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The Six-Hour Day and other Industrial Questions. By LORD LEVERHULME. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd. Pp. xv + 344. Price 12s. 6d. net.)

Piece-rate, Premium, and Bonus. By J. E. PROSSER. (Williams and Norgate. Pp. 122. Price 6s. net.)

The Industrial Council for the Building Industry. By the GARTON FOUNDATION. (Harrison and Sons. Pp. 153. Price 1s. net.)

THE demands of Labour to-day may be summed up in the words : more wages, more leisure, and more control over industry. Lord Leverhulme is in command of a business with an issued capital of over £23,000,000, and his reputation for making profits is so high that his last issue of £4,000,000 was over-subscribed at a time when £10,000,000 of issues were competing for the public favour. In his opinion factory life has a "deadening effect." "From fourteen years of age to seventy years of age is a long life-span, and if you consider the conditions of attending, for eight hours a day, the same automatic machinery and following the same routine, with its continual deadly, monotonous round of toil, those of us whose employment is varied will realise how this bites into the soul of a man or woman and tends to corrode it." Again : "Our industries progress, science progresses, but we have little or no corresponding progress in conditions of comfort of the workers. The employee-worker lags behind in that culture, education, social and economic well-being which he ought to enjoy under modern conditions of civilisation. Our manufacturing towns are squalid and over-crowded, with ugly dwellings, without gardens. They are unlovely congestions, without beauty or possibility of refinement, and the great bulk of the workers remain at a relatively low state of betterment. . . . Men and women who get up to go to work before daylight and return from that work after dark cannot find life worth living. They are simply working to earn enough one day to prepare themselves to go to work again the next day. Their whole life is one grey, dull, monotonous grind, and soon their lives become of no more value to themselves or the nation than that of mere machines." Perhaps those writers who are fond of screaming "Bolshevist!"—a couple of years ago it would have been "Boche!"—whenever there is a whisper of a strike will listen to this justification of industrial unrest from a peer and a millionaire. It is somewhat fashionable in some quarters to sneer at Lord Leverhulme, but there is little doubt that he is the only man among the wealthy captains of industry who is ready to confess that "our modern industrial system in this great United Kingdom stands self-condemned, when the income-tax

returns show that it rests on a basis whereby one-ninth of the population enjoy one-half the total income, and more than nine-tenths of the accumulated wealth, whilst the remaining eight-ninths of the population have only one-half of the total income, and possess less than one-tenth of the accumulated wealth." This disproportion is probably the reason why "this nation as a whole has never yet really trusted Labour"—as Lord Leverhulme asserts at the beginning of his book. "We have always borne a mental attitude of suspicion and distrust towards Labour."

Lord Leverhulme's proposals for "harmonising Labour and Capital"—which he explains from the dictionary as meaning "adjusting in fit proportions"—are well known. He would institute a six-hour day with continuous shifts and would in this way get a larger output at a lower wage-cost and with less strain on the worker. The reports on the health of munition workers show that the economies of short hours are not yet exhausted, but the continuous shift is likely to encounter a good deal of opposition from the housewife whose domestic economy it will upset. It is useful to remember that they are now citizens; and there is another point, that while four shifts in the twenty-four hours may be economical for the machines, the machinists will be forced to spend half their working time in turn under quite unnatural conditions. In the second place in his reforms Lord Leverhulme puts housing, and here all will agree. Thirdly, part of the new leisure is to be devoted to education, which in all grades should be more practical and less bookish.

All this is good, but is seen to be not enough. "If high wages, short hours, good housing meant finality to Labour Unrest, then Labour would not be a man but a vegetable." "Capitalists have now the task set them to democratise their system, and to create conditions that will enable Labour to take some democratic share in management, and some responsibility for the success of the undertaking." There must be Co-partnership—which must not be confounded with our old friend profit-sharing. The principle is somewhat vague; apparently after paying salaries and wages to management and labour and 5 or 6 per cent. to capital, capital and labour are to divide "the profits of their joint labour fairly and squarely between them." Here, as in the phrase "adjusting in fit proportion," there is the idea that under the present system there is discoverable an absolute norm of justice, a view which will not get the support of Mr. Smillie. Exactly how the workers at Port Sunlight share in management and responsibility is not quite clear, except that each undertakes "not to waste time,

labour, materials, or money in the discharge of his duties." We may agree that it is futile to put workmen on boards of directors without giving them a training in the higher branches of work, but many will regard as ominous the statement that "the control must rest with those who find the capital."

Lord Leverhulme's book is a collection of addresses grouped together under the main themes; it is somewhat formless and too full of repetition, but it contains some good stories, and is excellent propaganda for his own views and also, as he will find when the pamphleteers get to work, for some views more "advanced" than his own.

To pass to Mr. Prosser's book from Lord Leverhulme's is somewhat like passing from a lecture to the notes for the lecture. It is a very compressed and very fair analysis of the chief methods of wage-payment—time-wage, piece-wage, and those intermediate forms which by some form of premium or bonus attempt to unite the advantages of time- and piece-wages by giving the workman a guarantee of a fair minimum, and at the same time such an inducement to speed up that the wages-cost of the work will be reduced. Once more we are in search of the maximum output and the wage which will induce its production, and still we have to struggle against the notion prevalent among workmen that a high standard of effort is dangerous to security of employment. This is not so foolish a notion as it seems, for while "in the long run" demand will certainly absorb the increased output, the workman is concerned with what is going to happen in the intervening period. Under one form of the Halsey premium, for example, assuming time-wages at tenpence an hour and other expenses also at tenpence, the reduction from ten to five hours in the time for doing a job means an increase of 30 per cent. in wages and a reduction of $42\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in cost, but the market has to be doubled if half the labour has not to be discharged. The workman has to take all the risk, and naturally he plays for "safety first."

It is very difficult to summarise Mr. Prosser's book, for he has already done his own summary so excellently, and if his standpoint is that of the employer, that position is never obtruded, and his comments on the slipshod methods of the past are sufficiently strong to guarantee a fair degree of impartiality. One reflection may be permitted, and that is that the extension of piece-wage to industries like engineering depends on the reduction of operations to their simplest elements, involving one or other of the systems of motion-study. Whether these are adopted or not, it is plain that a good deal of "scientific management"

—arrangements for regular supply of material, proper disposition of tools, economic planning of workshop, etc.—can and should be instituted, even if the other principles of Taylor and his followers are not accepted. One has an uneasy feeling that the “efficiency engineers” are aiming at the reduction of operatives to automata for the production of profits. It is interesting to observe that Mr. Prosser concludes his book with a chapter on profit-sharing, and that he holds that “some scheme of this nature alone can give the workman that broader view, that sense of industrial co-partnership, which the usual methods, however remunerative they may be, fail to inspire.”

One has almost got tired of hearing it said that “the brotherhood of the trenches” should introduce a new ideal into industrial life, but the little pamphlet on the building industry, published under the auspices of the Garton Foundation, comes to revive our sick hopes. In 1914 the building trade was in a dangerous condition. “The rates of wages had failed to keep pace with the ever-increasing cost of living; the gulf between employers and operatives was growing wider—suspicion had become so ingrained and so strong that almost every proposal, no matter what its real merits, was only regarded as a tactical move in a great strategic struggle for mastery.” A dispute about non-union labour led to a lock-out in London which was going to be extended to the whole country when the outbreak of war persuaded both sides to return very largely to the *status quo*. The “incredible futility and wastefulness” of the contest were brought home to some thoughtful men, and when a renewal of disputes was threatened in 1916 the young director of a large joinery works near Willesden, Mr. Sparkes, put proposals for the organisation of the whole industry before the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners. They at once accepted the principle of a National Industrial Parliament for the Building Industry, and the National Associated Building Trades’ Council followed their example. The masters next took it up, and in May, 1918, the first meeting of the Industrial Council for the Building Industry (Building Trades’ Parliament) took place in the Central Hall, Westminster, and was supported by twenty-two trade unions and seventeen associations of employers. The object of the Council was to review the conditions affecting employers and employed so as to ensure the largest possible measure of joint action. Among the questions coming within its scope were : “(1) regularising production and employment; (2) the provision of a graduated scale of minimum rates designed to maintain real wages as nearly as possible on

a level throughout the country; (3) minimising the fluctuations of trade by intelligent anticipation and the augmentation of demand in slack periods; (7) the inclusion of all employers and workpeople in their respective associations; (8) the revision and improvement of the existing machinery for the settlement of differences; (10) securing to the workpeople a greater share in, and responsibility for, the determination and observance of the conditions under which their work is carried on; (12) ensuring to the workpeople the greatest possible security of earnings and employment." The collection and circulation of statistics and information, the promotion of research, the consideration and utilisation of inventions and improvements, and education were also among the objects.

The Council consists of 132 members, elected half by the employers' associations and half by the trade unions, and meets quarterly. The Administrative Committee has ten members from each side and meets monthly. There were already four district Conciliation Committees in existence and also Demarcation Committees for dealing with disputes between craft and craft; and both employers and operatives were organised in national craft associations and in local federations embracing the whole building industry within a given area. The Council has since proposed the establishment of craft industrial councils (like the Painters' National Joint Council) and regional industrial councils (as in Scotland). Works committees are to some extent in existence, but there are difficulties arising out of the shop stewards' movement. The East Lancashire Painters' and Decorators' Joint Council has adopted a rule that trade unionists shall only work for associated employers and that the latter shall only employ trade unionists. The North-Western Area Joint Council for the Building Trades has adopted uniform rates of wages for skilled craftsmen and labourers (four grades in each). The National Council has also during the past year had committees at work on resettlement and demobilisation, on education and apprenticeship, on safety and welfare, and on management and costs. The interim report of the last-mentioned committee is given in full. It proposes to set up committees, national and local, to regularise demand by accelerating new building enterprises in slack times and by advising their postponement in periods of congestion. These committees should also deal with the decasualisation of labour through works of afforestation, road-making, etc. In times of necessary unemployment the industry itself should maintain its unemployed by levying a fixed per-

centage on the pay-bills and refunding the costs of maintenance to the trade unions. Employer-managers should declare the salaries they regarded as due to them, subject to review by the employment committees, and a regular rate of interest should be allowed to capital. The surplus earnings of the industry should be pooled, publicly declared, and applied to the guarantee of interest on approved capital, loans for development, education and research, superannuation schemes, and replacement of approved capital lost through no fault of the management. The Council referred the report back for further examination by the Committee, and there we must for the present leave the most important and revolutionary experiment that has for many years been tried in British industry.

HENRY W. MACROSTY

The Labor Law of Maryland. By MALCOLM H. LAUCHHEIMER, Ph.D. Johns Hopkins University Studies. Series XXXVII. No. 2. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press. 1919. Pp. 166.)

THIS study deals with the legal status of the labour union in Maryland, the workmen's compensation law, the conditions of employment, the terms of employment, miscellaneous laws, and the administrative system, and has two general chapters on the problem of the labour law and the State in relation to labour. The difficulties of adjusting modern ideas about labour to the conditions in a State which is half agricultural and half industrial, where the courts are inclined by their training to lean "in the direction of the individualistic philosophy of freedom," where the administrative departments are staffed on the principle of giving the "plums" to political supporters, and where the application of constitutional law involves "some of the finest legal reasoning," are very clearly brought out by the author. The League of Nations has undertaken the task of harmonising industrial legislation in all manufacturing countries, but the problem is no less difficult within the United States, where the labour section of the League has been holding its first conference. To Western minds the constitutional law of the United States, and even more of some individual States within the Union, seems to pay an exaggerated respect to individual rights and individual freedom, and the "fine legal reasoning" that has been used to bring the police law in to limit *laissez faire* arouses more intellectual admiration than respect. "Maryland is an average American

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