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BOOKS

SOCIAL RELATIONS IN INDUSTRY

REPORT ON INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN NEW ZEALAND. By A. E. C. HARE, M.A. (Cantab.), Ph.D. (Lond.), Research Fellow in Social Relations in New Zealand Industry. Victoria University College.

Reviewed by F. L. Combs

DOCTOR HARE'S credentials are given above because they are quite as essential to the work he has for five years been doing as those of a medical man to the performance of his calling. Years of experience and study—probably nearly 20—lie behind his report and the experience was gained in an old country before additions to it were sought in a new one.

Dr. Hare has done a very important job and done it very well. The importance lies in the fact that the Report produced by it has to do with the basic conditions connected with the work of over half a million New Zealanders. In examining the conditions under which they work Dr. Hare was also inevitably dealing with the circumstances under which they live two-thirds of their lives.

Dr. Hare does not, like Ruskin, attempt to answer these searching and comprehensive (almost cosmic) questions. If he did our economic-industrial civilisation would be no more interested in the answer than it has been in *Unto this Last* during the century (almost) since Ruskin wrote it. We are still blandly if blindly certain that poets like Wordsworth and Ruskin and Arnold knew nothing about life.

Dr. Hare himself, however, is by no means unappreciative of the poets—he quotes Bridges at the outset:

Reason shamefast at heart and vain above
measure
Would look to find the first fruits of in-
telligence
Showing some provident correction of man's
estate
Toward social order.

And one feels that he shares the ironical bitterness of the lines he quotes. But in the volume which follows he sticks to his order of reference which may be set forth thus:

Here is a scheme of things concerned almost entirely with production for

profit. How, bringing to bear "a wise discriminate purpose in clear contrast against the blind habits of brutes" (Bridges again), can this scheme be made to function more harmoniously and efficiently? In short: Can it be induced to produce the goods—and perhaps more goods—with less human wear and tear and consequent wastage of manpower?

Such an order of reference demands a disciplined mind; one that can assemble and assess evidence in a scientific spirit. It calls for uncommon powers of orderly, logical thought and of lucid statement. Dr. Hare has all these qualifications. But he is possessed of other qualities at least equally important. These are moral.

Wolsey salved from the wreck of his fortunes "his integrity to heaven." At least he said so. One feels as one reads this Report that his integrity is one thing Dr. Hare, cost what it may, will on no account part with. Not that he is in the least emotional. Able as the Report is, there are parts of it that are dry reading to a layman. But it is dominated by a respect for facts, and when those facts point to inferences the inferences are made without fear or favour.

"The ball no question makes of ayes or noes, but right or left as strikes the player goes." Whether you are an employer or a worker or an official or a party man, or just an ordinary citizen, there are parts of the Report you will by no means relish. But, taken as a bitter tonic, it is going to do New Zealand good. We have been rather complacent about our advanced social and industrial legislation. (I write as a man in the street for fellow men in the street). Well, the Report is not written to shatter that complacency. It is not written to do anything—except to carry out its assigned task. Incidentally, however, it does provide salutary corrective to our complacency. We are in many respects not in the van; in many respects we are in the rear. Take one example: Factory Conditions (Chapter E). Most of the factories are not in buildings designed as factories. The vast majority are in premises unsuited to the purpose for

EUROPE

(To Georges Bernanos)

AND now spring comes to the starved and blackened land
where the tailless abominable angel has spent his passion;
dead roots are twined through the bones of a broken hand;
now death, not Schiaparelli, sets the fashion.

IN the 20th Century of the Christian era
the news-hawk camera man, no Botticelli,
walks on this stricken earth with Primavera,
and Europe cries from the heart of her hungry belly.

TEN flattened centuries are heaped with rubble,
ten thousand vultures wheel above the plain;
honour is lost and hope is like a bubble;
Life is defeated, thought itself is pain.

BUT the bones of Charlemagne will rise and dance,
and the spark unquenched will kindle into flame,
and the voices heard by the small maid of France
will speak yet again, and give this void a Name.

—A. R. D. Fairburn