

date on which the Magna Charta of Industrial Democracy was won—a date that may stand beside 1215 in importance. But one does not need to have a profound knowledge of history to recall that the Great Charter of Political Liberty, won seven centuries ago, was merely a starting point, a broad statement forecasting a freedom, much of which had to be struggled for in future and won bit by bit during a long period of time. “The Bill of Rights,” “The Habeas Corpus Act,” “The Act of Settlement,” the great “Reform Bills,” are a few outstanding milestones, marking successes in this long struggle. When the barons brought King John to his knees, long centuries had yet to elapse, a civil war had to be fought, a king executed, and many other struggles carried out, before the full rights of parliament were finally assured.

Such facts as these should warn us against mistaking the forms of liberty for the reality. They should warn us, too, that the growth of real freedom is slow. The creation of Parliament, the symbol of liberty, by no means meant that Parliamentary liberty had been finally won. So now. These Joint Industrial Councils and Committees, these new symbols of industrial freedom, are merely organisations created for the purpose of winning and defining democratic freedom in industry. The long training in the orderly method of securing political liberty through parliament will, no doubt, prove of great value here. But while the new Joint Industrial Councils and Committees express clearly a general recognition that workmen have rights not yet obtained, including a right to share in the responsibility of defining them, the actual formulation and winning of these rights are in the future.

It is, however, a great advance step that industrial civil war should end in the creation of the means for the orderly consideration, working out and definition of those rights, by the deliberate use of discussion on equal terms in the open, in place of under a constant threat of the exercise of might. Democracy has herein scored another great win. It is a long step forward in civilisation when it is recognised for any new field that social progress (in this instance, in the industrial field) should be by a steady and orderly adaptation of social