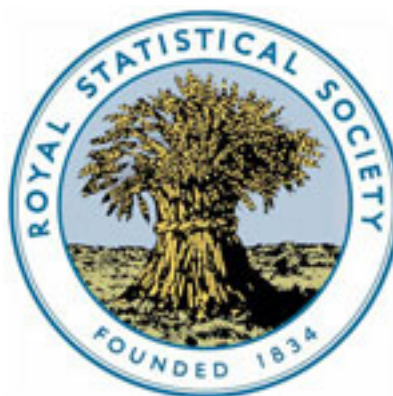


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La Grève, les Salaires et le Contrat de Travail by D. Zolla; M. Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu

Review by: A. L. B.

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The most the advance between 1859 and 1873 can be taken at is from  $6\frac{1}{2}d.$  to  $9d.$  per hour, or less than 50 per cent. In weekly earnings it was from 33s. to 39s.  $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ , or about 20 per cent. Further, there was a great strike in 1878 for  $10d.$  per hour, during which hundreds of masons and carpenters were working at this rate, only to go back to  $9d.$  when the strike failed and trade became depressed.

Mr. Dearle suggests (p. 188) that the members of the Steam Engine Makers Society are more regularly employed than the members of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, because the former help one another to get jobs. The real explanation why the Steam Engine Makers have less unemployment is probably that the Amalgamated Society of Engineers have by far a greater proportion than have the Steam Engine Makers of members employed in shipbuilding and marine engineering, and these branches of industry are notoriously more fluctuating than the textile machine making, &c., in which so many of the Steam Engine Makers are employed.

The figures in the footnote at p. 41 are rather confusing, and a diagram would be much clearer.

On the whole, these blemishes do not affect the main purpose of the book, and as an analysis of the situation and difficulties of one trade Mr. Dearle's book is certainly valuable and worthy of attentive study.

G.H.W.

13.—*La grève, les salaires et le contrat de travail.* Par D. Zolla, Professeur à l'École de Grignon. Préface de M. Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu. 305 pp., 8vo. Paris: V. Giard and E. Brière, 1908.

The thesis of this not very important work, supported by the preface, and repeated again and again, is that strikes have no influence on wages. The proof offered is circumstantial, supported by rather irrelevant theoretical considerations. A review of the movement of wages in France in the nineteenth century shows, on the whole, that wages rose most rapidly before workmen's associations were legal, and comparatively slowly in more recent years, during which strikes, promoted by these associations, were frequent. It is further shown that, in comparing industry with industry, there is no relation between increase of wages and frequency of strikes. It is urged that the only cause of increment in real wages is increased productivity, and this statement is supported by interesting statistics of production. The erroneous notion that want could be replaced by luxury, if only the division of reward between land, capital, and labour were less unequal, is exposed at length.

The arguments brought forward are (except in the most obvious cases) unconvincing. It is no doubt true that no country is so rich that all can have everything desired; but it is equally true that, so far as mere mass of produced commodities is concerned, there is enough for moderate comfort for everyone. If, as is alleged, an equal division of the profits of all the French railways among their employés would give each "only" 200 francs per month, still, this would be a very handsome addition to their incomes; and the fact that this quotient is higher than would be obtained in most industries

can hardly be used as a *reductio ad absurdum* of the idea that the national income other than wages is large. The author, in fact, proves too much. He never discusses the fundamental problem as to how the rewards of landlord, capitalist, and labour are mutually determined, and whether the effects of the law of substitution, by which the utilities of different agents of production are balanced against each other, is inevitable in its action. He does not discuss the justice of the assumption that workmen at all times and in all cases are sufficiently good bargainers individually, or have sufficient mobility, to obtain the wage that, theoretically, should come to them; nor does he examine whether increased wages are themselves the prelude to increased productivity. As a counterblast to socialistic propaganda (which the author evidently intended to produce) the book will be unconvincing, but as a collection of interesting statistical data (with adequate references to their sources) it is not without its value.

A.L.B.

14.—*Les trusts et les syndicats de producteurs*. Par J. Chastin, Professeur au Lycée Voltaire. Paris: Félix Alcan, 1909. Price 6 francs.

After a sketchy account of combinations of employers before the most recent developments of modern industry, M. Chastin proceeds to survey present-day combinations, whether in the form of kartell or trust, in Germany, Austria, France, Belgium, Spain, Russia, England, and the United States. Generally speaking, this account is well done, and contains the best-known and most important facts concerning the most prominent combinations. An exception to this statement must, however, be made in the case of the chapter on England. Here M. Chastin's information is always out of date, and often so defective as to be positively misleading. He is not acquainted with the most recent developments, and he does not grasp the real character of modern industrial organisation in Great Britain.

The second part of the book consists of four chapters dealing with the effects of combinations on competition, prices, wages, and finance. Here the facts are well-known, and M. Chastin marshals them in orderly array. We are obliged to him for the prominence which he gives to the Comptoir de Longwy, whose operations are less well-known than they deserve to be. There is little novelty in his criticisms, but then, there is little room for novelty. The third section of the book consists of two chapters on combinations and the individual, and combinations and the State. His general conclusion appears to be that combinations are inevitable, and that they must lead to a certain destruction of initiative. On the other hand, he thinks some of the dangers exaggerated, and that there must always remain a wide field open for the individual producer. He foresees some risk of anti-social agreements between the trusts and the trade unions, but the basis of his argument is unsound; and, indeed, he seems to be possessed with an unnecessary fear of the trade unions. In the last chapter he examines and rejects the views of the socialists that the development of trusts must lead to the State control of industry. In support of his opinions, he enters