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Author(s): H. W. M.

Review by: H. W. M.

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The obscurity which surrounds its origin and early days is not surprising. The idea of a permanent Friendly Society, accumulating funds to meet future risks, was not familiar to the people who associated themselves together in small local clubs, which in general lasted only for a single generation or so, and kept no records. The affiliated orders themselves were merely groups of such small bodies, as may appear from the fact that even now branches of some of the minor orders do not graduate their contributions. The inherent unsoundness of this method was frequently disguised by the spirit of self-esteem and of consideration for their poorer brethren which led members to abstain from making claims upon the funds if not under necessity to do so. This element, which gives the societies their distinctive name as "friendly societies," still exists, but to a smaller extent, and this may perhaps account for the circumstance that successive observations of the statistics of claims for sick-pay have shown a gradual increase. One consequence has been that the progress of societies towards complete financial soundness has been slow. Another consequence has been that the legislature, in attempting to promote that progress, has had alternate hot and cold fits, at one time seeking to make the societies sound by Act of Parliament, at another more wisely leaving them to the voluntary action which in general produces the best results. The Act of 1875, which is still in effect the statute governing them, embodies the mature wisdom of the legislature in this respect. Its lines were laid down by the late Mr. J. M. Ludlow, whose great public services deserved a higher acknowledgment than they ever received. The ideas embodied in it are those of providing the members of every society with exact knowledge of its position, giving them access to official help for the remedy of wrongs and the protection of minorities, and maintaining unimpaired the voluntary principle.

Mr. Robinson devotes four chapters to the co-operative movement and five to trade unions. Space will not allow of our commenting upon these. His conclusions are in favour of voluntary association as against legislative action. When the legislature adopts the position of pioneers, unsupported by the real desire of the nation as a propelling force, the task it attempts proves too often to be beyond its powers. When the State enters into competition with voluntary association, or seeks to shoulder its burdens, the voluntary association necessarily undergoes fundamental change, and will probably die out. Voluntary effort is more elastic than statutory regulation can be, and moulds itself from time to time to meet new requirements. Legislation lags behind, while voluntary association leads the van. Progress can only be surely attained by the building up of individual character. With all these views we agree.

The author has taken a hint we gave on the previous occasion, and has provided this book with an index. E.B.

7.—*Le Syndicalisme et la Prochaine Révolution.* Par M. Dufour, Ex-Professeur d'Economie Politique. 436 pp., 8vo. Paris: Marcel Rivière et Cie, 1913. Price 6 francs.

The author has retained at least one not uncommon attribute of the professorial chair: he is a good hater, and his language is not

only authoritative but vigorous. Indeed, it is curious to reflect how the more a man is opposed to "authority," the more uncompromisingly does he demand unquestioning belief in his own views—and this is particularly true of our author. The book is not negligible, far from it; one might guess that it is only the price of six francs which may secure the author against prosecution. It is an interesting and in some ways a fascinating book. Everything seems so axiomatic when couched in the clear, crisp French style, till after reading some chapters one feels in a nightmare in which any postulate may come true.

In the first part of the book we are on familiar ground, "Property is theft." The public has already paid back to the capitalist in the surplus of selling-price over cost many times the capital advanced. The factory system is falling to pieces under the strain of its own development. The only novelty is that the demonstration is backed up by some very general figures, which do not look as if many of them would bear analysis. The conclusion is that it is the duty of everyone to help forward the revolution by direct action and propaganda. Sabotage is not only permissible but laudable, for the workers are only destroying their own property. The "State" is both thief and assassin, and, therefore, the State and patriotism and militarism must be fought by all means—"on occasion by firing on employers and officers." Legality is in complete opposition to the interests of the community, and consequently, says M. Dufour, in words which have a very familiar ring about them, "it is the duty of the proletariat to transgress it on every possible opportunity." The Socialist party are entirely in the wrong path and their doctrines are false and impossible. It is with some relief that we read that "the immense majority of the public is quite incapable of understanding" the reasons which make syndical rule both imperative and possible, but in the next paragraph our relief is dashed by the conclusion that "in these circumstances an intelligent minority will begin the revolution by force."

In the organisation of the future every industry is to be directed by a federal assembly which will decide all economic questions, the duration of work, amount of payment, &c., and by a federal committee charged with the administrative and technical work. These federal assemblies will be formed of delegates from all the local trade unions and will sit in one of the chief industrial centres. In the towns each industry will be directed by its syndical assembly and its syndical committee, both constituted either by the members working in a trade or by their delegates. The assemblies will be "entirely analogous" to the present trade union organisations which conduct strikes and discuss labour questions; they will appoint the administration committees of technical experts. The committees will choose the management staff and will take "all the necessary steps to ensure work immediately to every person asking for it"; they will also reserve occupations for women, and decide as to the use of machinery. The committee of each industry will negotiate with the committees of other industries as to the conditions on which it will obtain its supplies of materials, tools, &c. Prices

will be fixed by the technical staff after approval by the committee. "The administrative committee as well as the managers of the different departments should possess the disciplinary powers, such as fines, &c., necessary to ensure obedience." Fines, it may be noted, are one of the most keenly-felt grievances of the present system, but in Utopia there will be no injustice.

We will thus have federal assemblies for mines, textiles, railways, sea-transport, &c., and in agriculture there will be 3,000 local syndicates, grouped into regional federations, and centralised into a national federation. This New Jerusalem will be ushered in by a general strike, accompanied by a "serious sabotage," a simultaneous insurrection breaking out in all industrial centres, and wholesale desertions from the army. And yet most persons, including "exp-professors of political economy," insist upon some relation between "end" and "means."

H.W.M.

8.—*La Réglementation du Travail réalisée ou projetée : Ses illusions et ses dangers.* Par Edouard Payen. iv + 258 pp., crown 8vo. Paris : Félix Alcan, 1913. Price 3 fr. 50 c.

Readers of Herbert Spencer's well-known essay on "Man *versus* the State" will perhaps remember that in that vigorous plea for individual liberty it was forcibly contended that one "interference" of the State led inevitably to others in the vain attempt to undo or correct the mischief caused by the initial departure from the strait path of right policy. The brochure now before us might aptly be described as a rousing discourse upon this text. In clear and forcible language the author illustrates the failings of French legislation which has tried, by means of official inspection and control, increasing in rigour and extending in range, to regulate the hours and the other conditions of work in his country. He maintains, for instance, that in such a case as the recent prescription of a weekly day of rest, the law has been confronted by difficulties which were not perhaps contemplated, or at least were not fully understood, by the authors, or supporters, of the enactment, that its enforcement has necessarily been accompanied by express exceptions, or by tacit evasions, which in effect have made it more inoperative, where it was not originally otiose, than impetuous unthinking legislators had conceived, that it has already produced some unwelcome consequences, and caused some difficult situations which might have been avoided, and that on the whole it may be doubted whether it has advanced or retarded a voluntary movement in a wished and desirable direction, which was making favourable progress before the law appeared upon the scene.

That M. Payen is free from *parti pris* will scarcely be affirmed any more certainly than such an assertion could have been put forward about Herbert Spencer, and, like that distinguished philosopher, he may fairly be said to state with emphatic confidence one side of the case alone. Nor indeed is he himself unconscious that he can be held to play the role of an "advocatus diaboli," for the second portion of his essay, where he examines the fresh schemes which are being projected in addition to, or extension of, those