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imagery he employs becomes occasionally overburdened, but his subject is admittedly one in which lucid description is very difficult.

It is a serious defect in the book that it is all designed to lead up to the conclusion that credit does not raise prices, a conclusion which is hardly fit to be taken seriously. The line of argument is that purchases on credit, being in anticipation of purchases for cash, are limited in the same way as the latter. Mr. St. Clair could never have taken this position but for his very sketchy treatment of the subject of banking. He hardly seems to realise that commodities may be "bought for keeps" with cheques as well as with cash, though he points out that his "retail" market must be regarded as including purchases of fixed capital on the largest scale. Even so, he is constrained to admit that if bankers gave long credit, prices would be raised.

R.G.H.

9.—*The Skilled Labourer, 1760–1832*. By J. L. Hammond and Barbara Hammond. viii + 397 pp., 8vo. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1919. Price 12s. 6d.

With this "detailed" story of "particular bodies of skilled "workers" in chosen industries Mr. and Mrs. Hammond end their trilogy on the three-quarters of a century from 1760 to 1832. They thus close their lively attempt to write afresh the moving narrative of the "Industrial Revolution." In the earliest book of the series, by turning their attention at the outset to the "Village Labourer," in what they then called, by an additional title, a "study of the "Government of England before the Reform Bill," they showed, properly, that "industrial" must be interpreted to cover agriculture. Linked together indeed, as they were, in development and results, so in origin and character the "revolutionary" changes towards the end of the eighteenth and during the beginning of the nineteenth century wrought in the methods of production followed, and the status taken, by the mass of workers in the quiet villages of the countryside resembled those rousing noisier stir in the crowded towns. But the factory, with its elaborate machines driven by water or by steam, had its counterpart in the large enclosed corn farm, and a fresh direction, started now, of capitalism, which had, we should not forget, its earlier phases, threatened at one and the same time domestic handicraftsmen and peasant commoners. Yet it is no disproportion that has given twice the space occupied by the big canvas of our authors to the conspicuous features of the "new Civilization," so described on the title-page of their second book, which were thrown into boldest relief in urban life. The "Town Labourer," as such, demanded that ampler measure of attention. In this final instalment of a third volume Mr. and Mrs. Hammond have, too, made the most extensive use of the novel material discovered in the Home Office papers. It is nevertheless indicative of their attitude and aim that, while they include here some interesting facts about the remarkable inventions that contributed no small quota to the vast increase which followed in the out-

put of wealth, they have, so far as we can see, taken little or no notice of developments of banking. But these accompanying means for providing easily in prompt abundance the required capital were indispensable. They should therefore have a place in a full record of these busy years which would justify its addition to authoritative histories accessible to students bent on the discovery of "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," before this readable, but by no means neutral, version of one important side of the notable occurrences was produced. The omission is, as we think, ominously significant.

For it is not unjust to say of this, as it has been said of the two preceding portions, that in them we have an example, with the grave "defects" of its arresting "qualities," of biased history written for a purpose. We would challenge any candid critic to read the opening chapter of this book without discovering forthwith evidence of ingrained prejudice. Nor is goading passion hid. History thus becomes more vivid, but it is also less trustworthy on that account. The purpose kept in view by Mr. and Mrs. Hammond is, apparently, to give powerful aid to the pushing agitation of those who would "reconstruct" the industrial order through destruction of the "capitalistic system." But in visiting for this end the sins of forefathers on grandchildren, or great-grand children, they are, we believe, unfair in act as well as in intention. They are not proof against the subtle temptation to suggest a moral to be drawn from an unlovely past, beyond recall, to a present which happily can be represented as similar through misplaced emphasis alone. For "wage-slavery," as many facts have proved in the interval, is no inseparable characteristic of capital or capitalists. It is so only in the twisted caricatures of narrow prejudice or in the oblique short-sightedness of passion that "sees red." If the mournful sequel of the long Napoleonic struggle is described in this book, with some excuse but also with some exaggeration, as "civil war," it does not follow that the national unity achieved by Britons in the last few years will quickly yield a tame surrender to fomenters of intestine strife. The prophets of class-war may yet be disappointed, and we can see no advantage, but rather a disservice, in reviving "implacable" memories.

Nor could we subscribe without reserve to the sweeping judgment that the question raised a hundred years ago, which, we submit, is no longer relevant, was "whether the mass of the English people were to lose the last vestige of initiative and choice in their daily lives." That seems to us an absolute and extravagant dogma which shows the perversity more than the insight of the utterers. And indeed their pen is dipped in gall, or perhaps we should more properly say in venom. Not merely is the whole picture drawn pervaded by deep gloom but any glimpse of struggling light is promptly obscured. Grudging recognition of good behaviour or fair dealing by individual capitalist or employer is cancelled by the disposition and conduct ascribed to the group. And, while the repeated failures

of the workmen in their combinations or their strikes are unflinchingly recorded, the violence accompanying their acts is regretted as futile rather than condemned as wrong. It seems to be justified by their pitiable condition. In our authors' malign opinion the Government and the ruling upper classes rarely, if ever, do what is just or proper, or, if by chance their action is correct, their motives are suspect. Honourable politicians and humane statesmen and righteous judges, who occasionally are found, are lost amid a crowd of Ministers and magistrates unscrupulously using the soiled testimony of spies, and unhesitatingly resorting to military occupation by armed garrisons. With all the evil and the misery that indubitably stained those bygone days we cannot deem this coloured description fair history. There is a side which is ignored or blurred. The end in view dictates means employed by the accusers as well as the accused.

The special animus to which we have been bound thus to refer was perhaps most evident, and misleading, in the account furnished in the earliest book of the motives, the procedure and the results of the enclosures of common land. In the general survey in their next volume of the factory regime the authors were fairer to individuals in blaming the system, and they drew, opportunely, attention to the surrounding atmosphere of religious belief and philosophical thought. They added such apt commentary to previous readings. The details of particular occupations in this concluding part would seem to give even less scope for indiscriminate censure. Less opportunity has certainly been opened for the effective use of literary picturesqueness, and the separate small facts are not made so lively or impressive as broad description and large denunciation. In the choice, however, of illustrative examples, and in their distribution of emphasis, the judicial habit of cool detachment and balanced estimation is not more obviously displayed, or, it may be, more assiduously sought, than in the earlier stages of the narrative. Mr. and Mrs. Hammond, however, say that in their selection of industries they have taken those for which the "fullest records" were "available."

From the miners of the Tyne and the Wear, and the abortive strikes on which these ventured in 1831 and 1832, against "heavy odds," under the leadership of Hepburn, when in a "life and death struggle for the right to combine" "high hopes" ended, for the time at least, in complete defeat and utter disappointment, we pass to the cotton and the woollen and worsted workers. The contrast between the first new-fangled trade, which could be forced more easily into a fresh mould, and the stouter more prolonged resistance offered to unfamiliar circumstance by the older industry, with its ancient traditions and conservative temper, is appropriately emphasised; and the further instructive distinction has been drawn between the woollen and the worsted branches of the latter in their responsiveness to capitalistic influence. Different steps in the advance of the machinery used are also noted, although the chief topic is the fate, mostly unhappy, of the workers, and their striving,

unsuccessful in the main, against the novel situation thrust upon them. In a succeeding chapter on the Spitalfields Silkweavers, the fact is pressed that they "alone of textile workers" "obtained an "act for regulating their wages"; and their good fortune, and the maintenance, a rare exception in those troublous days, of "industrial peace," were, it is contended, tied closely to that Act. They became, in consequence, an "aristocracy amongst wage-earners," although, Mr. and Mrs. Hammond characteristically add, to discount too cheering an estimate, "it cannot be said that the price "paid for their orderly behaviour was very high." After the repeal of the Act, which remained in force for over fifty years from 1773 to 1824, their later history became melancholy reading, and their wages were "reduced to starvation level or below it." The "stress of "foreign competition," acknowledged as one factor, was not, we are reminded, the main cause of their wretched final destiny.

A chapter on the frame-work knitters, provoked, as our authors urge, to riotous frame-breaking by the failure of other law-abiding methods of seeking redress for clamorous grievances, leads to the concluding chapters on the Luddites. In them, we think, Mr. and Mrs. Hammond have made the most considerable addition in this instalment of their work to previous histories. They discuss in turn the action taken by and against the Nottingham, the Lancashire, and the Yorkshire Luddites; and they append to these descriptions a graphic, if a sordid, tale of the adventures of one of the odious tribe of *agents provocateurs* who were employed, to their deserved discredit, by the authorities. "Oliver the Spy" seems to have resembled the preparers of "cinema" films. The crimes, like the criminals, were the creatures of his own suggestion as much as, or more than, they were the spontaneous acts, or even the vague ideas of those whom he accused. The evidence of such informers was, of course, tainted; but it needed a firm just judge, not always found, to rescue the innocent from the snares set by the prejudiced ardour of inferior officials willing to accuse and eager to convict. It is, too, to be feared that in more exalted quarters ready use was made of, and large reliance placed on, such shady agents and dirty instruments. This dark corner at least deserved the unsparing light shed here upon it; and we are grateful for the pains and skill brought to this illumination. It has been, we imagine, no unwelcome duty which Mr. and Mrs. Hammond have thus discharged, with a triumphant gusto as frankly shown as their damning exposure is effective.

L.L.P.

10.—*British Labour Conditions and Legislation during the War.* By M. B. Hammond. v + 335 pp., large 8vo. New York: Oxford University Press, 1919.

If there be advantage in economic, as in many affairs, in "seeing "ourselves as others see us," then the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace is rendering Englishmen a service by including in its "preliminary economic studies of the war" such books as that