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factory solution of the labour problem than the retention of unwilling villein service. With increased cash they could hire some labour or turn the land to other uses. Again, we cannot agree that from serfdom practical emancipation was finally won by the popular rising of 1381 (p. 232). Various causes contributed towards the great change; some were at work before the rising, and others became more important during the fifteenth century. From every standpoint, except the political, the rising must be regarded as a failure.

The essay contains so much of value and of interest that we hope these indications of a change in recent opinion may receive some consideration in a later edition. For there is no other detailed account in English, based so largely upon trustworthy records, which leaves so clear an impression of the magnitude and universality of this European catastrophe, and we would fain commend it without reservation to students of fourteenth century history.

ELLEN A. MCARTHUR

L'avènement du régime syndical à Verviers. Par LAURENT DECHESNE. Pp. 552. (Paris : Larose et Tenin.)

M. DECHESNE's book will prove a mine of invaluable materials to all whose task it is to study the question of strikes. But it does not lend itself at all to critical analysis, inasmuch as it is purely descriptive. In so saying, we are far from wishing to depreciate it, for the author's avowed intention went no further. At least, his chief object is declared to be "To depict such disturbances and the remedies propounded for them." And we follow him further and willingly when he says: "Is there any need for emphasising the interest attaching to a detailed and impartial account of this sort of strife?"

We may go so far as to say that the strikes selected by the author are specially instructive, for although they arose in one and the same city, and for the most part in one and the same year (1906), it so happens that they embody, as in a microcosm, all the possible aspects of a strike.

The most interesting of all, occupying the larger portion of the book, is the strike of the wool weavers. Verviers, as our author says, is the Bradford of Belgium. The strike, which lasted three months, and involved 15,000 hands, will live in economic history for several reasons.

In the first place, because it introduced certain clever tactics

which have since been imitated in France. The children, namely, of the strikers were sent away to other industrial centres in the country, and there received the hospitality of working-class comrades. Their exodus was carried out in large companies, and their journey, either at the start, or on their arrival, or on their return, was made the occasion of great demonstrations, stirring public opinion and quickening the feeling of solidarity among the working masses. The children unconsciously played the part of missionaries of Socialism. If we may believe the author, and it sounds probable enough, some abuses crept into and disfigured this noble enterprise. There were workers not on strike who availed themselves of it to give their children a pleasant outing and the benefit of free entertainment.

In the next place, it was a forced strike. The employed did not go on strike, but were "lock-outés," as they were locally termed. The employers were trying to compel the men to work two looms, when the latter wanted to be engaged on one loom only. Failing to overcome resistance, the masters decided on a lock-out—a *coup d'état* well enough known in England, but more or less of a novelty on the Continent.

Thirdly and lastly, the strike ended in a "collective contract" between the respective federations of masters and men, which is of peculiar interest. By it the effort was made to determine the spheres of mutual competency in employers and employed throughout the whole manufacturing world, and to formulate thus a kind of law on the relations of Capital and Labour. It is well worth while to quote the very important text of this contract, drafted by the workers' federation, and inserted with hardly any alteration into the treaty of peace dated October 30th, 1906 :—

"It is the business solely of the master to settle (a) the nature of the capital and the arrangements necessary for the specific kind of production; (b) which markets to select for the disposal of produce; (c) the methods of production, that is to say, the choice of raw material, the modes for manufacturing it, the human agencies employed. This last clause implies the master's right to engage and to dismiss his staff, and to decide on their proportionate gains. . . ."

"But it is the *contract of bilateral work* which must fix under what conditions the staff is to be engaged, such as rate and minima of wages, intensity, pace, and duration of labour; hygienic conditions; liability in case of accident."

Here is a distinction which has the appearance of being not only rational but scientific as well.

A second strike—that of tramway men in the same city and the same year—is also described in a highly instructive manner. The fight between the strikers and the “blacklegs,” there called “supplanters”; the boycott carried out not only on the company’s tramcars, but also on all who had the effrontery to use them; the way in which the public at first abetted the boycott out of sympathy, and finally wearied of it, forcing the men to give in—all this is narrated with numerous quotations from newspapers, and anecdotes, making a highly entertaining series of pictures, and embodying some deeply interesting evidence for social psychology.

Why does the author entitle his book “The Advent of the Trade-union Régime in Verviers”? Because he wishes to show how the multiplication of strikes has instilled into the working classes—and, by rebound, into the employers—the feeling of solidarity, “the consciousness of class,” as the Marxist Socialists call it—and how the old Manchesterian conception of the master imposing peace on his men has been superseded by the more truly liberal notion of a synallagmatic (bilateral) contract between master and men.

The historical portion of the book can also show some instructive points: the opposite, for instance, to that taught often in economic treatises concerning the advent of machinery at the opening of the nineteenth century. Our author shows that the number of working weavers was thereby reduced from 25,000 to 10,000, and that over sixty years had to pass (that is, time enough for an entire generation to suffer and die!) before an equal number of workers could once more be given enough work to support them at weaving.

It would seem that the author has faithfully fulfilled his promise to give us a fair and impartial account. And yet the question will arise, whether he has not donned spectacles a little too roseate of hue when he thus sums up the results of the six weeks’ “play” of the Verviers weavers:—“The period fell chiefly in a sunny autumn, following on one of the most splendid summers ever known; six weeks of pleasant and healthy holidays, to which they resigned themselves with no great reluctance!” An appreciation which is the more singular after we had learnt, on the preceding page, that those weavers had been compelled to expend, during that time of sacrifice, more than a million francs of savings; that is to say, in all probability every sou they had been able to lay by during their whole lifetime, let alone the debts they doubtless had to incur! Truly an effective way of spending a pleasant and salutary holiday!

The book is adorned with illustrations of the chief buildings at Verviers, which seem somewhat superfluous, the more so in that they have no connection with the subject.

CHARLES GIDE

Das Wesen und der Hauptinhalt der theoretischen National-ökonomie. By DR. J. SCHUMPETER. (Leipzig : Duncker & Humblot, 1908.)

WILL the controversies as to the method and limitations of political economy never cease? Why cannot we all agree with that great economist who said that he only recognised two schools in economic science—those who demonstrated their conclusions, and those who did not? Probably because there must be so large a field in which the paucity of accurate data, and the difficulty of drawing conclusions from them is so great, that there is little scope for “demonstration.” But this can be no excuse for false and inaccurate reasoning, or for a deliberate refusal to use those aids to correct reasoning which we possess. The differences between the methods of economics and those of any other science should be only those due to the very limited opportunities which are afforded by social and industrial phenomena for accurate observation and experiment. With the growth of statistical methods and the growth of statistical material it will become possible to make more accurate generalisations, to get some fairly good estimates of elasticities of demand, and so forth. Few things are more pitiable than the way in which historians, journalists, and politicians make a false assumption of fact, such for example as that demand is normally inelastic, and then consider that a person who has the honesty to discuss a problem by means of a demand schedule is impractical. After all, discussions about method are of small importance. The scope of the subject is, however, a matter of some importance, because if results are obtained which are only intended to apply within a certain sphere or range, it is a serious matter if such results are afterwards assumed to be accurate outside that range or under an entirely different set of limitations. For this reason the question whether the results of economics are, or can be, at present only “statical” and not “dynamical” are of importance. Dr. Schumpeter contends, with great ability, for the view that economics should be—or at any rate is—limited to statical problems. The question is of sufficient importance to deserve consideration; but we must