

Industry in New Zealand is now in a state of uncertainty which organisation of labour resources would remove. An official pronouncement as to what are the really essential callings is wanted, followed by the official undertaking to give these industries a chance to live. They should not be man-starved by taking experts from the workshop or the land to serve in the trenches. Sir John Findlay favours a bold policy. "We must," he says, "have equality of sacrifice. Inequality in this respect is the key to much unrest. Taxation of wealth, and particularly of war profits, may involve some apparent hardship, but compare that hardship with those of Gallipoli or the frozen fields of France! Compulsion is being applied to men of military age. Why should compulsion stop there? If farmers, in respect of wheat, or in respect of milk, declare they will not sow the former, or supply the latter unless they get war-swollen profits, they must be sternly made to understand that, whether it be in camp or farm, self-interest must, at this time, be subordinated to the common weal and all must, to the end, do as they are told. The Government must do more in this matter, and do it more boldly. This was no time for tenderness to sectional interests. If private interest and private selfishness are embarrassing the Government, and adding to the cost of living, then let the State nationalise that industry in the interests of the whole country." All we wish to add to this admirable statement of the present need is that the Government has no more urgent matter to consider, and nothing else should have "right of road" until the producers and manufacturers of the Dominion know what is going to be done with them.

The Partnership of Labour

Britain is happy in having as its Prime Minister a man like David Lloyd George, with the fire of enthusiasm, and a Celtic imagination which enables him to peer into the future with so keen a vision. While some people who rarely look ahead are bemoaning the labour troubles which they expect to experience after war, Lloyd George sees that Labour is coming into its own, and that the process will be for the benefit, not only of the working man, but for the whole community, capitalist and worker alike. Perhaps the feeling is not so well evidenced in New Zealand, but it will come, and we welcome the time when both classes, as a result of mutual sacrifice and suffering during this time of trial, will meet each other with goodwill, in no atmosphere of mutual suspicion. Exploitation has been given such a set-back by State interference, that the working classes will in future feel that they are not helpless. Therefore they will turn less to the desperate remedy of the strike, and rely more upon the benevolent parentage of the State—not a class-controlled organisation, but representing the best elements in the whole community. Lloyd George, in his great answer to the German peace note, summarised in the phrase "Complete restitution, full reparation, effectual guarantee," dealt with the situation of the English people at this stage of the great conflict. "One characteristic," he said, "is a franker and fuller recognition of the partnership of Labour in the Government of this country. No

Government that had ever been formed to rule here has had such a number of men who all their lives have been associated with labour and with the labour organizations of this country. We realize that it is impossible to conduct a war without getting the complete and unqualified support of labour, and we were anxious to obtain their assistance and their counsel for the purpose of the conduct of the war."

Labour in New Zealand is doing its share too. There are extremists who still follow the dog-in-the-manger policy of barking at everything not exactly in line with their academic ideas, but the great mass of Labour has its shoulder to the wheel. Labour leaders are doing valuable work in the administration of the vitally important Military Service Act, and they are to be found on the patriotic committees, and in the fighting line. One of the best known Labour leaders of this country, Sergeant Carey, laid down his young and promising life for the great cause of freedom. These are things to set against the seditious utterances of men who in peace time, as in war, are mere stirrers up of strife. They are not reflecting the real spirit of labour, and a realisation of this truth will help the people of the Dominion towards the view which the brilliant, humane leader of the English people holds in regard to the future of labour.

Railway Dangers

The Royal Commission to investigate the condition of the New Zealand railways rolling stock has reported, as we expected it would, that the safety of the travelling public is not in the slightest degree endangered by the use of pieced springs in the draw-gear of wagons. The politicians who were aiming a blow at the imported General Manager have thus failed in their object: in fact the missile turned out to be a boomerang, for it hit them hardest, as the Commission gives a good deal of credit to the railway management for the excellence of the equipment, and the improvements and economies made during the last three years. One matter which gets only a line or two in the report, is of the greatest importance to the travelling public. The Commission states that among the improvements is the removal of the Pintsch gas cylinders from below the passenger cars, and the substitution of small cylinders in a safer position within the framing of the car. The large gas cylinders slung beneath the framing of our passenger cars constitute the worst danger in case of derailment or collision, for they are almost sure to be displaced, allowing the gas to leak out, creating an explosive mixture, and making the risk of fire a very grave one. When the Auckland Main Trunk express came into collision a few years ago near Mereer, the gas cylinders caused anxiety, but fortunately those who went to the rescue of the imprisoned passengers warned everyone regarding the great risk of fire or explosion, and they were saved that usual horror of a railway wreck. It is satisfactory to hear that the Railway Department is dealing with this danger, and it would be still more satisfactory to know when they propose to construct all-steel carriages. The cost of rebuilding the present rolling stock on fire-proof lines would be too great to face, but there is no reason why this modern policy should not be adopted for the future.