

tion restriction policy on the other. Mr. Aves does well to draw attention to it, since it has such a significant bearing on the problem confronting the United Kingdom. The Australian Socialist is seized of the same great fact. He knows the immense volume and value of our production. He sees that this enormous asset is shared amongst 4,000,000 of people. He reasons that if he increases the divisor, the quotient must decrease proportionately. Hence he desires so strongly to limit the divisor strictly to its natural increase. He does not see that economically what appears in one aspect as a divisor is, in another, a multiplier as well. In a community of 4,000,000, doing a trade worth £135,000,000, the wage market is certain to be elastic.

Close analysis of the statistical tables reveals fairly clear indications of what almost every economist admits to be the probable result of State compulsion in the matter of work and wages. That the minimum fixed tends to become the maximum earned is evidenced by the tables appearing at p. 49, which show that only 25 per cent to 35 per cent of the workers engaged in various trades earn amounts above the minimum. The statistics and the very elaborate analysis and comment on the problem of the slow, aged, and infirm worker again confirm the warnings that have been given. Trades Unions are the aristocracy of labour, and the minimum wage may become a legislative sanction, the maximum a privilege. In answer to inquiries Mr. Aves elicited opinions from employers and employees on this crucial point. Some small employers maintained that it favoured the larger firms; some larger firms maintained the opposite view. Individual instances are cited, with evidence proving both conclusions. Nothing can be more convincing as showing the almost insuperable difficulty in the problem of an equitable adjustment between the conflicting claims of economy and humanity. It is difficult to record a verdict on the point, but none should be formed without a careful perusal and a still closer and wider investigation of the facts of the case as outlined in pp. 54 to 56 of the Report. One significant fact well worthy of