ASBESTOS

VOL. III. ROCHDALE, JANUARY, 1920. No. 9.



This allegorical drawing, by Bernard Partridge, is our "House Mark." It represents "Asbestos" standing between Civilization and the destructive elements.

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ASBESTOS

VOL. III. ROCHDALE, JANUARY, 1920. NO. 9.

Thoughts from the Editor's Fireside.

The Status of the Worker.

THE mere act of writing such a title as the above causes the mind to describe a course similar to that of a boomerang. Slavery—serfs and thing-men—redemption servants—the era of unjust land-laws—the industrial exploitation of labour. Then, the fight for association—for the right of combined action—which, rightly or wrongly, the worker believes has been countered step by step, when not openly, then by amalgamation, groupings and poolings.

The Great War comes like a thunderbolt in a lowering sky hitherto lit by the mildest of sheet lightning.

The storm abates, and a new world is heralded.

But a lot has happened during the storm period, and "a new world" carries widely-differing meanings to different minds.

"We are being betrayed," says the worker; "let us strike for our just rights before Capital has time to re-erect her defences."

"Be patient," counsel the official Leaders of Labour.

"Throw the old Leaders out," cry the shop stewards and the hot-heads generally: "they have lost their grip; they cannot longer fight; they are bought!"

And the voice of the wild men prevailed.

But the Government remembered its office, and appeal to the sanity of the people was not made in vain.

Have we, then, done with the matter? Far from it.

How often, during the great Railway Strike, was to be heard the puzzled question: "Who wants the railwayman to have less than £2 per week?"

Back of this query is to be found the crux of the whole trouble we are now experiencing.

What is to be the post-war status of the worker? How is England to be made a land fit for heroes to live in?

History teaches with no uncertain voice that Revolution will not serve. Apart from the examples provided by the French and Russian Revolutions—whose lessons are plain—it is not too much to say that the status of the worker has never been improved by revolutionary methods. Revolution has done nothing for the worker which could not have been better done by reason and evolution.

Progress has been retarded for periods

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of varying lengths by Revolution, and only after the upheaval has subsided, and men have again become sobered, when orderly and evolutionary methods have been restored, is it possible to again advance upon lines which have any prospect of security and permanency.

And we venture to predict that the latest idea in Revolution will fare no better than those of the sanguinary type—we refer to the published intention of the Trade Unions Congress Parliamentary Committee to act in concert with the Central Board of the Co-operative Union for the purpose of controlling and ensuring food and money for a Grand Hold Up of the Nation.

In this connection we have been charged with exaggeration in exposing the dangerous tendency of certain proposals. But we would ask any serious student of current events what he makes of these incidents of very recent occurrence.

On 19th October (Sunday) at Whitefields Tabernacle, Mr. Harry Gosling, President of the National Transport Federation, said: " We want a Supreme Council . . . he was almost afraid to give it a name until they got a little further advanced—a Supreme Head." What did they want this substitute for the Parliament of the People for? Here is his answer: " Whatever you do, be sure to be ready to fight." " They would very soon show him (the Capitalist) they could manage without him."

On Armistice Day, when most of us were thinking of Our Glorious Dead, the wild men were urging their hearers (at the Kingsway Hall) to " imitate Russia." On November 15th, Mr. Robert Williams asked Irishwomen (at the Albert Hall) to " feed your children with hatred of the governing classes of England."

Mr. Henry Alexander, late Hon. National Treasurer of the British Socialist Party, and its representative on the Executive of the London Labour Party, and Mr. E. C. Fairchild, until recently the editor of the party's official organ, " The Call," have resigned their membership of the party. They disagree with the advocacy of forcible revolution in preference to action through Parliament, municipal bodies, and trade unions.

We have never gone further than the position indicated by these statements and facts.

We have also been accused of championing Capital in these Notes. We do nothing of the kind. We are honestly trying to find the middle way to Peace, Progress and Prosperity. We may all be sure the *middle* way is the right way.

What, then, does Labour now want? In our view, she is out for security in progressive status.

What is Capital's case? Alongside security in progressive status for the worker should be security in progressive production.

Is the one incompatible with the other?

At the risk of reiteration, we say No! Decidedly not!

We shall be delighted to find that there is neither necessity nor desire to reduce the wage of any worker, however high the wage may be.

We shall be more delighted still to find it is possible to maintain the high rate of wages in the face of falling prices, so that the workers may win both on " the swings and the roundabouts." The confidence which would thereby be reflected by the workers in the readjusted system would be well worth the money.

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During the difficult transition period of " From War to Work," the status of the worker is in a state of flux—it is both fluid and unstable. The worker is right in his endeavour to ensure that there shall be no slipping back. Apart from the wage question, the improvement in his status as a result of the war perhaps does not amount to much. The men-folk have surely benefitted somewhat in a broadening of the mind while on active service, and if they have found a new sideboard or piano installed by reason of the munition service of the wife or family upon return, so much to the good. We do not agree that the workers who have invested in furniture have done foolishly, providing, of course, purchases have been made with discretion. And, in any case, that is the workers' private concern.

The result of 40 years' popular education was being seen long before the war, and many a worker had alternately dreamed of acquiring, and despaired of getting, a piano " some day." The war merely accelerated things by providing a wider outlook and a little more cash at one and the same time.

This enlargement of view has penetrated all classes during the war, and none so much as that we term the working class. It is not a bad thing in itself—it is only so in its exaggerated application.

The great difficulty with which we are met in attempting to solve this problem is simply the difficulty of the inefficient.

The Unions do right in fighting for a minimum living wage, but they do wrong in making it difficult or impossible for an employer to pay according to ability. That has been the effect of the action of the Unions for the past 25 years to our personal knowledge.

We have this problem to face therefore, that the status to be ensured is that of the general body of workers, and this can only be done by lumping the inefficient with the efficient and averaging the result.

The trouble that arises at this point is that so many people translate this problem in terms of a search for the minimum wage. They cling to the old idea that the worker's status should be such that he and his should be easily distinguished by home, clothes, and food. We say this is a morally wrong view.

Most workers have family pride and technical pride, both of which are worth cultivating from mercenary as well as high motives.

Wages should be absolutely independent of, and considered apart from, the rise and fall in prices. Wages should be based upon production only, and no good reason has yet been advanced (or if it has, we have not seen it) why a limit should be put to the wage earning capacity of any man. The reason for a lot of the workers' bitterness is to be found here, and the blame is to be equally apportioned as between the reactionary employer and the blindness of Trades Unionism—piece rate cutting on the one hand, and on the other the effect of Union rules, which result in production being retarded to the pace of the slowest man in the shop, and in the impossibility of recognising efficiency over the standard rate.

If only the Leaders of the Great Trade Unions—who know, and have not feared to declare their knowledge—if only they could persuade their followers of the urgent need of readjusting industry on a totally different basis!

We who are associated with the Asbestos and Rubber Industry are already

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showing the way. We have our Workers' and Officers' Committees in the Factory, we have them working together in the Employees' Council, and we have our National Joint Industrial Council, where the representatives of the five Trades Unions in the Industry meet the employers' representatives to some purpose, both in the direction of ensuring progressive status for the worker and in clearing away the many obstacles to progressive production.*

All Trades Union Leaders must know, and they should plainly say that the principle of assured progressive status for the worker is impossible without the corollary principle of assured progressive production. There must be no restriction of output if there is to be no restriction of workers' status—meaning in the first place, wages.

In all fairness it must be stated that the second principle does not exist (except perhaps in the isolated case of the Asbestos Industry) as yet. The minimum wage and the maximum working hours have been won by the workers generally without any recognition of the plain duty of minimum output, which should have gone alongside them.

Now this cannot go on indefinitely. There is a limit to the capacity of Industry to pay, and this limit is governed by its capacity to produce. If the worker's capacity to produce is an indefinite quantity, so may his demands on the wage bill be. But if he be determined to limit his capacity to produce, no power on earth, or in Heaven, can stave off the moment when he will find he has " milked the cow dry."

We know that a certain class of agitator views this latter prospect with equanimity. He tells us he is working for it—it means " the end of the life of wage slavery," etc. (*vide* our correspondent in another column). But when this happens—which God forfend—where are we? Our export trade gone ; our Empire dissolved (because our Colonies do not contemplate being dragged at the wheels of a modern Tribune Lunacy) ; want, yea ! starvation would soon stare the population of our country in the face—and then, the end !

What would then be the status of the worker? What is the status of the worker in Russia to-day? A degradation such as has not been known since the French Revolution, and such, before that, as had not been known since the days of serfdom.

The vocal leaders of Capital and Labour are not so far apart mentally ; we venture to assert they are nearer one another to-day than they have been since the inception of the factory system in British Industry. The pity of it is, these enlightened leaders have such a dead mass of ignorance to carry with them, and this remark applies with equal force to both sides. This dead mass of ignorance weighs like the hand of Death itself on the hearts of those of us who are honestly trying to hasten the advent of Industrial Peace. It has made many an employer slip his high ideals for the good of his workers, and many Trades Union leaders and Social Workers retire into hopeless obscurity.

The current issue of " ASBESTOS," the house organ of the Turner Brothers Asbestos Co. Ltd., Rochdale, is a delightful number, exquisitely printed and exceptionally well edited, and contains a number of striking articles of general interest on topics not usually found in such publications. It is readable from cover to cover.—" *The British Export Gazette.*"

* See report elsewhere " The Joint Industrial Council."

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Editorial Notes.

OUR POLICY.

Mr. Joseph Nuttall, President of the Rochdale Weavers' Association, charges us with a lot of things in his letter, which we print verbatim elsewhere, the sum of his accusation being that we were guilty of partisanship in our last issue. Surely it is a novel charge to lay against us with the evidence produced, *i.e.*, that Mr. R. Turner, who wrote on "Trades Unionism as the Enemy of Democracy," does not represent Labour. How does the truth of this assertion affect us either way? The columns of this journal are as free to Mr. Joseph Nuttall as to Mr. R. Turner. We have repeatedly thrown out invitations to Labour leaders to present their case in their own way. And in criticising Mr. Entwistle's letter, Mr. Nuttall is in no better case. In commenting upon Mr. Entwistle's letter, in our last issue, we said: "If there is any argument to present on the other side these columns are open for their frank statement by any workman or other champion." In the absence of a reasoned statement of the case from the other side, we reproduce Mr. Nuttall's letter as received.

We cannot, however, allow the assertion that "the Trade Union representatives did not appeal to their people to work overtime" to stand, and we therefore print (with Mr. Nuttall's letter) extracts from letters received from Mr. James Collings, President, and Mr. H. H. Duke, General Secretary, of the Amalgamated Society of India Rubber, Cable and Asbestos Workers; Mr. R. W. Leach, Joint (Operatives') Secretary of the National Joint Industrial Council of the Asbestos Manufacturing Industry; Mrs. Leonora Cohen, District Organiser of the National Union of General Workers; and Mr. Joseph Blades, District Organiser of the Workers' Union. (The two latter are reproduced as evidence that the officials of other Unions take no exception to the contents of our last issue.) These extracts will be found immediately following Mr. Nuttall's letter—we have omitted non-essential matter only, and the originals may be seen by any responsible Trade Union official.

* * *

A VICTORY FOR LOYALTY.

As a set-off against Mr. Entwistle's castigation of our workers in our last issue, on account of their refusal (and the manner of their refusal) to work overtime up to the limit of the old ordinary time (55½ hours), in order to meet an extraordinary situation, we have now to record with unfeigned pleasure the fact that, the workers having had time to think, reason has prevailed, as we contend it always will in the long-run with the British worker. Mr. Entwistle is at least entitled to take credit for one thing, in our opinion, *i.e.*, the result of that peculiarity in the mentality of the Britisher which permits of a friend calling him a fool for his own good.

* * *

EFFICIENCY AND STATUS.

For all who have "to work for their living," there is a distinct relationship between efficiency and status—barring out "luck" for the moment. The reasoning of Mr. P. O. Wittey (see article "Are We Efficient?") is in our opinion sound, and our own remarks under "Fireside" notes are best read in conjunction with those of our contributor.

We say the Unions "do wrong in making it difficult or impossible for an employer to pay according to ability." The latest phase, in opposing the co-partnership principle, is, of course, the logically absurd conclusion. The result of the case (which is now being fought out in the courts) to test the right claimed by the Unions to expel members who accept co-partnership arrangements, will mark a decided, and a highly important, step forward or backward. Should the Unions establish their claim, they will have digged a pit for their own burial.

We view the progress of Industry from the inception of the Factory System in the

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form of a triangle. The base represents the purely individualistic period when every man—Capitalist and worker alike—fought for his own hand. The two sides connecting with the base represent the cleavage of Capital and Labour, and the commencement of the great struggle for security on the part of the worker. Capital and Labour have each been climbing up his side of the triangle since the time of the recognition of trade unions, and we calculate the position to-day to approximate three-quarters of the journey, to the meeting place at the apex of the triangle, to be accomplished. A little more patience, a little more goodwill, a little more education on both sides, and the victory is won.

• • •

" LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP ! "

A homely—and timely—admonition. We commend the review of Mr. C. E. Raine's book, " The Nationalisation Peril," appearing elsewhere, under the above heading, to the attention of our readers. We have nothing to add to the remarks which appeared under Editorial Notes in our last issue—our view is very ably represented pictorially in the cartoon which will be found in the centre of this issue.

• • •

LENIN'S ADDRESS.

Lenin has made a great discovery—that Revolution won't take the place of Work. Most civilised people had some glimmering of this truth what time they learnt that twice two make four, but to Lenin it is a Revelation of mature years. He has issued a pamphlet of 46 pages, and we have thought it well to review this (see " The Russian Soviets and the Industries " elsewhere). He is now crying for the *bourgeois* (the middle class) he has killed or otherwise scattered to the four winds. He wants the engineers, the chemists, the accountants, etc., back. Presently he will want the Capital—and the Capitalists. The review is well worth reading.

• • •

AMALGAMATION.

The attention of our readers is directed to the notice which is reproduced immediately following these Notes. It will be seen that we are coupling up with two other concerns which are in the nature of technical complements to our own Organisation. There is no doubt the result will prove of advantage to our business friends.

• • •

THE GREAT SILENCE.

There is nothing we can say of the Great Sacrament of Silence in commemoration of Our Glorious Dead which took place throughout the Empire on the 11th day of the 11th month, at the 11th hour, that had not been better unsaid. We wish only to place on permanent record the manner in which it was honoured in our own organisation. The engines slowed down just before 11 o'clock, the whistles blew as the Town Clock struck, and everyone stood or sat exactly where he or she happened to be for two minutes. What a long time it seemed! And is it little wonder that emotions were stirred in remembering under a voluntary ban of silence breathing the grand ritual of a Great Sacrifice and a Great Deliverance.

• • •

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

While welcoming the birth of this great ideal, we were constrained in a former issue to utter a word of warning, and we concluded: " To weld together the several links in the British League of Nations and to consolidate our friendship with the Great Republics are not unprofitable spare-time occupations." Nothing has occurred since to warrant the striking of a wider note. We are pleased, however, to observe the attitude of our leading Statesmen, as explained by Mr. Balfour in saying " he was not prepared seriously to discuss with any man what the future of international policy should be unless he was prepared to accept in some form a League of Nations, or tell him what substitute he proposed."

An extremely significant occurrence was reported in October—an occurrence which points the way to safety, and to the higher ideal when the latter comes within the range of practical politics. Some

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suggestion was thrown out to cede British Guiana to the United States in liquidation of war debt. The Legislature of the West Indies immediately took alarm, and as the result of an urgent cable strongly protesting that such a step would arouse " the acute resentment of the whole community," the proposal (if it had reached that stage) was dropped. The countries on the outer fringe see the need of a British League more clearly than those nearer home.

We are at one with Lord Milner in our belief in the destiny of the British Empire. We have no liking for the " bombast of drum-and-trumpet Imperialism." Nevertheless, we conceive the League of Nations, which we call the British Empire, has been drawn, thrown, clamped, and welded together for a high purpose. Certainly it is fulfilling a high mission in establishing Peace and Justice, and to us at home in providing food and work.

As Lord Milner says : " We need these countries. Their products are vital to our own industries. Our trade with them is essential to our own prosperity, and there could have been no trade to speak of without the peace and order that we have established.

" It is pure nonsense to talk of that trade, the trade of India, of Egypt, of West Africa, of Malaya, of the West Indies, as if it mattered only to ' capitalists.'

" Where would the workers be without the cotton, the jute, the rubber, the tin, the vegetable and mineral oils, not to mention the foodstuffs, tea, coffee, cocoa, fruit, all of which come largely or wholly from these countries under the British flag? "

And " the better conditions of life, which all Social Reformers long for, are unattainable without them."

Yes ; let us not neglect our own doorstep in looking after the houses of our friends.

* * *

NATURE TALKS.

Mr. B. R. Walmsley's article describing the habits of " Some Birds of our District " is exceeding pleasing and informative. We have arranged to reserve space for Mr. Walmsley to continue these talks, and we have no doubt they will interest a very much wider circle of our readers than those who live in the valley of the Roach.

The birds which illustrate Mr. Walmsley's article were secured locally, and are to be found in the Rochdale Museum. Permission to photograph and reproduce was readily granted by the Library Committee through the kind offices of Mr. R. J. Gordon.

* * *

ANOTHER OF 'EM.

Itoko Oju Agemo Street,
Abeokuta,
October 4th, 1919.

Sir,

Hope you are pretty well and to remind you about my application of the 16/8/19 I think will duly handed to your possession I wish you to send me cotton goods tabacco and so forth Such as Biscuits and floral Spirit Beer ginger ale, Ciggarrett, Kolawine, I want to remind you for my previous letter dated on the 16/8/19 which I mentioned for produce as my formerly letter. I wish you to shipping them through Bank I have been ready for Security and everythings do kindly reply me of this letter because am ready now to be trading with you, but I want to know what are your going to do with me, and to prepear for argreement between you I, and to supply me assorted provisions such as Sandine, Salmon, Corn beef, Butter, and give the authority to the Bank and to give everythings freely of charge and price that you may offer me, as soon as I sell it finish I will Blance to Bank, do urgent reply.

faithfully yours
S. O. and son.

* * *

It is meet and seemly that the Law and the " Profits " should be confided to Father Abraham's bosom, and that to St. Peter should be confided the duty of mapping the safest routes to the Better Land, but it no more follows that our General Office is Heaven, than it is to be expected the Men's Hockey Team should always win because of a Bullock and a Mad(d)ox in the first line. So that's enough about it.

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TURNER BROTHERS ASBESTOS COMPANY LIMITED,
ROCHDALE.

THE WASHINGTON CHEMICAL COMPANY LIMITED,
WASHINGTON STATION, Co. DURHAM.

NEWALL'S INSULATION COMPANY LIMITED,
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

The Directors of the above Companies beg to announce that it is their intention to submit proposals to the shareholders with a view to the amalgamation of the three Companies.

The amalgamation is to be of such a character as will permit each hitherto separate Company to retain its name and to maintain its present policy.

Each of the Companies, after amalgamation, will continue to be separately operated by its present Directors and Personnel.

The Directors expect, as a result of this proposed change—increased efficiency. They hope to attain this by eliminating duplication in manufacture, by pooling manufacturing knowledge, and by conducting joint research. As a result, it is confidently expected, that more advantageous service than in the past will be at the disposal of the customers of the three Companies.

NOVEMBER, 1919.

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Look Before You Leap.

The Nationalisation Peril, by G. E. Raine. Thornton Butterworth, London. Price 3/6 net.

"NATIONALISATION" is a good long word which trips pleasantly off the tongue; most of the people who use it have no very clear idea of what it means, but employ it simply to describe some vague industrial Better Land where everyone would get more money for doing less work, or else—more simply still—just as a handy term of abuse to sling at a capitalist. But in point of fact Nationalisation does mean something—and something quite important in the long-run to every individual worker; and as this something seems to be on the high road to realisation, it behoves workers to see for themselves what it is, and to make up their minds about it. If it is good, let us by all means let this good work go on; if it is dangerous and mischievous, let us cease to waste good time over bad dreams.

Observe in the first place that some evidence on which to form an opinion exists. The facts about the working of Nationalisation in countries which have tried it—in France, in Australia, in Germany, its home—are known, and Mr. Raine has put them on record. Germany has actually attempted the nationalisation of mines, and a German Committee which inquired into the results of the experiment last March reported unanimously that "the entire management of the mines by the State on the ordinary bureaucratic lines would seriously interfere with their economic exploitation. *Every extension of State undertakings was uneconomic.*" "It would not be progress, but rather retrogression," they found, "if the rights of the present owners were transferred to the workers." They came to the painful conclusion that a concern with one experienced owner is more likely to be prosperous than a similar concern with several hundreds or thousands of inexperienced owners." That is Germany's contribution to the quest for truth in this matter.

Now for Australia's. What Australia has discovered is that the rare and refreshing fruit promised by the nationaliser is a mirage. "The State," writes Mr. Eggleston, a friendly witness, "works on capitalistic lines. It conducts industries on similar lines to individualist industry. Its employees are wage-slaves just as much and no more than those of private employers." A strike in a New South Wales State department began the industrial upheaval in Australia in 1917, which threw nearly 100,000 out of work. It is the same story everywhere. "From all points of view," declared M. Leroy Beaulieu in 1912, "the experience of State Railways in France is unfavourable." And in France the test is direct, for they have private and State railways working side by side.

Should we do better? Here again it is a matter of facts, not opinions. Mr. Raine has collected them in his chapter called "State Stunts." Let us pick out a few examples at random of the working of "Nationalised" enterprises in this country. The Finance Committee of the Metropolitan Water Board announce an estimated deficit in the near future of £900,000 a year. The loss for the current year is estimated at £746,000. Our State-owned telephones had a deficit of £100,000 in 1914-15, and of £120,000

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in 1915-16. What the deficit is now nobody seems to know. The history of the "Nationalised" war enterprises is well-known and uniform. The canteen accounts show a loss of £155,000 on sales of a little over £1,000,000; an explosive factory built at a cost of £1,300,000 produced in the one year for which it worked £16,000 worth of explosives; an abandoned factory at Kenbury involved the nation in a loss of £647,499, and that is not the final figure. The "National Shipyards" fiasco is matter of history. The moral of these and dozens of similar discreditable failures is enshrined in the report of the Commissioners on the Cippenham scandal. "They feel very strongly that the scheme has no chance of success unless it is carried out upon the ordinary commercial lines, and subject to the degree of pressure usual in competitive business."

The mere fact of this universal failure shows that it is not anything in the conditions nor in the men who work the system which is responsible for the result; it is the system itself. "The Government," says Mr. Raine, "buys badly and sells badly. Probably ninety-nine out of every hundred of its officials have no knowledge of business methods. Indeed, having regard to the cumbrous system of elaborately organised delays and embarrassments, no business man could employ business methods in a Government office."

The results, then, of the "Nationalisation" of industries will be "uneconomic." What does that mean to the worker? These three things. Firstly, the production of the nationalised industries being inefficient, he will have to pay more for an inferior article. That is his loss as a consumer. Secondly, the administration of the nationalised industries being expensive and incompetent, he will have to pay in taxes for their upkeep. That is his loss as a taxpayer. Thirdly, the State's monopoly would rob him of the possibility of changing his employer. There would be no other. That is his loss as a worker, as an employee. Where is his gain?

What is Democracy?

The control of industry from London is not democracy; it is bureaucracy. The management of a business by a joint directorate of employees and proprietors is not democracy: it is unworkable joint stockery. What is democracy? It is, shortly, legislation by Parliament and administration by local governing bodies. There are a few, a very few public services that must be administered by the State—among them, the railways, post office, and national defence. The fewer State services we have, and the more local services we have, the better. For State service means a distant bureaucracy, and that absence of direct control by the public which always makes for comparative inefficiency. Administration must be where the population is and the industry is. Men live and work, not miscellaneously, in the country at large, but in counties, towns, and villages, and the only government that can effectively reach them for constructive purposes is local government.

Social-Democracy means public ownership, and the public ownership is the negation of monopoly by either workers or capitalists. There is never a word about Local Government in the pronouncements of Labour leaders. What an amazing stupendous, VITAL omission. A nation can no more be governed from Parliament than a family can be governed from the Town Hall; and the politician who discusses all the phases of government except the government of the counties, town, and parishes where men live does not realise the very A B C of politics.—JAMES LEATHAM (in the *Gateway*).

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Are We Efficient ?

By P. O. WITTEY.

INTERNATIONAL comparisons are often odious, but frequently profitable, especially since the great European upheaval. The discussion of the question " Are we efficient? " is of far less interest than an enquiry into its origin. Why should we, so long enjoying financial and industrial predominance, be continually arguing in these days amongst ourselves, as to whether we, as a nation, are playing a losing game? Why are we in the dock defending ourselves against charges of national or class indolence, incompetence, and that awful crime of slacking. In the Victorian days of triumphant utilitarianism we found it unnecessary to make excuses except for our alleged arrogant behaviour when investing some of our wealth in foreign parts. In times when our commerce was more or less behind that of the Netherlands, it is doubtful whether time was ever spent in pessimistic conversation on the subject.

HOW WE CAME FORWARD.

The truth is that we owe the growth of our commerce mainly to certain national and political advantages, the benefit of which can hardly be regarded as everlasting. Our insular position has protected our trade against the disturbance of marching armies, and together with our wonderful Navy, has facilitated our maritime development.

Political reforms have been furthered by our safety from foreign invasions, and freedom on our island had the effect of attracting various bands of emigrants skilled in useful handicrafts which have been the beginnings of our textile and engineering industries. It is reasonable to suppose that unless further wars break out in Europe, the benefits and advantages of our geographical position must become less effective, and there is really no reason beyond our own internal dislocation why we should not retain the comparative manufacturing and mercantile eminence which it would seem we are likely (if we have not already started) to lose.

Owing to the meddlesome persistence of that, shall we say, misguided adventurer Christopher Columbus, we have to reckon with very keen rivals across the " Herring Pond," who have had till recent years an even more advantageous aloofness from European quarrels than have we ourselves. It is perhaps worth remembering, too, that in Asia there are vast tribes of industrious people living on the crust of richly-mineralised earth, who will no doubt begin to manufacture sooner or later.

OUR NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS.

The somewhat flattering and popular notion that there is some sacred or heroic quality in the English character that ensures our supremacy in trial and dangers of every kind, is perhaps more unwise than we care to acknowledge.

Just as soldiers of all nations appear to be equally brave and enduring, so there is little difference in the ranks of industry.

If we are honest we must admit that the working of an automatic machine tool in a modern factory, can be as efficiently handled by a reclaimed savage as by a British workman. As a matter of absolute fact, the chief requirement of modern factory labour is a docile and patient application, which is often not a little irksome to the intelligent and independent trade unionist.

In the guidance and managerial handling of industry there is, without a doubt, great scope for British national characteristics, but the tendency of our politics has been to restrain enterprise, and impose heavy fines on success ; briefly, to make it less worth while to struggle forward. The electors who do no sort of originating or development work, who have no ideas, who form no plans, and who will take no risks, are insisting on a greater and greater share of the results.

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POWER OF POLICY.

Clearly then, if the foregoing judgment is sound, namely, that we cannot retain our industrial eminence by means of any national advantages, either in the situation or resources of our land, without the superior efficiency of labour, it behoves us to do our utmost, by the scientific application of policy. We must then place the fostering of industry and the opening of markets in the programmes of our statesmen, as something at least as important as the prohibition of liquor. We must regard the prosperous establishment of one engineering works as of more importance than the consequences that follow even the dismissal of 500 Government "Limpets."

If at one end we have the Government with the support of the electorate taking an intelligent, sustained, and benevolent interest in the affairs of industry, and if at the other end our manufacturers will eagerly and promptly avail themselves of improved methods, machinery, first-class material, and scientific management of their employees, then, and only then, will Britain and her Empire retain her position as the leading industrial nation of the world.

A Much-needed Object Lesson.

We invite the careful attention of our worker-readers to the remarkable letter reproduced below, and we wish to emphasise the lessons which it conveys, viz. :

The value to the worker at home of the Empire's overseas business. Of the £3,995,000 profits of the Company last year £370,000 only was made out of the Home Trade, and consequently the British Worker—through the British Exchequer—benefited to the extent of the taxation on the difference (£3,645,000)—probably amounting to *something like three times the amount of profits made out of himself* as the Home Consumer.

Incidentally the worker is shown the value of world-wide organisations—unthinkingly denounced as "Trusts"—to himself, in relieving him of taxation, and helping to make the burdens of a higher civilisation lighter for him.

The letter goes to show the futility of accepting wild assertions too readily. When facts and figures are obtainable the case more often than not (so far as big business organisations are concerned) takes on a very different complexion. Big businesses are generally run on a small margin of profit—it is the extent of the organisation which swells the totals—totals which the British worker should delight to see, benefiting, as he does, every time.

To the Editor of
"Paisley Daily Express,"
Glasgow, December 4th.

Sir,—With a view to correcting a number of misleading statements which have recently been made regarding this company and its profits, the directors think that the public should be informed of the following facts :—

	1914.	1919.	Increase.
Retail Price of 200yd. reel...	1¾d.	4d.	128%
Retail Price of 400yd. reel...	3d.	7¼d.	140%

The above shows the increase which the public have to pay when buying reels ; but the company, in order to produce the goods, has to pay much greater increases, namely :—

Cotton yarn (nearly three-fourths of the whole)	240%
Other raw materials (wood, paper, etc.)	150 to 400%
Coal	160%
Wages	150%

The actual cost of the 400 yards reel is made up as follows (to three places of decimals) :

	Pence.
Yarn as bought from spinners	3·497
Our manufacturing cost (twisting, bleaching, spooling, etc.)	·684
Spools, wrappers, and selling expenses	·899
Total	5·080
Our selling price to the trade...	5·729
Our profit	·649

or less than 2/3rds of 1d. per reel.

These figures are based on values ruling at Sept. 5th, when our last price-list was issued, and since then the market price of yarn has advanced very considerably.

The total profits of the company last year amounted to £3,995,000, but of this approximately £370,000, or under one-tenth, was made from goods sold in the United Kingdom.—I am, etc.,

For J. & P. Coats Ltd.,
THOMAS GLEN-COATS, Chairman.

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The Asbestos Industry.

Formation of a Joint Industrial Council.

IN our last issue we printed a review of the work of the Officers' and Workers' Committees, and also of their joint labour in the capacity of an Employees' Council. As will have been gathered, the workers, through these organisations, have a considerable say in the management of our Factory. As part of the Asbestos Industry, however, we go a lot further, and although the life of The National Joint Industrial Council of the Asbestos Manufacturing Industry has not yet reached its first anniversary (the constitution was adopted on March 12th, 1919), enough good work has been accomplished to warrant us in reviewing its proceedings to date.

THE " J.I.C." CONTROLS THE ASBESTOS INDUSTRY.

First let it be said quite plainly, this Council, consisting as it does of representatives of all the Trades Unions in the Industry, and of all the Employers, practically controls the Asbestos Industry in this country.

Operatives' representatives are returned by The Amalgamated Society of India Rubber, Cable and Asbestos Workers (3), The Workers' Union (1), The National Union of General Workers (2), The National Amalgamated Union of Labour (1), and The Rochdale Weavers' Association (1), totalling eight, to balance eight Employers' representatives. One member of each group act as Joint Secretaries.

Mr. Samuel Turner has been appointed first Chairman of the Council.

The general object of the Council is " To secure the largest possible measure of joint action between Employers and Workpeople for the safeguarding and development of the Asbestos Manufacturing Industry as a part of national life, and for the improvement of the conditions of all engaged in that Industry."

The " J.I.C." have attained a large measure of success under the " general object " head during its brief existence.

WORK OF THE " J.I.C."

We have said that the " J.I.C." practically controls the Industry. Here are some of the matters with which they deal: Wages (which come up for " regular "—which we take to mean continuous—consideration, hours, regular employment, working conditions, machinery for settlement of differences, and the establishment of machinery where necessary, etc.—all tending to ensure the progressive status of the worker, for which we contend in our Fireside Notes; and on the other side of the shield, to advance progressive production (without which, as we say, progressive status is impossible), " the consideration of measures for securing maximum production," the encouragement of research and invention, the study of statistics, organisation and methods of the industry in this and other countries, technical training of entrants in the industry, co-operation with educational authorities and with Industrial Councils of other industries (is this not an advance on the Whitley Report?), and the securing of the loyal observance of collective agreements.

To complete the edifice, provision is made for the " representation of the needs and opinions of the Industry to Government Departments and other authorities," and conversely the consideration of matters such authorities may see fit to refer to the Council.

It will be asked: What have the Council done? It would be impossible to report all the proceedings in this Journal,

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but we think it only right to extract the following for special mention :—

SHORTER HOURS.

The first act of the Council was to confirm an agreement arrived at before its constitution was formally drawn up, *i.e.*, to establish a working week of 48 hours in place of 55½ in the Asbestos Industry—the rates of pay remaining the same for the shorter as for the longer week.

Bonus was readjusted to avoid loss of wages to the workers, while piece rates were increased by an amount equivalent to the reduction in hours, the only proviso in the latter case being a clause which reads, "in the event of improved machinery being installed, or improved methods adopted, the rates may be revised by mutual consent."

THE NEW "MINIMUM."

The employers' offer of a minimum rate of 9d. per hour plus ½d. for each 10% increase in cost of living over pre-war rate for unskilled labour has been accepted, the rate to vary up or down according to the cost of living as disclosed by Board of Trade Returns.

The minimum applies to all males 18 years of age and over, and the rate is to be reviewed quarterly.

It has also been agreed that all rates for labour other than unskilled shall be the subject of negotiation between individual Firms and the Union concerned.

PRODUCTION.

An agreement has been arrived at unanimously (all Unions being represented) that restriction or limitation of output shall be discouraged, and all help possible rendered to expedite and increase production.

"J.I.C." REPLACES ARBITRATION COURT.

At one of the meetings Mr. A. H. Bayes, the Liaison Officer representing the Ministry of Labour, made an important announcement. A difficulty having arisen on the subject of the amount of a proposed advance in wages, and the question of referring the claim to Arbitration being under discussion, Mr. Bayes pointed out that the Ministry of Labour desired to relieve the Court of Arbitration of such business, and that they wanted to see Joint Industrial Councils as the final authority on all matters relating to hours and wages. As a result agreement was finally reached, though not without difficulty, arising apparently out of the length of time intervening between meetings and the shortness of some memories. We wonder whether we would be in order in suggesting monthly meetings, instead of quarterly?

Subsequently it was felt that the agreement should be made the formal award of the Court of Arbitration, and it has now received the sanction of the Minister concerned.

RED FLAG "STATESMEN."

The buyers and sellers of empty words pretend that all will be well if we establish soviets. They would have us take it for granted that the shop stewards and revolutionary orators embody all virtues and all the talents and that we have only to unfurl the Red Flag to conjure up the New Jerusalem.

The people will be wise to ignore the empty words and futile promises of these latter-day saints and their lieutenants. What have they done that we should trust them?

They have created no beautiful or useful thing. They are lacking in grace and culture. They have no experience of business or statesmanship. They have no sense of proportion, no modesty or balance, no constructive policy. They are violent men whose speeches are deformed by malice and envy; whose inspiration springs from material selfishness.

They have no sense of discipline. They would govern the world who have not learned to govern themselves or each other. Those of them who are honest and not wholly selfish are philosophers of that ricketty kind who imagine that evil and difficulty will disappear because they do not like them.—*Robert Blatchford* ("*S. C.*," 30/11/19).

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Correspondence.

My dear Mr. Editor,

I should be false to myself and unworthy of the confidence of my members if I failed to express my feelings of disgust and suspicion for many of the opinions and, worse still, insinuations expressed in the October number of "ASBESTOS." The tone of your journal this month is distinctly partisan and definitely hostile to the bona-fide Labour and Trade Union movement. We cannot accept the statements of men like R. Turner as representing in any sense the opinions of any representative body of working men, who are either, on the one hand Trade Unionists, or on the other Non-Unionists. Neither the British Workers' League nor the National Democratic Party represent Labour in any true sense of the word, and whatever may be said of Smillie, Williams, Thomas, or Shaw, they do at least speak for the body of organised Labour which they represent; men of the type of Turner and Terret speak only for themselves, and in no way for any body of Labour. In many cases these very men flout the decisions of the organisations to which they themselves belong, for which they are patted on the back and called brave and heroic by men who are suspect of the Labour movement. The Labour Party as at present constituted is not perfect by any means, but for the time being it is the only medium of expression for organised British Labour, and we attach little importance to the expressions of the other crowd, who carefully avoid its conferences, and only challenge its policy in an indirect way. I am sure that you are much mistaken if you think that contributions from these men will either enhance the value of your journal or improve the confidence of the workers; they will only destroy what confidence already exists, and cause your journal to stink in the nostrils of those who you intend it to help and inspire. We do not complain that you challenge the policy of the Labour Party, but we do ask that that challenge shall be direct and free from misrepresentation, and made where we can have equal opportunity of combating the opinions expressed. You will excuse me if I correct an impression given by Mr. Entwistle in your journal *re* ballot on the hours question; the Trade Union representatives did not appeal to their people to work overtime; we agreed to nothing except a ballot, and the ballot decided against it. It was an honest, straight, democratic vote, and I see no cause for complaint. I am surprised at the very severe reprimand which Mr. Entwistle indulges in, and to suggest that the decision was insulting is most undignified, and the only kind of democracy indicated in the mind of Mr. Entwistle is the ordered kind, which in other periods has been described as autocracy. I shall feel in honour bound to combat these various sentiments as occasion arises, and in the absence of a Press medium will be obliged to use our meeting rooms, and shall take the earliest opportunity of placing these matters before our members in quite another light than that conceived by your contributors, and will then leave them to judge.

I have taken the opportunity of reading the foregoing to my Committee, who endorse all its sentiments, and authorise it to be forwarded to you, with a request for publication.

Yours faithfully,
JOSEPH NUTTALL.

The article by Mr. Entwistle I greatly appreciate, which should do a great deal to bring relations closer between the employees. I am sure when I interviewed Mr. Brierley, with others of your firm, and gave consent for our Union for the ballot to be taken on the extra hours to be worked, which advice I shall give to any place if necessary, I much regret that the men have not acted up to it.

JAMES COLLINGS,
General President,
Amalgamated Society of Rubber,
Cable and Asbestos Workers.

(*From a second Letter.*)

I am pleased to say you may with pleasure use my letter of thanks in any way you like, especially if it will alter the determination of the men "not to work overtime."

JAMES COLLINGS.

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I appreciate the article by Mr. Entwistle entitled and addressed to the workers of your factory, and notwithstanding what has been said about us, that is, about the general officials from some of our members, we should tender the same advice again and again under similar circumstances, and we regret that such advice is not acted upon.

H. H. DUKE.
Amalgamated Society of India Rubber, Cable and Asbestos Workers.

(*From a second Letter.*)

I understand our General President, Mr. J. Collings, has written a similar letter to that I sent to you, and has no objection to you publishing it in your next number; likewise neither have I.

I am joined in this by our General Treasurer, Mr. J. Kenyon, who wishes to thank you for the copy you have sent him, and appreciates Mr. Entwistle's article in the same manner.

I should esteem it a favour if you could supply me with 15 copies of "ASBESTOS." I should like the Labour side of the Council and the Management Committee of the Union to receive one each on account of the special interest which the columns of the journal contain. Personally I am delighted with Mr. Entwistle's article.

R. W. LEACH.
National Joint Industrial Council of the Asbestos Manufacturing Industry.

I am in receipt of your letter and copy of the House Magazine "ASBESTOS," for which I thank you.

I am particularly glad to receive the Magazine, in the first place, because it is so artistic, and secondly, the reading matter is excellent.

I shall consider it a favour to be placed on your list for future copies.

Yours faithfully,
LEONORA COHEN,
District Organiser.
The National Union of General Workers.

I am in receipt of your latest issue of "ASBESTOS," for which I am much obliged. I shall be glad if you will let me have the Magazine each time it is issued, as there is much interesting and important matter contained in it.

JOS. BLADES.
The Workers' Union.

To the Editor of "Asbestos."

Dear Sir,

We greatly appreciate the favour of receiving October number of your House Organ, "ASBESTOS."

We find same extremely edifying and instructive throughout, and the whole matter therein has been carefully perused and found of much interest.

In connection with "An Address to the Workers" on page 137, you might kindly inform Mr. Rowland Entwistle that in our factory we had the very same subject in hand. Our working hours were reduced from 54 to 48, and under an old agreement our employees were entitled to time and a quarter for Overtime. Circumstances arose similar to yours, whereby we were compelled to work overtime, and after a short period our men declined such work unless they were paid time and a half, but on principle we could not give way. We called in the local secretary of our workmen's Union, who addressed our men at a meeting, and thereafter on a show of hands they declined to work overtime. Thereupon, we pointed out that a small meeting could not legislate for the whole of our workers, and suggested a ballot. Voting papers were distributed to our men, and thereafter a collection of these was made by two workers going round and asking each one to register a vote. Thereby practically a full vote of workers was secured, and with commonsense prevailing a majority was in favour of supporting the firm and working the necessary overtime at the firm's rate.

We sympathise greatly with your firm in the trouble pointed out in the said "Address," hence our venturing to write you with views as above.

Yours faithfully,
W. MUIR SMITH,
Managing Director.
A. B. Fleming & Co. Ltd.,
Ink Manufacturers,
Edinburgh.
10th October, 1919.

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To the Editor of "Asbestos."

Dear Sir,

I am sorry that such good-intentioned men as yourself and Mr. Entwistle should be so much out of touch with the psychology of the mass of the workers to-day. They may not be intellectuals; they may not be political economists; they may not be conscious Socialists; but they know their true friends, and the Trade Union masses, which represent half of the population, will support their Socialist leaders.

The latter are gaining favour by leaps and bounds, and such a state of affairs is a cause for thankfulness even by the great employers of labour. The Socialists are fast becoming the Conservatives of Democracy—the constitutionalists or extra-constitutionalists. But unfortunately there are still a few vacillating "Lib.-Lab." leaders who shake the confidence of the workers. The workers dislike being sold or betrayed, or cajoled, by one of their own class, even more so than being misruled by the so-called ruling class. Hence the illogical unreasoning reason that so many of the reactionary ruling class are still sent to St. Stephen's. But the working classes have been exhorted to be hard-headed and industrious, and whilst they have not much time or surplus mental energy for a great deal of study, they are fast learning how to manage their own affairs, and will very soon be in a position to live their own lives without the aid of coercion from their illustrious superiors and present owners. The worker has had the conviction forced upon him that Parliament as at present constituted is obsolete and far too cumbersome. He is now working out his own emancipation, as he will shortly work out the emancipation of the whole community.

He now has shop stewards and shop committees, and in some cases there are independent District Committees. Through these channels the leaders are ordered what to do, so that the leader finds he is fast becoming a mere servant and not the super-man that he erstwhile imagined himself to be.

I am sorry if you cannot see that the whole wage system is played out. Even the sharing of profits or plunder will not work. The average worker now is a greater potential revolutionary than the most enthusiastic Socialist.

I would shortly define the present trend of ideas thus:

(1) The righteous discontent and unrest is universal. Therefore obviously is not caused by an insignificant section.

(2) The so-called extreme section in their teachings and literature are really only giving intelligent expression to the awakening social consciousness of the inarticulate majority (the vast majority can give neither oral or written expression of their convictions).

(3) Overtime is contrary to the principles of Trade Unionism, especially whilst there are many thousands requiring work. (Paragraph 5 partially explains why.)

(4) In spite of the recent gibes of the Capitalist Press, they must know that all the expert economists testify that machinery and speeding up whilst it quickly supplies the demand and cheapens production (unless the product be monopolist), it also undoubtedly hastens the glutting of the market, which means more unemployment, and a strong lever for the Capitalists to reduce wages.

(5) The whole cause of the present world-wide social, and therefore moral, upheaval is due to the fact that the producers realise that machinery, tools, horses, steam power, electrical power, also their own skill, brains and labour are all being used primarily to produce for individualistic profit, and not as it should be, primarily and altogether for the supply of the needs of the whole community.

When reading this letter I would like you to remember that there are 400,000 ex-soldiers and sailors *out of work* in this land fit for heroes?

The National Federation of Discharged Soldiers and Sailors will very shortly cause more stir in the country than even the miners and engineers. We are in for big events, and it is as well to be prepared for them. Machine guns and tanks cannot save the rotten constitution and wage-slavery from the purging effect of the rising public consciousness of the new era, so much boasted by Lloyd George, but which is so long overdue.

Revolution, after all, is only another term for reconstruction.

Yours truly,

ALEC. FISHER.

Middlesbrough,
October 15th, 1919.

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The Way of Salvation.

By Sir AUCKLAND GEDDES.

INTERNATIONAL trade is the exchange of goods between countries, either directly or indirectly. Goods, not money, must be exchanged. That is the basis of an understanding of trade. To goods we may add services—for example, the carrying of other people's goods in our ships, or insuring other people's goods against risks whilst in carriage. But, fundamentally, trade is the exchange of goods.

Let us see first what are the goods which we as a nation must get. In this country we have too many people to feed off our own soil, as it is at present farmed and used. Some people think it might feed us if farmed and used largely; but that is not immediate practical politics, whatever the future may hold. First, then, we must import food—wheat, rice, barley, oats, sugar, meat, fruit, dairy produce, and such supplements to food as tea, coffee, cocoa, hops. Then, to keep Lancashire going, we must import cotton; to keep the West Riding of Yorkshire going we must import wool; and to keep Glasgow, Sheffield, and Birmingham going we have to import iron-ore, pig-iron, perhaps even steel. Lead, copper, zinc, tin, are other things that we need. Certainly for another generation we must import timber. We cannot do without silk, leather, and rubber from overseas. Now the worth of these things in the quantities we require runs into hundreds of millions of pounds a year—ten or twelve hundred millions before we begin to touch the luxuries for consumption here. To live as we have lived we must import not less than two hundred million worth of these.

What have we to send out in exchange? British-grown food; No. British raw material? Practically only coal. For the rest, manufactured goods mostly made out of the raw materials we have imported, with a little pedigree stock to improve the breeds overseas. So it comes to this—we have to pay for our food and raw materials out of the value given to the raw material by manufacture and out of coal. In order to get that value we have to find customers, which means markets overseas.

There are at the present time two great problems before me: (1) To get the production; (2) to find the markets. And Europe, which used to be one of the greatest of our markets, is disorganised, impoverished by the war, in parts in a state of impending or even actual economic collapse.

The solution of the problem of production lies in the hands of our own people. Our first and greatest danger has arisen from the decline in the output of coal. And I would like to convince every man concerned in coal production that that decline is hampering not only this country but hampering the recovery of the whole of Europe. For every country in Europe needs coal, and if they do not get it—and there is practically no place but Britain from which they can get the amount they need—the recovery of Europe will be impossible. If Europe does not recover our trade cannot recover, and if our trade does not recover, and recover rapidly, the outlook before the working classes of this country is black, gloomy almost beyond words. It is not only in coal that the output is declining. In every British industry—except agriculture—the output is less than it was and shows signs of still growing less. That way disaster lies.

There is, unfortunately, a prevalent belief that the less work which an individual does the more work is left for others to do. Exactly the opposite is the case. The truth is that the less work each does the less work there is for others to do.

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With Nationalisation as the Steersman, Enterprise is upset, while the labours of Progress and Industry head the Ship of State away from National Prosperity.

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The Russian Soviets and the Industries.

THE leaders of the Russian Bolsheviks have discovered that the principal need of the Russian people is not political liberty, but bread, that a nation can make a living only by adequate production, not by cutting off heads and by plundering the rich. Their leader, Lenin, has issued a long manifesto on the subject. It has been translated into English, under the title "The Soviets at Work."

The pamphlet runs to 46 pages. It is rather dull and wordy, and it seems worth while to give the gist of it in Lenin's own words. We read :—

> "With the creation of a new type of State, offering to the oppressed toiling masses the opportunity to participate actively in the free construction of a new society, we have solved only a small part of the difficult task. The main difficulty is the economic domain : to raise the productivity of labour, to establish strict and universal accounting and control of production and distribution, and actually to socialise production. . . .
>
> "The first problem of any rising party consists in convincing the majority of the population that its programme and politics are correct. This problem is, in the main, solved. The second problem of our party was the conquest of political power. We are now confronted by the third problem, which is the most urgent, and which characterises the present period—to organise the management of Russia. . . .
>
> "Of decisive importance is the organisation of strict and universal accounting, and control of production and distribution. . . . Without this there can be no question of the second condition, just as essential to the establishment of Socialism, namely, to raise the productivity of labour on a national scale."

From his point of view, Lenin states perfectly correctly that the conquest of power alone is of very little use to the masses if the masses remain poor, or if, as has actually happened in Russia, the overthrow of the existing economic system leads to general misery and starvation. Let us now see how Lenin proposes to re-create Russia's prosperity for the benefit of the people. The creator of Bolshevism tells us :—

> "The art of management is not inherent in people, but is gained through experience. . . Without the direction of specialists of different branches of knowledge, technique, and experience, the transformation towards Socialism is impossible. . . . But the specialists are inevitably bourgeois on account of the whole environment of social life which made them specialists. . . .
>
> "Let us take up the position from the practical side. Let us assume that the Russian Soviet Republic must have a thousand first-class scientists and specialists of different departments of science, technique, and practical experience, to direct the work of the people in order to accomplish more quickly the economic rehabilitation of the country. Let us assume that these greatest 'stars' must be paid Rbls. 25,000 each. Let us assume that this sum must be doubled. . . . Can this expenditure of Rbls. 50,000,000 a year for the reorganisation of the work of the people, according to the last word of science and technique, be considered excessive or unbearable for the Soviet Republic? Of course not. . . . The corrupting influence of high salaries is beyond dispute."

Before the revolution the Russian workers were told that the capitalists were their worst enemies, that they were an unmitigated evil, that their elimination would vastly benefit the workers. Experience has taught the misguided people and their leaders that the despised capitalists are indispensable to trade and industry, that they can not be made to work by threats and by starvation. Hence Lenin is willing to pay them high salaries, although that proceeding is opposed to the Bolshevik doctrines. Of

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Asbestos-Cement.

By W. F. GIBSON.

IN a preliminary article which appeared in No. 4 issue of this Magazine I presented in a very general way a few notes on Concrete, interspersing some references to our own product in this class of materials, namely, Asbestos Concrete or, as it is more frequently called, Asbestos-Cement.

I also raised several interesting points which must have caused a spirit of enquiry into the nature and properties of this commodity of modern construction. It is therefore my intention to elaborate somewhat the cursory character of the above-mentioned preliminary notes and bring before the reader a short series of articles dealing with Asbestos-Cement in the many aspects of its utility.

It will have been noted that I made mention of two components only in connection with the composition of Asbestos-Cement, namely, Asbestos and Portland Cement. There are several kinds of sheeted material of concrete type that are compounded of more than two components, but these cannot be included in any category of comparison with a two-component mixture on account of special functions appertaining to those extra components. Our subject being therefore a two-component mixture, these notes are simplified in some respects and can be confined within narrower limits.

To those whose daily association with Portland Cement consists of intimacy or otherwise with paving slabs, piers, sea-walls, dock walls, foundations—always at some interesting stage of construction—it may not be inappropriate to devote a short space to the description of one of the components of our product, namely, Portland Cement, specially so in view of the recent articles giving some descriptive account of the origin and properties of Asbestos. In making some notes on Portland Cement it must be remembered that they are not intended to be an expansive article on that subject, but just sufficient to be placed alongside those on Asbestos, so that a better idea of what Asbestos-Cement is may be retained.

Portland Cement is manufactured from a mixture of calcareous, silicious, and aluminous materials, the two latter being usually in combination as silicates. Typical examples of these classes of materials are found in chalk, limestone, and calcareous marl and clays, all of which occur naturally, and only require favourable conditions and processes for their intimate mixture, calcination, and pulverisation. By modern methods the requisite degree of blending is obtained in two ways: (1) with dry materials ground to a meal of very fine state of division; (2) by wet mixing, using a fairly large quantity of water and producing thereby a slurry. Both of these processes are intricately mechanical, for a high degree of perfection in mixing is essential if a sound product be required. Having obtained a satisfactory primary mixture, which must also conform to certain standards of chemical composition, it is removed by mechanical means to the calcining process, where, after being heated to a temperature approximating 1,400° C. in suitable kilns, the resultant product is a sintered mass of clinker in which the lime has combined chemically to form silicates and aluminates. This clinker is subsequently ground to an extremely fine powder, so fine that frequently less than 5% fails to pass through the 180 × 180 sieve (32,400 holes per square inch). Clinker in such a fine state of division is now known as Portland Cement, and possesses a valuable property, namely, to dissolve and decompose in water, and to form new compounds that have the further property of forming very hard bodies, or as is more commonly known, the cement sets and hardens. The use of terms such as "dissolve and decompose" is not strictly correct, the better term being hydrolyse, for by using this term we introduce here reference to a phenomenon that has been noticed with certain forms of

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Asbestos, which will be enlarged upon later.

How then do we evaluate this Cement to prove its utility and suitability for particular purposes? There are two general methods, (1) chemical, (2) mechanical, both of which are the outcome of much patient work of those who have made a special study of Cement from the point of view of ascertaining its possibilities and also for the acquisition of specific information in respect to its properties.

In the field of chemical investigation very valuable information has been obtained, and with certain conditions given, it can be fairly accurately predicted whether, in view of composition, the Cement will behave normally. This is shown by the use of either the hydraulic modulus or the cementation index. Research work has shown well defined ratios between certain components of Cement, and these can be stated in a simple formula of molecular proportion, such as:—

$$\frac{Ca\ O}{Si\ O_2 \quad Al_2\ O_3}$$

The maximum permitted by the B.S.S. is 2·85, by which is meant that a balance of acids and bases is obtained, and no excess of bases can be present and cause instability of product.

The cementation index is valuable from another point of view, and takes into account all acids and bases in the Cement, the composition being obtained by careful analytical methods. Briefly, it may be stated as a ratio of acidic to basic compounds so that the hydraulic possibilities are fairly completely indicated. A good cement should have an index round about 1·0, and marked variations from this figure indicate inferiority of quality in either unsoundness or lack of strength.

Mechanical tests of Cement are conducted strictly according to standardised methods in order to eliminate the operative variant, and include tensile and compressive strengths, soundness, fineness, and setting time. Having obtained these data we are able to use our Cement with certain knowledge of its behaviour, and such tests are justified by the possession of that knowledge.

A-calling.

Youth

I was sick to death of the Country.
  I wanted a London Street,
With the City crowds around me
  And the sound of hurrying feet:
I wanted to be in the Battle
  For life, for wealth, for fame;
I wanted to feel the sensation
  When a newsboy yelled my name.

Middle Age

I have soared the triumphant ladder.
  I left the Country behind.
I've wealth, and fame, and sensations
  Of all that I longed to find.
But a breath comes up in my nostrils
  (I'm sick of women and men),
And I long for the gorse and heather,
  And the wee burn " up the glen."

Old Age

I've broken the chains that bound me;
  To all I've said " Good-bye "—
The world, the flesh, and the devil—
  And I'm going back to die.
To lie in the hush of the bracken,
  Away from the glare of the City,
With the heather and gorse around me,
  And the wee burn whimpling " Pity."

M. T. B.

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Shakespeare and his Empire.

By ARTHUR MEE.

Editor of "My Magazine" and "The Children's Newspaper."

SOME strange, unbreakable, invisible bond it is that binds together our English-speaking race; some vital spring there is that grips and holds us all.

And what it is can any man say? It has come down through the centuries; it has woven itself into our innermost lives; it is part of this great work-a-day world that we live in and part of a dream that we dream. It has run through multitudes of common folk, and through those men who led our nation on. It was in Francis Drake and Walter Raleigh, in Alfred and Cromwell, and Shakespeare and Milton; it was the something that brought the young men from the cities and the plains not long ago when the call went out from Mother England.

What is it—ah! what is it? It is the spirit of England, the heaping up of hopes and dreams and yearnings and longings of our English-speaking race for ages back; the love, the joy, the throb and impulse and music of life as men have known it in these islands for a thousand years, surging and swelling like a wave—the wave of the spirit of England rolling in the ocean of time.

No man made it what it is: it is made of all who pass this way. And yet, surely, as we look about and think of these great forces that have made us what we are, there stands supreme, among the central figures of our race, this man who lived in a cottage by the Avon, this master mind and tongue of Englishmen throughout the world, Shakespeare.

Of all our Empire men he surely is the chief, for though he fought no battles, sailed no seas, and passed no laws, he put into immortal words the things we stand for everywhere. He threw his spell upon us all in every time and place, and those who speak the tongue he spoke come to the things he said and feel their hearts burn within them as they read him by the way.

Truly our Shakespeare has reached his immortality, and none can think of a future in which he has no place. Yet out of what a past he came! It is one of the constant wonders of the world that our heroes came from a land we cannot recognise as ours, and it will do us good, in these days of trouble, to throw ourselves back to the England in which our greatest Englishmen lived and moved and won immortal fame.

When Shakespeare stood at the playhouse door in London, holding the horses of the lords and ladies who threw him their coppers, he must have seen poor people passing by with little white rods in their hands. Without these rods the people dared not leave their homes, for they were the sign that plague had visited their houses within forty days. For three hundred years plague raged in England, bursting out now and then in a frightful holocaust of death. For a time it would die down, but the England of those days lived in constant peril of this messenger of death, which cut off hundreds here and thousands there, and at last destroyed one-fifth of the people of London.

There, his future all unknown, was the mightiest intellect that had dawned upon the world, yet what a world his was! The floors of houses were strewn with rushes, often undisturbed for ten or twenty years; the streets were spread with filth which only rooks and ravens and jackdaws ever thought of carrying away. Leper houses were common.

Nobody in Shakespeare's day seems to have had the courage or the knowledge to face this spectre of disease that grew before their eyes, stalked through the country unopposed, cutting down princes and people, yet ready to succumb at any time to the death-blow no man struck. The plague was the child of a nation's ignorance and neglect. For two hundred years it raged before we find a single warning by a doctor.

But we must not be hard on these

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doctors, who were not so wise as Shakespeare. Nobody was, and even Shakespeare believed in witches. The stories of wizards and goblins that our children read are nothing to the stories that kings believed in then. The Parliament that made Cromwell Protector hanged or drowned or burned three thousand women for witchcraft, and the children of the Pilgrim Fathers, who left their homes for freedom's sake, put witches to death in New England across the sea.

The Great Plague and its seventy thousand deaths stands out a black page in our history, but the great murder of witches is a blacker page still. For every death in the Great Plague there was a death of a witch; seventy thousand poor women have been sent to meet their Maker by the witchcraft laws of England.

Everybody believed in them. The King of Shakespeare's England decreed that anyone who should take advice from any evil spirit should die. Cromwell's troops spent the night before the battle of Newbury in drowning an old woman. All over the country were these poor women, whose evil powers were supposed to be the cause of whatever went wrong. Old Moll White was blamed for everything; there was not a maid in her parish, it was said, who would take a pin from her, though she offered a bag of gold with it. If a horse was lame Moll White had done it; if the milk went wrong Moll White was in the churn; if the hounds were going out the master of the hunt would send his servant to see if Moll White had been out that morning. If they were not burned, these women were drowned. They were wrapped in a sheet and dragged through a pond; if they sank they were innocent, if they floated they were guilty.

So many strokes with the lash was the doctor's cure for a lunatic in those days, and the sure cure for certain diseases was the touch of the King. Shakespeare may have seen people crushed to death in trying to get their children near enough to the King of England for him to touch their little bodies and cure them. It is hard to believe it now, but in Shakespeare's day, when even King James would have abolished the King's Touch, the English Government told him that he must not abandon a prerogative of the Crown. Fifteen hundred years after the woman pressed through the streets of Jerusalem to touch the hem of Christ's garment, mothers were pressing through the streets of London that the King might touch the hem of their children's garment and bring them healing.

And in those days, too, when Shakespeare was writing that "the quality of mercy is not strained," the quality of mercy in English law was utterly unknown. A man can hardly trust himself to tell of the unspeakable things that were done before the eyes of men in those not very distant days. Even strong men must shake a little when they read some pages of our island story. The mere drawing of blood in a quarrel was punished by cutting off the right hand, and if a man exported one of his own sheep his left hand was cut off. A beggar was whipped the first time he was found, the second time his ears were cut off, the third time he was killed. The Lord Chancellor of England, when Shakespeare was writing "The Merchant of Venice," advised the torturing of witnesses.

The moral condition of Shakespeare's century is said by an old chronicler to have been that of "an addled egg cradling a living bird." Everybody drank; the King's friends of both sexes rolled helplessly about his Court, and a foreign ambassador wrote home describing a royal supper at which there was such a rush to the table that the table was upset and everything was scattered on the floor. Sir Thomas More's family were regarded as eccentric because they drank water—an almost unheard-of thing.

Marriages at five years old were not rare, and marriages at ten were common. The Duke of Buckingham's daughter was a widow at nine, and we read of her romping in an orchard in her widow's veil. We can hardly look for morals where there were hardly any books, where nobody travelled. Even if a traveller dared to cross the Channel he found it swarming with pirates. The Bible was a new book in those days, and the few copies available for the people were chained in churches. Shakespeare would hear of the bonfire of Bibles outside old St. Paul's, where the Bishop of London burned the first edition in the people's tongue; and the tradition would

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still be fresh of the strangling and burning of Tyndale, who was refused hospitality by the Bishop of London, and translated the Bible in the house of a merchant who happened to hear him preach in Fleet Street.

With these burning Bibles—a pleasant change from burning witches!—we may leave that strange world in which Shakespeare lived, and think of the wonder that out of such a world could come an everlasting heritage for all mankind, a spell that should bind as one the world-wide household of our English-speaking race.

Such a past our islands have behind them, but we who read of it with incredible eyes were born to a nobler heritage. We were born to treasures that the wise among us would not sell for the crown of a king. For us is the great inspiration of those who made these isles the home of freedom, for us is the treasure laid up where moth and rust have not corrupted it. It is not the king alone who wears a crown: we have a crown, each one of us, a crown of liberty and very gold that we should cherish as life itself.

More than ever, in the years to come, we shall love these precious things that nothing on the earth can take away from us. The Great Peace may find us poorer; we may live in smaller houses, work harder and longer, and the burden of life may be heavy to bear, but we shall have great consolations. Always there will be for us the stainless glory of our land, the memory of the things that it has done for all mankind, and always there will be Shakespeare.

We are not growing up, we who are his countrymen, with that thought of Shakespeare that all the world outside us has. He stands to the world as its greatest man, a man in whom the human mind reached nearest to its Maker; but to us he is our countryman, the man incomparable who came among us to make us great and lift us up and put in us the spirit of the world. No little State can we be now, with Shakespeare where he is; no little lives can we live now, with Shakespeare of us. He stood up in these islands; he walked in England all unguessed at; he gave a glory to the earth that will not pass away, and we dare not be unworthy of our king of men.

He is not too great or high for every one of us. He lived our life and spoke our thoughts; he left behind a priceless gift for every boy and girl born in these islands. We come to him, a great writer has said, as we come to works of Nature, knowing that, like sun and sea and stars, like frost and rain and dew, we are to submit to him in perfect faith that he is right. But we come to him, all the same, not fearfully, as to some mighty being, but with confidence as in a friend. He understands us; we must understand him.

We can hardly think a thought that Shakespeare cannot match; we can hardly imagine a situation that something he said does not fit. His language fits all times and his thought all places; no part of existence, no depth of the universe, no problem of human life, seems to be outside his range. A poet is no rattle-brain, said Emerson—he does not merely say what comes to him first, but he speaks from a heart in unison with his time and his country. But the wonder of Shakespeare is that his heart beats in unison with all times and all countries.

Nothing came amiss to him. A story of a thousand years ago in Shakespeare's hand was fashioned into something that will thrill the world a thousand years from now; he will fit to-morrow morning's paper as he fitted yesterday's. He will move us now to laughter, now to tears. Never in real life has come together such a marvellous crowd of people as Shakespeare's, and there is none among them he does not seem to know as he knows himself. He makes us feel that we know them, too. He puts us down in this great crowd of people and introduces us, and while we sit and read, we win a friend or make a foe.

It is all very real, and they are all real people. They are not here merely for a story, though you will find no more exciting stories anywhere, for every kind of man you ever meet in stories is in Shakespeare—clowns and fools and knaves, drunkards and madmen, kings and pedlars, merchants and thieves, cardinals and statesmen, great ladies and country wenches, beautiful children and degraded creatures, fairies, witches, ghosts and goblins—we meet them all in Shakespeare.

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But, though they move in thrilling stories, they are there not only for the story. So great a master of himself is Shakespeare that he will end his story in the middle and go on—a way that would kill most other books, but makes no difference at all in his, for these people of his plays are in the ceaseless round of life, reflecting the life and feeling of the world, the beating of the hearts of all mankind, as a diamond reflects light. His next-of-kin in the world of books, our great John Milton, soared up into the heavens for the play of forces that make up the everlasting interest of the world, but Shakespeare found them here on earth.

His mind is in the heavens—he takes a truth and carries it to its greatest height and sets it there for all mankind to see—but the life he pictures for us is the life that goes on all about us. His people are such people as we know, and his thoughts are such things as our dreams are made of. We can get into Plato's brain, said Emerson, and think as if we were there, but we cannot get into Shakespeare's. We may say that his mind came nearer being infinite and illimitable than the mind of any other man. How far it reaches out, how marvellous are the images it conjures up, and yet how familiar it all seems, and how much a part of the work-a-day world!

It is the humanity of Shakespeare, his touch with the world at all points at which our own lives touch it, that brings him close to us, and keeps his words alive. It is not something far away from us and beyond us. It is your life and mine that live in Shakespeare, for the hearts of men have been the same since Adam lived in Eden; and Shakespeare goes out seeking men, finds them in their good and evil hours, and penetrates them through and through as if his pen were some magic thing that could pierce their inner lives, and come out touched with their subtlest motives and their most secret purposes. There are some clocks that tell the time and show the mechanism too, and it seemed to Goethe that Shakespeare's characters were like that. We see the actions of a man, and seem to see the working of his heart and mind.

And it is this power, piercing down beneath the surface of life like the Röntgen rays, that Shakespeare will give to us all if we will take it. He who listens to Shakespeare enriches his life and strengthens himself for his battles with the world. Shakespeare is no preacher; he sees things as they are and paints them so. He shows us human causes and their consequence; he shows how little passions grow too great and lead to tragedy; he shows us how dishonour leads to ruin and evil overwhelms the lives of innocent and sinful, too; he gives us the sure foundation of worthy lives, loving our country and our neighbours, cherishing friends, and bearing ourselves in dignity against an enemy.

Seek what we will that matters to us all, we find it in the book that Shakespeare left us. It will never fail us if we read it earnestly. It will tell us a good story; it will thrill us with a sense of great adventure; it will keep us company in sorrow and delight us in our happier days; it will lift for us the veil behind which move the inner lives and purposes of men. It encompasses for us the height and depth and breadth of human life. It gives us Ariel's brightness, Rosalind's charm, and the friendship of Celia. It gives us the loyalty of Antony, the jealousy of Othello, and Macbeth's duplicity. It gives us the generosity of Antonio, the ambition of Wolsey, the profundity of Hamlet, the patriotism of Henry the Fifth, the sacrifice of Kent, the foul treachery of Edmund. It gives us the purity of Isabella, the unnaturalness of Goneril and Regan, the cleverness of Portia, the devotion of Jessica, and the faithfulness of Cordelia. It gives us the malice of Iago, the self-will and varity of Lear, the pompous ignorance of Pistol, and Shylock's revengefulness.

We come to Shakespeare for all these, for infinitely more than these, and he does not fail us. He is the voice of England that will never die, and when, in far-off places, men hear the English call of Home, Shakespeare is there. When kings and thrones have perished from the earth he will sit enthroned in the hearts of men, and the treasure he gave us, the precious stone he set in the midst of these islands to endure for ever, will shine like the stars that are always looking down on our far-flung British Commonwealth, the Empire of the Free.

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Nature Talks.

Some Birds of our District.

By B. R. WALMSLEY.

ARRACHEUR,* the Peregrine, was hungry. He had been on the wing nearly all day, and had eaten nothing. The weather was so cold, and everything was covered with snow, that most birds had sought the villages and towns for food, and were consequently not abroad.

He was getting desperate when he saw, as he came over Cribden, Mrs. Riley, the farmer's wife, come out to feed her poultry. Round he circled with outstretched wings; then down he plunged with that fell swoop common to all the Falconidæ.



THE PEREGRINE.

The old cock saw him and gave the alarm; the poultry flew in all directions. One fine pullet he had set his eye on made for the cote from which it had just emerged. One of the falcon's claws caught the tail feathers of the pullet; the other claw gripped a cord which was attached to a trap underneath the cote—for farmer Riley has missed some of his chickens. As Arracheur tilted his wings to rise he dragged the trap from underneath the cote, and its teeth, as they clashed together, tore the under-side of his left wing, breaking the flesh and starting blood; his left foot, too, was injured and bleeding.

Without a flap of the wing he sailed over Rooley Moor, feeling very disappointed, weak, and hungry.

He sighted Whitworth Church, and as night was coming on he alighted on the top of the flagstaff to rest and consider his position. There were some rooks and starlings playing about the gargoyles and the parapet, who looked at this strange visitor with suspicion. At first they all flew away on to the house-tops; then one rook flew back on to the gargoyle to get a better view. He turned his head first one side, then the other. Another followed; then some starlings came chattering around, but the peregrine sat motionless on his pole. He was weak through loss of blood and want of food, so he simply rested. As darkness came on he found his way into the belfry through the louvres. How musty it smelled! Feathers were plentiful, but he was just content to nurse his wounds and rest.



HOODED CROW.
(What appears white in the picture is really a very dark grey.)

The next morning he was out again on the flagstaff surveying the district. It was Sunday. Some carrion crows had followed the blood trail along the snow, as they had often done with wounded hares and bleeding sheep, and hirpled about until the poor victims were dead. Sometimes they waited several days for the poor thing to die. To-day they were puzzled. Arracheur looked down from his perch on the hooded crows, apparently taking no notice. His rest in the belfry had somewhat restored him, but still he

* A plucker to pieces.

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was hungry. Suddenly, without the slightest warning, down he came on to the back of one of the carrion crows, talons and beak at work. He caught the crow in mid-air just as he had left one of the corner stones of the parapet. He flapped his wings to steady himself and to get a firm grip with his claws; then he carried his victim round the corner of the tower and landed him on the tower roof. Soon the carrion was headless and featherless, and his warm naked body undergoing internment by segments. When he had finished his meal he returned to the flag-pole, where he preened his feathers and wiped his bill on the knob, surveyed the district, feeling much better for his meal. Then he tilted his wings and sailed away over Watergrove towards Hollingworth Lake.

"Do all falcons do that kind of thing?"

Yes; all the falcon family get their living that way. They are birds of prey.

"But we have not many falcons in this district, have we?"

Not many peregrines. They pass over these moors flying high, but we have others of that family. The commonest is the Merlin.



THE MERLIN.

This inhabits Rooley Moor. It is the smallest of the falcon tribe. He comes down Smallshaw Wood and Healey Dell for blackbirds and thrushes, some of which are bigger than himself.

Then we have the Kestrel, which is larger than the merlin, but not as large as the peregrine.

If you want to see perfection in flight, thorough mastery of the air, the kestrel can show it you. Without a single flap of the wing he can soar upwards of a thousand feet.

Have you noticed what a quantity of starlings we have in Spotland this winter. There seems to be more than usual. Many come from Norway.

"Do you mean those birds we see in flocks, bigger than sparrows that settle on the trees in Falinge Park?"

Yes. They are called starlings because their plumage is mottled like "stars." They are commonly called "shepsters," because they follow the sheep. Have you not seen them riding on the sheep's back in the country? The sheep like them because they pick out the grubs and insects that bite the sheep. The sheep's wool is warm for the insects to hide in.

The starling is the farmer's and allotment holder's best friend. People are afraid they are eating up their seeds, but if you examine the crop of one which has been shot you will find insects and worms (not seeds). As long as they can get worms and insects they will not touch vegetation. But in winter, when all worms have gone deep down into the earth to sleep the winter through, and no insects are to be found, they have to get what they can, such as berries and vegetation.



STARLING.

In severe weather, when snow is on the ground, and the water frozen, birds die of hunger and thirst—not of cold. The feathers are too warm for that. If you find a bird dead in severe weather and take its feathers off, you will see it has no flesh on it—skin and bone—died for want of food.

"But," you ask, "don't birds feel cold?"

Yes, to a certain degree; but not the degree for death. You can easily tell when a bird is feeling cold. You will see it open its feathers out like a broody hen to let the air in amongst its underneath downy feathers. This air is warmed by the bird's body and forms little cushions of warm air held in by the feathers.

"Then why do birds fly to warmer climates," you ask? It is because of the insect food they require, which only warm climates produce. They simply follow their food.

Those who cross to Africa go by way of Italy, because Italy at one time stretched across the Mediterranean to Algiers, and the birds flew overland.

The practice has continued, though the land has sunk. If you take the soundings across the Mediterranean it will show shallow water right across. Still the birds go as their parents went; as they have been taught by them for very many centuries. (*To be continued.*)

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Home Notes.

SUNSHINE AFTER RAIN.

By A. ROWLAND-ENTWISTLE.

Shortly after the appearance of " An Address to the Workers " in the last issue of this Journal, a member of the Workers' Committee, at one of its meetings, told me that he had been charged with a special message from those he represented. He was instructed to tell Mr. Entwistle that they were deeply disappointed in him. They had regarded him as their friend, but now they didn't know what to think. They looked upon his letter as an entirely unwarrantable charge. They were a loyal body of workers, as keen to increase output and to serve the best interests of the Firm as anybody, and they wished to point out that they already were working from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. on a day and night shift. When I observed that my " Address " could not possibly have reflected on them he replied : " Oh ! yes, it did, for we were among those who voted *against* the overtime proposals." On being asked why a body of workers who were working overtime voluntarily should vote against an extension of hours for others, he explained that the proposed hours on which they were asked to vote differed slightly from those they were working, and as they did not want any alteration they voted against them.

This illuminating statement opened up a series of enquiries as to the various " lines of reason " which had operated to lead so many workers to vote against an extension of hours to increase output, and it began to be evident that there existed an astonishing degree of misunderstanding with regard to them. At the suggestion of the Officers' Committee the members of the Workers' Committee undertook to ascertain the feelings of the various sections they represented. As a result of their investigations a report was sent to the Directors embodying suggestions for revised hours, and suggesting that a majority vote could be obtained in their favour. The Firm, however, in the light of their previous experience, did not feel inclined to take any further action on their own initiative, and thought that the next move should come from the workers themselves.

A week or two later the second quarterly meeting of the Council of Employees was held, and arising out of that meeting a deputation from both Committees was appointed to meet Mr. Sam Turner. At the interview which followed the deputation expressed the opinion that the Council were able to bring about the desired extension of hours without opposition. Mr. Turner promptly invited them to do so. An extraordinary meeting of the Council was convened with Mr. J. Brierley in the chair, and a scheme was formulated. Consent was secured from each section of workers by their Committee representatives, and the apparently impossible was accomplished. The factory went on overtime without a murmur.

I feel that I am privileged to be able to tell this story, and I take this opportunity of assuring the workers that my faith in them has never wavered. It was necessary for me to write what I did in order that they might come to realise the inevitable construction which was put on their actions. The way in which they now have shown their true mettle makes me proud to have been associated with them. Their elected representatives, the Council of Employees, are to be congratulated on their work. They have pointed the way to the avoidance of misunderstandings in the future. The following letter, expressing the appreciation of the Directors, is a recognition with which they have every reason to be satisfied :—

" To the Officers' and Workers' Committees.

" The Directors desire me to convey to you their thanks and appreciation for your successful efforts in bringing about the extension of working hours for the purpose of increasing production—so vitally necessary at the present time for reasons already explained.

" It gives them pleasure to know that this has been accomplished through you.

For Turner Brothers Asbestos Co. Ltd.
(Signed) J. BRIERLEY,
Works Manager."

December 3rd, 1919.

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COUNCIL OF EMPLOYEES.

We were invited to attend the proceedings of the Officers' and Workers' Committees sitting together as the Council of Employees, at the second quarterly meeting held on November 10th last, and we wish before reporting the proceedings to congratulate the 24 members present, including, of course, Mr. Entwistle (the Chairman) upon the friendly and helpful spirit which prevailed throughout.

There were three motions on the Agenda in the names of each of the two Committees, and we think we cannot do better than formally report the business for the benefit of everybody in our organisation.

Motions by the Workers' Committee.

It was moved by Mr. D. Healey, seconded by Mr. R. W. Bentley, and carried, that Clause 10 of the Constitution be amended so that only one nominator shall be required for each candidate.

On the second motion it was moved by Mr. R. W. Bentley and seconded by Mr. C. Kershaw that four consecutive absences on the part of a member of either Committee should automatically retire the absentee. An amendment was proposed by Mr. A. Horbury and seconded by Mr. W. Sladen that each case should be left to the discretion of the Committee concerned, who should have power to retire a member for continued absence. The amendment was carried.

On the third motion it was moved by Mrs. Cudworth, seconded by Mr. F. Hampson, and carried, that a member of the Workers' Committee who by promotion became eligible to serve on the Officers' Committee shall be allowed to serve during his or her term of office. An amendment that such a member should retire on promotion, proposed by Mr. S. C. Salmons and seconded by Mr. J. Rudd, was lost.

Motions by the Officers' Committee.

It was moved by Mr. S. C. Salmons and seconded by Mr. C. Kershaw, that Clause 15 be amended to read: "Representatives shall hold office for 12 months from date of general election, except in cases where a casual vacancy has been filled. One half of the members of each Committee shall retire every six months in rotation. Retiring members shall be eligible for re-election." An amendment was moved by Mrs. Cudworth, seconded by Mr. R. W. Bentley, that at the first general election the Chairman and Secretary shall draw lots to decide who should remain on the Committee, the loser to be balloted for with the other members. A rider was proposed by Mr. L. Clegg and seconded by Mr. E. Parrington that the Secretary shall automatically retire in March. The rider and the original motion were carried.

The second motion, relating to grouping for the purposes of facilitating elections, proposed by Mr. C. Kershaw and seconded by Mr. E. Lord, was carried.

The third motion, providing for nomination of candidates by at least two members of his group, proposed by Mr. L. Clegg and seconded by Mr. F. Hampson, was carried.

The Chairman, reviewing the work of the Committees during the past three months, found grounds for encouragement. He emphasised the outstanding fact that there had been no essential point of difference between the two Committees, that they were, in fact, a united Council of workers actuated by a common purpose —the progress of the firm they served, the increased general welfare, and the satisfaction of the legitimate aims and aspirations of all concerned. He regarded the Committees as having passed the experimental stage, and as having reached a period when they might be said to have justified their existence and to have become a permanent institution. He appealed to the members of both Committees not to be discouraged by their rate of progress, not to be impatient, to persevere, and to endeavour to be constructive and helpful rather than critical.

Mr. F. Clegg and Mr. D. Healey, the Chairmen of the Officers' and Workers' Committees, both gave expression to the general feeling that the Committees ought to be more useful than they had been, and suggested that more matters might be referred to them by the Executive.

Mr. J. Brierley, who was present on behalf of the Executive, being asked by the Chairman to address the meeting, expressed his pleasure at being present, and encouraged everybody to persevere. He referred to the need for a canteen, explained the difficulties with which the Directors were confronted, and assured

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them that the matter was having every consideration. He read the report and minutes of the last meeting of the Joint Industrial Council of the Asbestos Manufacturing Industry, and offered to supply each Committee with their minutes in future, inviting them at the same time to offer suggestions to the "J.I.C." Finally Mr. Brierley offered to arrange for a joint deputation from both Committees to meet Mr. S. Turner to voice their aspirations more explicitly. These suggestions were warmly welcomed by the meeting, which then adjourned, after a two hours' sitting, for refreshments.

ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY.

Mr. Harold Taylor (A Dept.) wishes to appeal to all orchestral music lovers in our organisation to get into touch with him as soon as possible with a view to again taking up rehearsals. There is a feeling at present among members of the Society that they are not strong enough to carry on, and we have reason to suspect there is ample talent on the ground if the modesty natural to Spotland lads and lasses can be overcome.

XIX. ROCHDALE "TURNERS' OWN" BOY SCOUTS.

It is with regret that we have nothing to report under this head—unless it be that for the moment our Troop is moribund, or perhaps we should say in a state of suspended animation. We cannot think that the movement fails to attract sufficient Boys in our organisation. We prefer to presume that there has been some weak links in the chain by which vacancies made by older boys dropping out have not been automatically filled by the younger element entering the factory. Or it may be the time of the year has something to do with it. We may have to wait for the effect of Spring upon Youth's exuberance, but certainly the Troop should not be allowed to lapse permanently, especially now that, after long efforts, a good club is provided at local Headquarters.

GIRL GUIDES. 5th ROCHDALE "TURNERS."

On September 13th the Guides attended a "Village Fair" in connection with the Spotland U.M.C., held on the Spotland Cricket Ground. During the afternoon they gave the Grand March and an Ambulance Display.

A very pleasant day was spent at the 2nd Rochdale's Cottage, Syke, on October 25th. After tea an interesting discussion took place on badges and their uses.

Most of our Guides were present at a Rally held in Milton School on November 1st, to welcome Miss Behrens on her annual visit, who spoke in her usual cheery and inspiring manner. The programme consisted of songs and dances given by the various Companies.

Miss F. Lee has been appointed Captain of the Troop, with Misses V. Baskeyfield and A. Kershaw as Lieutenants. Several new members have been admitted lately, which is very encouraging. The girls are striving hard for the following badges: Cookery, Laundry, Millinery, Knitting & Needlework, Ambulance, and Domestic.

LADIES' HOCKEY CLUB.

We hope there is no truth in the rumour that the Ladies contemplate throwing up the sponge because they have one win only to their credit in the first four matches played. What would they say to being responsible for the formation of a Press Football Club (a Town's affair) and only winning one match throughout the first season. The Editor was the culprit in this case, but were we downhearted—NO! We canvassed the Big Nobs for further subscriptions, bought new jerseys such dinky caps, had a big slap-up dinner (Sir Alexander Acland-Hood—now Lord St. Audries—sent us a haunch of venison): and our second season was a howling success. So that's that!

The results to date are: October 18th, Crompton Ladies' H.C. (home), Lost, 0—6; October 25th, Rochdale Alumni 2nd XI. (away), Won, 3—1; November 22nd, Rochdale Secondary School 2nd XI. (home), Lost, 0—4; November 29th, Castlemere Ladies' H.C. (home), Lost, 1—6.

MEN'S HOCKEY CLUB.

We are justly proud of the achievements of our Men's Hockey Team. At the time of writing they have played six games, won four, lost one, and drawn one, with a total of 32 goals for and 17 against.

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The team came to grief sadly at Stalybridge on the 29th November, being unable to make any impression on the defence and losing by six goals. Our team sadly missed Bert Heanley among the half-backs.

The forwards are all very earnest workers, and the three inside men have notched about 28 goals between them.

At the moment of going to Press we learn that on Saturday, December 13th, the Club met and drew with Middleton (home), 3 goals to 3. It was a hardly contested fight, the home team being greatly handicapped by the loss of Mr. J. W. Bullock, who, after 10 minutes play, was forced to retire, having sustained a nasty cut under the eye through a collision. The Club has the satisfaction of not having lost a single home match up to the present, and has only been once defeated away. Scorers on Saturday were J. M. Maddox 1, B. Heanley 2.

HOCKEY DANCE.

A very pleasant evening was spent at the Provident Hall on Thursday evening, December 11th, where the members of the Ladies' and Men's Hockey Clubs gave a combined dance. Dancing proceeded from 7-30 to midnight, some really excellent music being played, which added greatly to the evening's enjoyment. The catering, done by Mr. W. Smith of Royton, was highly commendable. The proceeds from the dance will help to defray the expenses of the two Clubs.

FOOTBALL.

The football team has had a somewhat chequered career. They have played seven matches, won three, lost three, and drawn one, with a record of 13 goals for and 17 against. In fairness it should be stated that on the only two occasions on which they have turned out a full team they have won handsomely, one match resulting in the defeat of a previously unbeaten team. In each of the five other matches they have been obliged to take the field with seven, eight, or nine players only. Credit is due to those players who have consistently turned out.

ALLOTMENTS.

The season just ended records still another step forward, and one of which the allotment holders have every reason to be proud.

The second Annual Show was a pronounced success, and reflected the utmost credit upon everyone concerned.

At the annual meeting, held on October 15th, 1919, the whole of the retiring officials and members of the Committee were re-elected; though subsequently the treasurership was transferred to Mr. R. B. Bentley, the late treasurer, Mr. W. Greenwood, having resigned his position with the Firm, necessitating his withdrawal from the position. An entertainment and supper followed, and a most enjoyable evening was spent.

154 plots are now being prepared in readiness for next season, and there is every indication of a record year. There are a few vacant plots, applications for which are invited by the Secretary.

The Directors have now agreed to the planting of fruit trees and fruit bushes on the allotments; the only condition is that in the event of the land being required by the Firm, which is unlikely, no compensation is to be expected. Certain regulations have been drawn up governing the planting of the trees, etc., and copies will be posted on the lockers in due course. It is hoped that having obtained the necessary consent, the allotment holders will avail themselves of it and plant up to the maximum number allowed by the Committee, *i.e.*, twelve trees.

GENERAL.

THE RUBBER MAKING DIVISION BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.—On November 1st this Society promoted a Social in the Provident Hall, which was very successful. Messrs. Goodhew and Schofield were in fine form, as usual, with their music. Refreshments were provided, the M.C.'s were excellent, and there was a jolly good company. About 180 were present. The net profits were £4 11s. 4d., which amount has been placed to the credit of the fund.

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OUT of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods there be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced or cried aloud.
Beneath the bludgeoning of chance
My head is bloody but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishment the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.

W. E. HENLEY.

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