

## AN ECONOMIC SURVEY.

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er country into a unified economic territory by means of preferential tariffs. The carrying out of this idea would have led to the high duty upon food imported into England, because only in this way would it have been possible to grant the colonies a preference worth considering. The realization of this plan broke down upon the resistance of the British consumers who, at the elections, rejected the moderate tariffs which had been decided upon at the Empire conference upon some articles, and thereby rejected the whole conception of a self-contained British Empire.

The second group, which is chiefly represented by the large English industry, wishes to restore the competitive power of English industry in the world market by means of a policy of inflation. As a matter of fact, a not insignificant depreciation of the pound has actually taken place in the last few months.

A third group represented by the commercial interests and the Labor Party, holds that it is still possible to ensure the food supply of England by the export of industrial articles, if peaceful economic conditions once more reign in Europe itself. How the restoration of a normal capitalism is possible, has so far only been announced in quite general phrases.

A fourth group has finally accepted the consequences of the derangement of the world capitalist system and advocates emigration, development of

English agriculture, and Malthusianism; which means it has already abandoned the struggle for the winning back of England's old position in the world market.

Thus we see a complete chaos in England's economic policy and, as a probable consequence, a further independence of the English colonies from the mother country, which is the very opposite development to that which is desired by the English imperialists.

## France and the Reparations Question.

France finds herself in a similar situation to England, with the difference that her agrarian basis is more extended and healthier, but on the other hand the position of the state finances is incomparably worse. The occupation of the Ruhr territory has brought little alteration in the fundamental questions of French economics. On the one hand the possession of the Ruhr assures the French heavy industry the necessary supply of coal and coke, but on the other hand the question arises as to where France will find the market for the full production of the French and Ruhr heavy industry. The natural market for the Ruhr industry is unoccupied Germany. France cannot therefore cut off the Ruhr industrially from Germany, as in that case French heavy industry would be destroyed by the competition of the Ruhr. All the fine plans for the participation of French capital in Germany will, in the event of their being carried out, not alter the common problem of English, French, and German heavy industry, i.e., the lack of markets. It is specially characteristic for the present decay of Capitalism

that French heavy industry wishes to attain its market by a long and systematic restriction of the export from the Ruhr, that is, by an externally enforced limitation of production of the industry of the Ruhr. Instead of finding consumers for the increased productive powers by the extension of the capitalist markets, it is sought to throttle competition by political measures and to restore the balance by reduction of production. Thus we see the scarcely concealed effort of the French capitalists to sabotage still further the production of the Ruhr, to keep it within bounds which correspond with French "national interests."

The occupation of the Ruhr has ended in this way with a temporary political victory but not with an economic strengthening of France. The rapid depreciation of the French franc in the past few weeks is proof enough for that. This depreciation is still proceeding. If, however, confidence is once shaken, the depreciation can easily reach the same dimensions as in Germany. The continually sharpening antagonism between France and England will also render futile the conferences of experts which began early in 1924. France, who is being badly hit by the depreciation of the franc, will still endeavour to make good the loss at the expense of Germany. With the disappearance of the hopes of an international loan, the stabilization of the mark will also fall to the ground. The chaos in Europe will become still greater and will drift with all speed towards a solution through war. The prospects of the restoration of "normal" capitalism in Europe in the year 1924 are of the remotest.

—"Inprecorr."

# Environment and Education

## A SCHOOL TEACHER'S POINT OF VIEW.

BY F. W. MOORE.

THE education of the people is not only a work of art, but it is the greatest work of art in the world, since on it the development of other kinds of art depends. Education should therefore have in it a centre of vision—a particular feature on which all minds could be concentrated, such as an attempt to develop the best average type of citizen, meaning by the best average type of citizen one who, by reason of his knowledge of his relationship to society and to the world at large gleaned from the view-point of economic determinism ought to be able (with others of his class similarly endowed) to regulate the policies of his representatives in parliament so that they might, compatibly with the development that automatically takes place in industry and machinery, bring about the best conditions, first for the continued instead of the intermittent operation of the world's machinery, and secondly for the setting free, in the interests of humanity, the most tremendous power on earth, "the strong minds, the cunning hands and cultured brains," referred to by Whittier, the very thought of which implies potential ability in productive effort in science, art, literature, discovery and invention, to which our present attempts in that line are but as a drop in the ocean—that potential ability, the dormancy of which was so eloquently mourned by Gray in his "Elegy in a Country Churchyard."

It is the liberation of these forces that we particularly refer to in the use of the term "Education"; but we might add that the setting of them free, lies not so much in the lack of ability to appreciate life on a higher plane as many people suppose, but rather the woeful lack (amongst the poorer classes) of those cultural influences that to a greater or less extent pervade the enviroing atmosphere of more fortunate people, and that form the very quintessence of those factors that go to create a taste for intellectual self-development, such as would inspire men with ambition, to seek as soon as possible that materialization of the conditions

mentioned above. If we glance for a moment at the biography of any of those great men, who in their youthful days were fortunate heirs to conditions fraught with refining influences, we should find this point particularly emphasised in the analysis of those forces that had so much to do in making them what they were: and if in connection with this we enquired how far our system of education goes towards bringing about a similar result in the ordinary citizen we could answer truly that its effects on humanity in general are bound to be meagre in proportion, in the first place, to the indifference to the law of economic determinism that is characteristic of historical textbooks, and secondly in proportion to the inequality of opportunity to take advantage of the higher institutions of learning that characterises the condition of the poorer classes of society, an inequality that may not be noticed by many people, but that becomes obvious on analysing the effect of environment on the great majority of the youth of Canada today.

We mention Canada as a whole, since, in looking for opportunities to improve our condition, we have lived in the East, Centre and West of this great Dominion: moreover the complaints appearing in the interprovincial press, from time to time, would lead one to imagine that the evils which we shall presently discuss in connection with British Columbia have a national, if not an international vogue. We shall however in treating of environment confine our analysis to conditions in the province just mentioned: but to understand its import would be impossible, if we sought to examine its effect without knowing the nature of the subject acted upon: and the subject being boys and girls, a cursory introduction to them at this point will no doubt be excusable. They are, as we all know, the children of loggers and professional fishermen who follow farming as an avocation, and who are in no way fundamentally inferior either physically or mentally to those of any other class of society in the land. No small percentage of these excel in various kinds of achievement: it is only a little while ago since several members of one family on their way to school in a boat, got overturned in deep water, when even the youngest

(a girl of six), than whom it would be hard to find a brighter child in the province, swam to shore and with others appeared at school in a change of clothes in less than an hour. In many districts the local gossips would find material in such an episode sufficient to satisfy the desires of an epic poet, but here the question of tardiness alone was considered worthy of notice. The brothers of this girl think as little of diving twenty feet under water as they would of eating breakfast: no wonder the performers of such piscine exploits are distinguished by the name of "Finns."

Another country girl who is equally adept in the water succeeded in winning one of the first prizes in the Art Department of the Vancouver Exhibition of last year, while others still won the admiration and applause of a concert audience by excellent productions of serio-comic sketches, piano solos or folk songs that literally "brought down the house" in the full metaphorical meaning of that term, and inspired many of the audience (amongst whom were strangers from boats in the bay); to declare in quite a spontaneous manner that they had "often seen worse on the stage."

The great majority are as intellectual and capable at the end of the common school course as any other children of the same standing anywhere. They are equally fitted to advance along the higher paths of learning. We know of one school of forty pupils and eight classes, than which none contains a greater proportional supply of splendid brain-power, but—sad to relate—like the unused water-power that might be had from the Falls of Niagara, it must go to waste from lack of opportunity. One might say that we have universities and high schools open to all, yet shutting them off from public use, is an invisible closed door, like the glass that allows the fly to see the outside world, but incidentally destroys any chance he might have of finding his way through the window.

The key to that door, apart from the possession of wealth, is the desire to open it, and probably most people will admit that that desire is born of environment. If they claim it is the result of heredity, we reply that heredity itself is the result of enviro-