

different points of view as set forth in this history. One of the most important is confirmed to the letter by this Report. It was my contention that whilst in our own behalf we might continue, with carefully guarded watch on its operation, some of our industrial legislation, for the purpose of drawing from experience more definite conclusions, yet even we ourselves have not sufficient data for a conclusive verdict on some of the vital issues involved. Still, further, it was contended that no older and more settled country was justified, without further inquiry and experience, in following blindly on our footsteps. Mr. Aves enters a similar judgment in words which are clear beyond limitation or qualification. The Socialist will not and cannot agree with the results which in this case are deduced from two separate and independent set of observations by two independent and separate inquirers. The reason is obvious. The Socialist starts out with a set of postulates which economists cannot accept, and which even Socialists themselves cannot agree to accept. It is useless to enter into the question of the solution of a mathematical problem with a co-worker who maintains that the three angles of a triangle may be less or greater than two right angles. Whatever else it may be, such a proposition is not mathematics. One of the co-workers must retire from the investigation. It, however, is the duty of the historian, as well as the ordinary investigator of social and economic problems, to point out that if legislative enactment is to go forward steadily towards the goal of partial or universal nationalisation, Socialism, though logical from its premiss, is destructive in practice. But this is an entirely different proposition from the assertion that there may be individual instances where legislation—even with the element of compulsion in limited cases—may attempt the amelioration of some of the conditions of the wage-earning classes. It is well that the two propositions be clearly and distinctly laid down both to the people and to the workers as a class who will bear the burden of the mistakes made, and share the