

Preface

Possibly the chief interest of the book lies in the diversity of opinion concerning the present-day cause and effect of control, and the policy to be pursued. The most important causes of control may be divided into six groups, metaphysical, philosophical, political, social, economic, and industrial. The metaphysical, found in Free Will and *I* terminism, and the philosophical bound up in the eternal question why man needs control, and what fundamentally controls him—these causes do not immediately concern the contributors. Therefore they have proceeded to the other four causes more closely connected with the subject of my inquiry.

Though I did not invite discussion of metaphysical and philosophic points, it is perhaps permissible here to consider a more intricate matter connected with the origin of control. By some social and industrial reformers it is thought that nowadays Government control is the outcome of popular desire—the desire for liberty only to be obtained by an intelligent policy of control. In other words there is a desire for liberty in control—strange paradox! Those who look deeper are, however, aware of the fundamental fact that men are largely and permanently controlled in their thoughts and actions by the word liberty, not by the true ideal which it contains. In fact to-day our most valued asset is words, not the ideals which they inform. It is true that our foremost writers and thinkers are continually talking about ideals. It is true also that the realization of ideals seems to be the object of their life. But actually they are engaged uttering sounds which we call words and phrases, without any sense of their meaning. State, Liberty, Authority, Democracy, Association, Capital, Labour, People, Peace, Power, Empire, League of Nations, Patriotism, Reconstruction, Control,—all these formative words what do they mean to most people? What do they mean to statesmen and politicians? What do they mean to that immense crowd of perspiring persons who to-day give them more prominence even than newspaper posters? Ask any of them what ideal in any of the words is being discussed, and we must come to the conclusion it is not the vital ideal that originally established the word. It is one of those periodical revisions of form which change of circumstances is permitted to impose upon words. So it comes about that whatever men may say or think, words, not ideals, are the greatest force in the world just now. They move men perhaps more powerfully than they have ever done, and they move them in a wrong direction. The reason