WILEY

Review

Author(s): Hugh Dalton

Review by: Hugh Dalton

Source: *The Economic Journal*, Vol. 24, No. 95 (Sep., 1914), pp. 445-447

Published by: Wiley on behalf of the Royal Economic Society

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2222015>

Accessed: 27-06-2016 05:09 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at

<http://about.jstor.org/terms>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Royal Economic Society, *Wiley* are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Economic Journal*

questioned whether a system of social insurance by the State is possible when you have America to deal with; and anyhow you can never tell, for "it is manifest that experience alone can prove or disprove many of these contentions" (p. 207).

A. FINGLAND JACK

A History of Socialism. By THOMAS KIRKUP. Fifth edition, revised and largely rewritten by Edward R. Pease. (London: A. & C. Black. 1913. Pp. ix + 490.)

THIS book, the first edition of which was published in 1892, has for some time been recognised as the best brief introduction to the theories of the most famous Socialists. In the present edition considerable changes have been made by Mr. Pease, the Secretary of the Fabian Society. The first nine chapters, which deal with Socialist thought from St. Simon to Marx, and with the beginnings of the modern Socialist movement, are virtually unaltered. Additions have been made to Chapters X. (Revolution in Russia) and XI. (Anarchism and Syndicalism). Chapters XII. (The Progress of Socialism Abroad), XIII. (The Modern International) and XIV. (The English School of Socialism) are the exclusive handiwork of Mr. Pease. The two final chapters are a condensation of the six final chapters of the previous edition, in which Kirkup attempted to "interpret" Socialism to his readers.

Mr. Pease has also added some appendices, including the Basis of the Fabian Society and a chronological list of general strikes, beginning thus (p. 467):—

"B.C. 494. Italy. Rome. Plebeians marched to the Sacred Mount. Complete victory. Syndicalists regard the success of the first recorded general strike as a good augury."

But, apparently, there were no more general strikes till 1874!

It is doubtful whether Mr. Pease's revision has improved the book. Kirkup was concerned, primarily, with *men*, with the theories of bold and original, though often grossly inaccurate, thinkers. Mr. Pease is concerned, primarily, with *movements*. He is, indeed (p. ix.), "convinced that historians will recognise that the successor(*sic*) to Karl Marx in the leadership of Socialist thought belongs to Sidney Webb," but of the thought of Sidney Webb, or of any other modern Socialist, he has very little to say.

On the other hand, he has much to say of the procedure at International Socialist Congresses, of the circulation of various Socialist journals, and of the details of Socialist organisations, from Bulgaria to the Argentine. Most of this rather tedious information

is quite out of place in a book of this type. Further, the electoral statistics, with which Mr. Pease makes great play, do not bear the interpretation which he seeks to put upon them. The growing strength of the so-called Socialist parties throughout the world is no index of the growth of distinctly Socialist opinion. All Socialist parties, as measured by their strength at the polls, contain, no doubt, a nucleus of genuine Socialists, but there is no reason to suppose that this nucleus is ever very large. Most of the four million Germans who voted Social Democrat at the last elections voted for Parliamentary Government, for freedom of speech and public meeting, for a lowering of the tariff, and, no doubt, in a general way for social reform and against certain features of the existing order. But they did not vote for the nationalisation of any of the means of production, nor is there any evidence to show how they would vote on such an issue, unless it be the naïve passage in which Mr. Pease informs us (p. 313) that in North Germany "any proposals for increasing State management of industry are distasteful to the Social Democrats, because they would limit the political freedom of the workpeople concerned" !

What is true of Germany is true, with slight modifications, of most other countries. The so-called "Socialist Movement" is a movement not towards more socialistic forms of industry, but towards more democratic forms of government. The advance of the Socialist movement is not the same thing as the advance of Socialism.

The weakness of such a passage as the following (p. 307) is, therefore, obvious :—

"As the conversion of Europe to Christianity occupied approximately 1,000 years, and went on steadily, irresistibly, and without substantial check, so the conversion of Europe to Socialism is proceeding as steadily, as irresistibly, and with even less sign of reaction, and at ten times the pace, so that it is hard to believe that within a century of the death of Marx any civilised country will remain where it is not triumphant."

As might be expected, Mr. Pease has much to say in praise of the Fabian Society (pp. 367–381), and gives us a frank description of its methods and point of view. The characteristic Fabian habit of mind is said to be partly due to the fact that several of the original Fabians were in Government service as first division clerks. "To men in such service many ways of influencing political action are apparent which the outsider cannot realise. The country is not so much governed by the votes of the electors as by the ideas put

into the heads of official persons . . . know more than other people, know what you want, and you can make other people carry out your ideas" (p. 379).

We have here an interesting exception to the general rule that the Socialist movement throughout the world is a democratic movement.

But it seems probable that the historian of the future will assign to the Fabian Society a slightly less prominent place in the world's history than does Mr. Pease.

HUGH DALTON

The Civil Service of Great Britain. By ROBERT MOSES, Ph.D. (Columbia University Studies, Vol. lvii., No. 1. New York : Longmans, Green and Co. London : P. S. King, 1914. Pp. 324. \$2.00.)

THIS volume does not purport to be a detailed study of either the history or the present organisation of the British civil service. It is an account, and in the main a panegyric, of what the author regards as the "brilliant and far-sighted plan to attract the most intelligent and capable young men in universities into the Government service," by means of a system of competitive examinations and the broad division of the service between a comparatively small, highly educated class recruited (in fact, though not formally) from a limited field, and a large, moderately educated class of officials admitted by examinations of a lower grade, and debarred from rising, save in exceptional cases, into the higher division. Dr. Moses gives a useful account of the discussions in which this scheme took its rise, the criticisms which it has encountered from time to time, and the various official inquiries into its operation, ending with the present Royal Commission ; and though his work contains, in this respect, little that will be new to English readers, it offers to American readers a valuable addition and corrective to the classical work of Eaton.

The main purpose of Dr. Moses is to urge the introduction of a similar mode of recruitment into the federal service of the United States, whose present system is "to attract a very miscellaneous and often ill-educated division of clerks by quasi-competitive examinations of the lowest conceivable standard, and to wait in vain for them to develop first-rate administrative ability." With this purpose in mind, it seems a little unfortunate that the publication of the work before us could not have been