

though a monopoly shared by so many persons as a National Guild is likely to contain, is not so likely to prove dangerous as a monopoly controlled by a small Trust or Ring. But a scheme of National Guilds would, almost inevitably, imply a Guild Congress, to which all the Guilds would send delegates for the discussion of common interests; and such a Congress might be trusted to prevent any abuse of a monopoly, which would, in all probability, severely affect the members of all the other Guilds. Much more serious is the amount of regimentation which such a system would involve; though, again, it may well be doubted whether it would amount to much more than the average skilled worker now undergoes through the action of the State, his Trade Union, and his employer, while it would have the redeeming quality of being, at least indirectly, self-imposed. For it is not, apparently, suggested, that industrial enterprises shall be undertaken by a National Guild as a whole; though all enterprises undertaken by the members of a Guild will have to be undertaken on Guild conditions, as to prices, hours of labour, standard of quality, and the like. A troublesome, but, probably, quite manageable problem, would be the "overlapping job," *i.e.* the undertaking which involves the work of two or more Guilds, such as the building of a reservoir, or the construction of a motor omnibus. But it can hardly be supposed that a system which, even in its imperfect form, was capable of producing the matchless and complicated perfection of the medieval cathedral, would, in the light of modern experience, fail to co-ordinate the efforts of different Guilds.

One particularly attractive feature of the scheme of National Guilds is, apparently, its bold application of the principle of mutual insurance. While the Guild, as a whole, would not undertake the carrying out of any enterprise (except that it would, probably, buy raw materials for distribution among its members), it would guarantee the performance of the work of any member, undertaken in accordance with its rules. This action would, it is believed, enormously strengthen the credit of the Guild, and thus,