

# By the Way

THE digest below of the 1920 census returns on the population of the United States by occupations, is offered as material for a case study of the population with a suggestion that it be used for an estimation of the numerical strength of those elements which might reasonably be expected to range themselves on one side or the other in the struggle for a new social order. The material may also be useful for other purposes. As to the particular use suggested, I may mention that some three or more years ago, when argument ran high on the feasibility of a proletarian dictatorship, Professor Hourvich, a prominent socialist in the U. S., made an analysis of the 1910 census returns and came to the conclusion that the proletariat were in too great a minority to effectually exercise a dictatorship. It would appear the looked for proletarianization of the masses of the people had not gone on at any way near the rate anticipated by the early socialists.

Be that as it may. Of all groups the industrial proletariat, workless in large-scale industry, have proved themselves most susceptible to socialist ideas and sentiment; and so the suggested study contains the question: What other occupational groups are likely to line up with the industrial Proletariat in the political struggles of the future? I forget Hourvich's approach to the question, but suggest the following remarks for consideration: As is fairly well known, each occupation develops its characteristic psychology. The continuous discipline of work-day habits of life is the foundation, and an occupational psychology will be found most strongly developed among large and compact groups, such groups being favorable to a consistent growth of a common sentiment. For the purposes of estimating such a political line up observation suggests a rough classification dividing occupational psychology into two broad type-categories, respectively—those people engaged in employments in directly productive industry who acquire a producer's psychology—and those engaged in distributive employments in trade and commerce acquire a trader's psychology. It is a question of more or less of course with people in both cases. A line drawn on that classification, dividing the likely opponents in the class-struggle might, or no doubt would, in degree, cut athwart a line drawn on a classification by economic status or well-being. On the question of the class-struggle proceeding straightly and logically upon a line drawn from economic status Veblin says in the essay on the "Economics of Karl Marx" in his "The place of Science in Modern Civilization": "Under the Darwinian norm it must be held that men's reasoning is largely controlled by other than logical, intellectual forces; that the conclusion reached by public or class opinion, is as much, or more, a matter of sentiment than of logical inference; and that the sentiment which animates men, singly or collectively, is as much, or more, an outcome of habit and native propensity as of calculated material interest."

If the slum proletariat of the great cities are reactionary, as they are generally regarded then they seem to offer a case in point. Other like cases will be some sub-elements of the clerical occupations, notably those connected with finance, as well as other like elements fulfilling clerical and technical functions in the sphere of distribution; while the class of servants and flunkies of various kinds, and the peasantry of the French Quebec type are in general looked upon as hopelessly reactionary. On the other hand, there are people of intellectual pursuits, of a comparatively good standard of life in a pecuniary sense, whose occupations involve scientific attainments and the use of the scientific method, who, together with those of the higher technical functions in industry show themselves as much inclined to the socialist ideal of a system of production for use, as against the present system of production and the conditions arising out of it. But it is worth noting that these elements are by train-

ing, habit and bent of mind strongly predisposed to orderly and experimental ways of social change. Then where shall we place nine millions engaged in agricultural pursuits? Generally a conservative element! Many of the laborers, however, are seasonal workers and could be put with the industrial Proletariat. As to the farmers, while they have the producer's psychology, it is contaminated by the psychology of the trader and employer. In many sections, however, the spirit of co-operation is overcoming the farmer's inbred individualism and narrow outlook and they show an increasing collective activity in the direction of using economic and political means for furthering co-operative enterprises and combating parasitism. The ways to a co-operative social life are evolutionary and many, wide as community life itself, and all may not be easily recognizable as such. But one of the conditions of progress is a continuous taking on or acquiring of the habits, skills and outlook of co-operation, and who knows, we may often be building better than we know. The farmers, in their co-operative undertakings, are, I think, in the direct line of advance. Economic necessity is often the mother of progress. Should the farmers continue to develop their own political organizations, as I think they will, seeing that the farming economy is on so great a scale and having its own special problems, it may be expected that their animus against the parasitic elements in capitalism will occasion at times some collusion with the organizations of labor against the common foe, a collusion that should with time become closer, as is realized a mutual understanding of a common objective, which is to say, a society based on an economy of production for use. To propagate that understanding is the Socialist's mission in life.

The few tables and some of the comments are lifted from an article putting them to other uses, in the Feb. "Scientific Monthly" by Professor Robert M. Brown, Rhode Island College of Education. The rest is a result of a perusal of the "World Almanac" for 1923 on the census.

Table I shows the number engaged in the various occupations in 1920 and the percentage of gain (+) and losses (—) recorded over 1910 figures. The other tables give the sub-occupations.

Occupational groups.	Per cent	1920
All occupations	+ 9	41,614,248
(1) Agriculture, forestry and animal husbandry	—14	10,953,158
(2) Extraction of minerals	+13	1,090,223
Total population		105,710,626
Urban population		54,304,603
Rural population		51,406,023
White population		94,820,915
Black population		10,463,130
Balance Indians, Japanese, etc.		
Persons 10 years old or over gainfully employed.		
Both sexes—all occupations		41,609,192
Male, all occupations		33,059,793
Female, all occupations		8,549,399
Child labor in U. S.		
Total population, 10 to 15 years		12,502,582
Male		6,294,985
Female		6,207,597
Total number in gainful occupations		1,060,858
Male		714,248
Female		346,610
Total in agriculture, forestry and animal husbandry		647,309
Male		459,238
Female		188,071
Manufacturing and mechanical industries		185,837
Male		104,335
Female		81,002

The rest, (117,713) are scattered around in other industries. The Census returns however, do not reveal the whole extent of the child labor evil. Children have lately been discovered working in the tenement districts of New York from 3 years of age up.

Table I.

Occupational groups.	Per cent	1920
All occupations	+ 9	41,614,248
(1) Agriculture, forestry and animal husbandry	—14	10,953,158
(2) Extraction of minerals	+13	1,090,223

(3) Manufacturings and medical industries	+21	12,818,524
(4) Transportation	+15	3,063,582
(5) Trade	+16	4,242,979
(6) Public service, (not otherwise classified)	+70	770,460
(7) Professional service	+30	2,143,889
(8) Domestic and personal service	—10	3,404,892
(9) Clerical occupations	+79	3,126,541

Sub-occupations.

Table II.

Group (1) agriculture, forestry and animal husbandry	Per cent.	1920 totals
Dairy farm, farm, garden and orchard foremen	+82	93,048
Lumbermen, raftsmen, wood choppers	+27	205,315
Gardeners, florists, fruit growers, nurserymen	+22	169,399
Owners and managers of log and timber camps	+ 6	81,410
Dairy farmers, farmers, stock raisers	+ 4	6,201,261
Garden, greenhouse, orchard and nursery laborers	+ 3	137,010
Other agriculturist and animal husbandry pursuit (apiarists, poultry raisers, bailers, etc.)	— 8	401,599
Fishermen and oystermen	—24	52,836
Dairy farm, farm and stock laborers	—37	4,041,627

The percentage of gains and losses, especially in this table must be taken with some reservations, allowing for seasonal fluctuations. The 1910 Census was taken in the middle of April when the busy season for agricultural and fishing pursuits is well on the way, while the 1920 Census was taken January 1, in the dull season for agriculture and a busy one for lumbering, etc.

Table III.

Group (2) extraction of minerals.	Per cent	1920
Oil, gas and salt well operatives	+213	91,022
Foremen, overseers and inspectors	+54	36,931
Operators, officials and managers	+36	34,325
Coal mine operatives	+19	733,936
Quarry operatives	— 4	45,162
Operatives in other mines (lead, zinc, etc.)	— 9	41,162

The great increase in the production of oil in recent years would make the increase in oil and gas well operatives easy of acceptance. The decrease of the last two items under mining operations may be due to the seasonal feature of the industry.

Table IV.

Group (3) Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits.	Per cent.	1920
Cotton mills, semi skilled operatives	+102	302,454
Iron and steel industries (semi-skilled)	+87	689,980
Machinists, mill-wrights, tool makers	+83	894,622
Iron and steel industries, laborers	+51	729,613
Carpenters	+ 8	887,379
Clothing industry (semi-skilled)	+ 6	409,361
Lumber and furniture industries (laborers)	+ 1	320,613
Painters, glaziers, varnishers, etc.	— 2	323,032
General building laborers	—28	623,203

To make up the 12,818,524 there are 29 other types of workers under this list none of which reach the 300,000 mark. They include food industry laborers (159,535) with a gain of 94 per cent., managers and superintendents with a gain of 93 per cent. At the foot of the list with a loss of 47 per cent are dressmakers and seamstresses (235,855); then come the general building laborers tabulated above, then the clay, glass and stone laborers (124,544) with a loss of 19 percent., and the brick and stone masons (131,264) with a loss of 18 per cent. The great number of women and children shown in this and agricultural industry should be noted.

Table V.

Group (4) Transportation.	Per cent	1920
Garage keepers and managers	+740	42,151
Chaffeurs	+535	285,045
Telephone operators	+94	190,160
Switchmen, yardmen, flagmen	+23	111,545
Brakemen	+23	114,107