

be one of partnership, instead of servitude, and that capital must function in the main in such a way as to subserve the interests of the community, and not primarily in such a way as to gather to itself surplus value.

But this is no time for demonstration of fundamental shortcomings: it is a time for making the best use of what we have got. And, after all, our industrial system is not a machine to be tampered with and experimented upon with impunity. It is a growth of ages, with roots deep down in history, and it is inter-dependent and interlaced with world conditions. It can be altered and transformed only by a co-operative spirit and a social sense on the part of those who operate it.

In the light of these considerations what should be the attitude of Labour leaders in industrial reconstruction? Clearly that of patient and suggestive helpfulness. Workers may, of course, point to profiteering and plead that a bad example has been set them by those who ought to have known and done better. But two blacks don't make a white, and, besides, if all profiteers were looked up, it would not make much difference to anybody else.

I should like to think that Labour was doing its share in the re-building of the world, but it is a melancholy reflection that in the year 1919 there were in this country more working days lost by industrial disputes than in any previous year of our history. In the year before the war five million working days were so lost, and before the end of last year there was a loss of nearly five times that number for 1919. These stoppages are bad enough as affecting the areas and the activities of the trades immediately concerned, but the effect does not stop there. Stoppage of one trade means stoppage of other trades.

I visited a Labour Exchange last week on the pay day. Some 4500 men were being paid the unemployment donation. Most of them were strong, healthy-looking men in the prime of life, and most of them had, of course, served in the war. Yet there they were, willing to work and unable to get it. I was told by the manager that many of them were workless because of the menders' strike, which had held up engineering and other trades and caused widespread unemployment. Many of them might have gone into the engineering workshops but for the fact that the A.S.E. members had refused to ratify a plan for their training. I was told further, what one might expect, that the men were getting demoralised by the lack of work.

There has been, and there is still much outcry about unemployment. Protest meetings are frequently held and the Government is denounced in unmeasured terms for the lack of provision of work. But the Government is powerless while it is thwarted by those immediately concerned. As a matter of fact, the Government have done more for unemployment and for the help of the unemployed than any Government ever did before, by creating the necessary conditions for absorption of Labour, and also by payment of donation to those still unprovided for by work. I wish Labour men and women could realise how much they could help—how much the matter is really in their own hands.

PAISLEY AND THE LABOR PARTY

The following is an extract from a speech delivered lately by Bonar Law, at a Unionist function held in Glasgow:—

Then Mr. Asquith was returned by Conservative votes which were given for a reason not to be regretted—that the electors are beginning to realise that the programme of the Labour party is a serious danger to this country. ((Hear, hear.)) I am inclined to think that the success of the Labour party at the by-elections has reached its zenith. (Cheers.) The war has left economic conditions which no Government—if it were a Government of archangels or archfiends—could prevent, and people naturally blame the Government of the time for everything they do not like. Therefore, at the by-elections Labour candidates got an immense amount of support which would not have been given them had it been believed for a moment that the vote meant putting in power the Labor party. (Hear, hear.) The last three by-elections show a complete change in the outlook, and what happened at Paisley, at the Wrekin, and Ashton, I think, is going to be the position in the future.

Mr. Winston Churchill got some pretty severe criticisms from some quarters because he said the Labour party was not fit to govern. I am not in the least afraid that Labour will not be fit to govern by the time they have got the majority to enable them to govern. (Laughter and cheers.) If any of you are sorry for us and think the members of the Government are worrying about the by-elections, I assure you that your sympathy is misplaced. (Laughter.)

I have not talked about this with Mr. Lloyd George, but I say for him quite as strongly as for myself that we have a big and very difficult task before us. The King's Government must be carried on. We will do our best as long as we believe that we have the support of the majority of the people of this country. (Cheers.) I believe we have that support today, that we shall continue to have it, and that if to-morrow we appealed to the people of this country the answer would be not by the same majority; it is too big—"We wish the present Government to continue its task." (Cheers.) When the history of the final phase of the war and the years since the war is told this Government will be considered as not undeserving of the good opinion of their countrymen. (Loud cheers.)

A BIG HOLD-UP

A last 12,000 people desirous of going to Australia and New Zealand are held up in Britain at present owing to the scarcity of shipping. The vessels on which they proposed to sail are either being held up through congestion at the docks, or used as larders!