, 1923, but threw on the delegates the responsibility of deciding whether or not the paper should continue.

“Carry on,” said Congress, and a scheme for the most rigorous economy was effected to tide the paper over a lean period. This was owing to the *Herald* having mortgaged its financial future during the costly years of 1922 and 1923. •

In March, 1925, on Lansbury's resignation, I was appointed General Manager of the *Daily Herald*, and Secretary of The Victoria House Printing Company Limited. On August 31st, 1926, Hamilton Fyfe left us, and William Mellor was promoted to the editorial chair.

To-day, under a directorate of representatives of the Trades Union Congress General Council and the Labour Party Executive, with this year's Chairman of Congress, Ben Turner, as Chairman of our Board, we are carrying on as the voice of organised Labour. The present Board is as follows:—For the T.U.C.: Ben Turner (Chairman), W. M. Citrine, G. Hicks, A. Pugh, A. A. Purcell. For the Labour Party: C. T. Cramp, H. Morrison. Changes are in prospect which will place the paper entirely in the control of the T.U.C. General Council, which will continue its policy of interpreting the aims and aspirations of organised labour; our *raison d'être* is the championing of the cause of the common people. We are at once the best-loved and the best-hated newspaper in the country.

The *Daily Herald* is a standing challenge to the Capitalist Press combines which threaten, as their trustification schemes quietly but surely widen to include the provincial as well as the national newspapers they already own, to make the freedom of the Press a byword and a thing of the past.

In Victoria House, under the General Managership of J. Atcheson Barrow, the Movement has a printing business of which it may well be proud. To a connoisseur of print, THE PELICAN PRESS imprint is the hall-mark of good taste and excellent workmanship.

To mention individually all those who have helped to build up our paper is impossible. They have come from all classes—and yet from only one—the believers in the Commonweal. To thousands, the personality of George Lansbury is, and must always be, inseparable from the *Daily Herald*. No one man gave or could give more of himself; but just in how far the love and loyalty of thousands has made his work for the paper possible, let him tell. I quote from "The Miracle of Fleet

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Street," to which also I gladly acknowledge my indebtedness for details.

"Again, in money, I record the simple fact that those who value *The Daily Herald* owe thanks a hundredfold to the brave band of bonny fighters who refused to be terrorised, and, with great faith, started the paper on that memorable day, April 15th, 1912, with a paltry capital of £300.

"We also owe a debt, none of us will ever be able to pay, to the vast army of men, women, and children who sent an answer to every appeal—some their jewels, some thousands, some hundreds, and some single pounds, and tens of thousands who sent us sixpences and shillings.

"The people—and their name is Legion—who have given and are still giving time, energy, devotion, and money—may now rest assured that their labour, service, and love are not in vain.

"We shall establish a great Press not to-day, perhaps, not to-morrow, but, sure as the sun will rise, so sure is it that in the fullness of time our mighty Movement shall come into its own, and the daily dissemination of the principles of Socialism shall be accomplished."

"The Miracle of Fleet Street," Lord Northcliffe called the *Daily Herald*. The day of Miracles is not yet over, I would add!

This story cannot be concluded without one passing reference to the printing by Victoria House of the *British Worker* for the Trades Union Congress as the most deadly reply to the gross misrepresentation of the Government's *British Gazette*, during the National Strike in May, 1926.

