

The SHEFFIELD CO-OPERATOR

No. 20.

APRIL, 1924.

GUARANTEED CIRCULATION, 30,000.

THE CO-OPERATIVE PARTY.

SHEFFIELD SECTION. NINTH HALF-YEARLY REPORT.

FELLOW MEMBERS.—The work of our Council continues to prosper; more and more co-operators are coming to realise the necessity and increasing usefulness of our work. The number of our pledged supporters, especially in the Hillsborough Division, has increased enormously.

Now that the two Sheffield societies are both contributing on the same basis of 5d. per member per half-year, and as each society provides for objects in the levy, no co-operator can complain of being levied unjustly.

The real constructive work of the Council is making its effect felt amongst the hitherto apathetic members, and the foundation is now being laid for a joint educational, political, and propaganda Council, representing every section of the two societies in Sheffield, which bids fair to win an increasing number of adherents. Our policy hitherto must be the winning of the city for co-operation, in every sense of the word.

PUBLIC REPRESENTATION.

1. Magisterial Bench.

We are pleased to report the appointment of two prominent co-operators to the Magisterial Bench. As mentioned in previous reports, we have constantly pressed for co-operative representation of this kind. Mr. Alec Loring, President of the S. and E. Society, and Mr. J. Dunbar (President of the B. and G. Society) have recently been appointed. The Council offers its heartiest congratulations.

2. Citizen Auditor.

The Council backed the candidature of Mr. S. Biggin (Secretary of the N.U.D.A.W.). Mr. Biggin has always been closely associated with our political work, and we are pleased to report that he secured the appointment as auditor without a contest.

3. Guardian Representatives.

Mr. J. W. Ibbotson, our co-operative representative for the Tinsley District on the Rotherham Board of Guardians, was compelled to resign through necessary business, and arrangements were made for Mrs. Barringer to contest the seat. Fortunately, however, Mrs. Barringer was elected without a contest.

Our Guardian representatives on both the Sheffield and the Ecclesall Branches are doing splendid work. Dozens of cases which previously had not been reported, are now promptly treated and applied to individual co-operators. These cases are immediately referred to our various representatives.

4. City Council.

In the recent November elections we contested Attercliffe with the retiring candidate (Mr. P. H. Mellor) who secured a substantial majority over his opponent, in spite of a very powerful organisation launched against him.

In Newstead, Councillor W. Bancroft secured election once more with an enormously increased majority.

We contested the Heeley Ward jointly with the Heeley Labour Party. Mr. D. Burned, a prominent co-operator and trade unionist) was the candidate agreed upon, and although he did not secure election, he polled a very satisfactory vote, which promises well for a future contest. In the Hillsborough Ward,

whilst we accepted no financial responsibility, we gave all the help possible in the way of organisation, &c., to the contest of Mr. J. H. Staples.

Our City Council representatives (Messrs. W. Bancroft, P. H. Mellor, and T. H. Weston) continue to render good service to their constituents, and make useful contributions to our municipal government. Again their work for individual co-operators is of immense

value, and whilst it is impossible to give details in a report of this kind, we trust that members will appreciate the self-sacrificing service of these representatives who do not receive any payment.

5. Parliament.

At the recent General Election we again contested the Hillsborough Parliamentary Division with Mr. A. V. Alexander as candidate. The votes

cast for Mr. Alexander were 15,087, giving him a majority over the next candidate of 8,778, which is double the majority of last year, and also a clear majority over both the Conservative and Liberal candidates combined. Mr. Alexander polled a higher number of votes than any other candidate of any party in Sheffield, and the highest number of votes of any Co-operative candidate in Great Britain. It should be pointed out that the cost to the local party of this election was only 173 15s. 2d.

Mr. Alexander has been appointed as Under-Secretary to the Board of Trade, and as we write, reports are coming to hand of the splendid efficiency with which he is carrying out his new duties, thus justifying the confidence placed in him by the people of Hillsborough, as well as the work of this Council.

Mr. Alexander's work for his constituents has progressively increased during the period under review, and was an enormous asset during the recent campaign.

The stimulus to the co-operative movement through Mr. Alexander's public activities cannot be over-estimated, when it is remembered that his address across the country in Sheffield, so much so that his name is now almost a household word, and no one can hear Mr. Alexander without learning something of the co-operative movement. The Council feels honoured in having such a representative, whose reputation all over the country reflects honour on the local section of the party.

REGISTRATION.

The Council has continued its work of registration to such effect that applications have been made for over 400 new electors to be placed on the Spring Register. This work entails a good deal of voluntary effort in the way of canvassing, &c., and we wish to place on record our thanks to those people who are carrying out these duties.

"SHEFFIELD CO-OPERATOR."

We are still publishing 30,000 copies of "The Sheffield Co-operator" each month. The copies are given away free. The whole distribution, except the cost of transport, is carried out voluntarily through the party machinery.

CO-OPERATIVE RAMBLERS.

The Party Rambling Club continues to prosper. We have now published a special hand of volantes and syllabus for 1924. Price of syllabus, including membership, 1s. The club is entirely self-supporting.

THANKS.

In conclusion, we wish to thank all those who have helped to make our work so successful, particularly the splendid band of volunteers who carry out the visitation and distribution work month by month. We are confident that the activities which we have carried out will ultimately mean the triumph of the workers' cause, both locally and nationally.

On behalf of the Executive Committee,
J. A. LONDON, President.
A. BURLAND, Secretary.

Sheffield Co-operative Party

Secretary: A. BALLARD, 6, BANK STREET (PHONE: 3982).

DIVISIONAL SECRETARIES, WARD SECRETARIES, AND POLLING DISTRICT OFFICIALS.

ATTERCLIFFE DIVISION.

Secretary (pro tem).—
MR. W. RINDSON, 126, Lefth-street.

ATTERCLIFFE WARD.—MR. W. RINDSON, 126, Lefth-street.

DARNALL WARD.—MR. G. NEWELL, 67, Solihull-street.

BRIGHTSIDE DIVISION.

Secretary.—
MR. W. A. WALTON, 318, Windmill-lane, Shiregreen.

ECCLESALL DIVISION.

Secretary.—
MR. BILLAM, 29, Mitchell-street.

HALLAM DIVISION.

Secretary.—
MR. C. E. S. GIBSON, 7, Armathor-road, Nether Green.

HILLSBOROUGH DIVISION.

Secretary.—
MR. G. SALMON, 12, Sydney-road, Creswick.

HILLSBOROUGH WARD.—MR. H. C. WHELAN, 19, Hillsborough-place.

POLLING DISTRICT OFFICERS.
WISBOOD.—MR. H. REEDONS, 6, North-road.
WISBOOD VILL.—MR. FRANKLIN, 57, Thornaby-road.

POLLING DISTRICT OFFICERS.

Wadley.—MR. J. CLYDE, 22, Bicken-street, Wadley Bridge.

Burroes.—MR. HALAS, Hillsborough Co-operative Institute.

Midwood.—MR. TAYLOR, 61, Hutterell, Dykes Hall.

High House.—MR. WEAKE, 22, Duffield-road.

Longsett.—MR. NEWMAN, 61, Lushick-croft.

Owlerton.—MR. SALMON, 12, Sydney-road, Creswick.

Cathcart Bank.—MR. S. SHERRER, 123, Barnforth-street.

WALKLEY WARD.—MR. A. BALLED, 44, Ripon-street.

Wadley Bank.—MR. KEEL, 238, Providence-street.

Hole Hill.—MR. MATHEWS, 179, Riverside, South Road.

Burgoyne.—MR. CARLTON, 45, Sherburn-road.

Prinnscoe.—MR. W. WILSON, 109, King James-street.

NEPESSEND WARD.—MR. J. W. ASTILL, 71, Ritley-street.

Boydland.—MR. J. J. W. WAGNER, 39, Bridgehouses.

Bridgehouses.—MR. E. PALMER, 48, Hoyleland-road.

Woodside.—MR. W. STACEY, 86, Hoyleland, Fyfe Bank.

PHIBROOF.—MR. GAMBRIER, 57, Mount-road, Parkwood Springs.

Norwood.—MR. BAKER, 21, Pinnacoe-croft.

SATURDAY, APRIL 12th, at 7.30 p.m.

A. V. ALEXANDER, M.P.

will address a PUBLIC MEETING to be held in the WYCLIFFE HALL (CHURCHING SQUARE), LANCASTER ROAD.

Everybody Invited.

TO THE ELECTORS in Hillsborough, Wadley, and Nepepsend.

You are cordially invited to the

SOCIAL GATHERINGS

EVERY MONDAY, at 8 o'clock.

in the HILLSBOROUGH CO-OPERATIVE INSTITUTE, 1044, WYCLIFFE ROAD, at 7.30 p.m.

Blank—type specimens—Admission Free.

WOMEN'S MEETINGS.

We would like to give special invitation to the women folk to the above, which are held

EVERY MONDAY AFTERNOON, at 2 o'clock, in the Hillsborough Institute Guild Room.

Short Address. Hillsborough. Come and spend a Pleasant Hour.

AGRICULTURE: A SWEATED INDUSTRY.

These farmers as a class are addicted to scrambling, and that they largely exaggerate their troubles, and must, therefore, not be taken too seriously, is very generally accepted, especially by town dwellers, or those who are not brought directly in contact with the agricultural industry. But impressions such as these generally have some definite origin, and I think it would be nearer the truth to say that they are a product of the altogether neglect of the industry by successive Governments for the last hundred years.

The condition of agriculture after the Napoleonic Wars, as depicted by Cobbett, was truly deplorable, and (but for the development of the export trade in manufactured articles, which at that time enabled the capitalists to repatriate from the exhaustion of those years) would have forced some action to deal with the industry on a sounder footing.

It is very easy to see that with the development of overseas trade, home agriculture ceased to hold as important a position in capitalist economy as formerly.

In the race for wealth, the glamour of imperialist expansion, and the rapid development of colonies, agriculture received scant attention, with the result that its position has remained substantially the same for one hundred years.

Competition and its Effect on Prices.

Before the Great War the prices of agricultural commodities were as low as would enable them just to continue to be produced at all. Wheat growing was only a barely profitable proposition on the best lands at the prevailing price of 30s. a quarter.

The consumption of wheat per head is about six bushels per annum, and it is interesting to note that for this bread ration the farmer received no more than 22s. 6d.

A recent report on the costs of wheat production at Rothamsted shows heavy losses, and states that since 1920 the financial results are deplorable, and show clearly why many of the arable farmers are in their present position.

The raising of live stock was scarcely more remunerative. The larger farmers more often bought their store cattle, than raised it themselves, leaving that operation to the smaller farmers, whose condition was, and is, often no better than that of the labourer.

The margin of profit secured by fattening cattle often depended not on the actual feeding operations, but on the ability to take advantage of the smaller man's need of money, and the consequent necessity of selling his stock at certain times of the year.

Milk production had increased enormously in the years before the war. Farmers were attracted by the relatively quick turnover, the ready money which enabled them to meet current expenses. Again we find the profits ridiculously low. Quoting from a report issued by the Ministry of Agriculture, 1923-4, I find that the cost of producing a gallon of milk (taken over thirty-eight farms with a total of 1,389 cows) was 20d. in the winter, and 2d. in the summer period.

The Injurious Power of the Distributing Combines.

The difficulty of organising farmers, arising from their decentralised position and the general low economic level of agricultural industry, has led them open to the machinations of the distributing combines and rings of distributors. The growth of these large combines has placed the farmer subordinate to the former. Whilst stabilising their profits at a high level, the combines are enabled to fleece the consumer on the one hand, and the producer on the other. They skim off the producer's profits and squeeze the consumer to the utmost. They have succeeded themselves in a most prosperous condition in the last few years in spite

of a falling market and the enormous Government's policy of deflating the currency, and are spreading their tentacles in all directions.

Sir Charles Wooding estimates the middlemen's profit on bread, meat, and milk at £175,000,000 per annum. United Dairies Ltd., owning nearly 500 shops, and controlling a very large part of the London wholesale trade in milk, produced in 1921 an account in milk, equalled in the history of the company, with 22 per cent. from 1919 to 1922.

West Surrey Central Dairies paid 21 per cent. over the same period.

Maypole Dairy Company distributed £604,210 in dividends in 1922, 20 per cent. on ordinary, 25 per cent. on deferred shares. In 1921 the figures were 20 per cent. and 27 per cent.

A comparison of milk prices to the producer with those of the consumer (London) in January, 1913, and January 1923, shows an increase of 95 per cent. to the former and 100 per cent. to the latter. The retailer's margin rose 213 per cent. Co-operative retail prices for 1922 were ad. to 4d. a gallon less than the private retailers, as quoted in the report of the Committee of Distribution and Prices of Agricultural Produce recently appointed to inquire into these matters.

In the fruit and vegetable industry the same profit-making is apparent. An analysis of prices on January 3rd, 1923, revealed gross retail profits of 100 to 244 per cent. in the West End of London, and 50 to 108 per cent. in the suburbs. Private retailers defied these as being due to deterioration losses, and they set the cartilage at 103 per cent. The co-operative estimate is 52 per cent. Covent Garden is not simply for private profit, hence its inefficiency.

The 1923 Wholesale Markets Committee recently recommended its municipalisation.

Butchers' and dealers' rings are largely responsible, in conjunction with private slaughterhouses, for excessive prices of home-killed meat to the consumer and low prices to the producer, while the importing combines are gradually monopolising the distribution of chilled and frozen meat.

The System of Land Tenure.

Only about 17 per cent. of the farmers in this country farm their own land; the remainder are tenant farmers, who pay rent to a landlord. The land for the most part belongs to a comparatively few large landowners. 782,000 acres of arable land has gone out of cultivation since 1918; the rural population, which formed 28 per cent. of the nation in 1871, had shrunk in 1921 to 21 per cent., the rest of them having drifted (presumably, into the towns, to swell the mass of unemployed). We are paying 450 millions a year for foreign food, mostly to countries outside the Commonwealth, and are thereby reducing the international value of our currency and increasing the cost of the 32 millions a year which we are paying to America.

Co-operative Production.

The remedy lies, of course, in co-operative production and distribution, and this is the kind of help we received until the workers gained political power (we are only in office at present).

This fact is almost unknown to the bulk of working farmers. Co-operative effort inside the present system can prove but partially successful, through lack of capital and the already strongly entrenched position of the distributors, entrenched position of the distributors, of wealth, which is part and parcel of capitalism.

A competitive system which artificially restricts the purchasing power of the masses of consumers, and, therefore, necessitates a corresponding restriction of production, must permit only a limited increase of living of both the farmer and the labourer.

(Continued at foot of next column.)

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Sheffield, Howson & Co. Ltd.

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New Season's Goods. Cycles, Prams, Tricycles, &c. Wicker and Canvas Chairs, Hats and Five Star Cases, &c. Splendid Range of Carpets, Rugs, &c.

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CIVILITY, ATTENTION, and FREE DELIVERY.

(Continued from previous column.)

Agriculture Sacrificed to Industrialism.

To stand up, farmers and labourers who are genuine food-producers, and not mere dealers or middlemen, have a very justifiable grievance, inasmuch as their industry has been sacrificed to the

great of industrialism. Their troubles are part and parcel of the "Capitalist" system. They would, in my opinion, be satisfied with very moderately remunerative prices for their produce, and a guaranteed market for the same, which would become immediately possible with the nationalisation of the land and the distribution of its products.

HILLSBOROUGH'S M.P.'S-BUSY WEEK-END.

MR. A. V. ALEXANDER, M.P., visited Sheffield March 13th, 14th and 15th, and as usual was kept very busy most of the time attending in Sheffield at 9.30 p.m. on the 13th, he addressed three meetings on the same evening.

FRIDAY.

WITH THE CO-OPERATORS.

At a special meeting of Brightside and Carbrook members, Mr. Alexander outlined the case for cooperative political action. Presenting his remarks by a reference to the letters appearing in the Press against the Co-operative Party, he went on to show the tremendous economic advantages to the movement of political representation. He stated that no political activities were a logical extension of the movement's historic educational policy.

AT MEETINGS.

Subsequently he addressed a crowded meeting of electors in the Rutland Hall, Sheffield.

Referring to his promise that he would give the electors periodic accounts of his stewardship, he proceeded to deliver a series of lectures to the Labour Party which was held in office but not in power. Nevertheless, in spite of the activity in the House he was proud of the accomplishments of the Government. With only six weeks to office they had a fine record of work and national achievement.

With regard to foreign policy he showed that confidence in Great Britain was being rapidly re-established throughout the world as a consequence of the Macdonald resignation in the British Foreign Office. The receipt of Russia, long overdue, was one of the first acts of the new Premier.

The housing scheme which was being prepared by Mr. Whitely, was explained to the company of the evening which had a fine record of a visit never before attempted by any Government. They realized that the people must be housed, and that the rents must be within reach of the poorest. The cooperation within reach of the poorest. The cooperation within reach of the poorest. The cooperation within reach of the poorest.

The Post Office Bill was explained to remain a very serious matter of public confidence in the Post Office of last year. The Traffic Act, although it was not a failure, was a long time before it was passed, and it was a long time before it was passed, and it was a long time before it was passed.

Mr. Alexander spoke on the subject of the "Call to Service." We were living in the midst of a world of woe, and it was his duty to call to service. We were living in the midst of a world of woe, and it was his duty to call to service.

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Educationally, already great strides had been made. The size of classes in schools was to be reduced and better opportunities for higher education were to be given to the workers' children. As a reference to which the limitation of expenditure on meals for school-age children was to be abolished, thus giving the children a fatter chance.

Labour is going to witness the expansion of the children, said Mr. Alexander. Mothers' pensions were receiving the serious consideration of the Government. They had had course to remember that all the children were to be given a better chance. They were proceeding in fact as fast as funds would allow.

Some people charged them with having dropped the idea of the capital levy. As a matter of fact, the whole question of the problem of the national debt was being closely impinged upon by a committee set up for the purpose, and altogether there was no doubt that the problem would be tackled in a really businesslike manner in the very near future. He reported that he was part of the six week work of the Labour Government, and he asked that the educational work should be continued to the end that in the near future Mr. Alexander would be presenting a definite proposal to work with the House of Commons, in order to put Labour's programme into complete operation.

Mr. Alexander afterwards addressed a meeting of the Hillsborough Branch of the Independent Democrats in the Wytheville Hall, Sheffield. He presented a series of proposals to one of the branch members who had offered an excellent opportunity him from work. Mr. Alexander spoke of the advantages of mutual helpfulness in co-operative and friendly societies, maintaining that the co-operative movement and the friendly society movement had much in common.

SATURDAY.

Mr. Alexander was kept busy the whole of the morning with the usual interviews with his constituents. This feature of his work is, we believe, peculiar to our representative. Since before long a representative has to have a very special appointment with his constituents, and a special appointment with his constituents, and a special appointment with his constituents.

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SMART, UP-TO-DATE FASHIONABLE COSTUMES. 3/11, 4/11, 5/11, to 6 GUINEAS.

CASEMENTS. RELIABLE VALUES. 50 inch Bay Casement, 10/11, 11/11, 12/11. Herrick Casement, 10/11, 11/11, 12/11. Herrick and Scallop, 11/11, 12/11, 2/0.

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KETTERING CO-OPERATIVE BOOT SOCIETY,

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AN EXPERIMENT IN CO-OPERATION.

We are always interested to know of any development of the co-operative spirit by boys, and Mr. H. G. Wells has done good service in this respect by his recent book about a schoolmaster and a school.

The book is "The Store of a Great Schoolmaster," being a plain account of the life and ideas of Sanderson of Oatdale and "Wimber," (p. 64).

Of course this belongs to the Co-operatives, which was, in the Middle Ages, a sort of grocers' guild. In these times, however, it is a body of progressive people with the duty of maintaining the funds belonging to it from earlier days, and of carrying out projects and policies.

The school itself dates from about 1590, and is naturally like all the type and shows such lines. As a "public" school it has had great success in attracting the well-to-do from our population. But Sanderson was far from being the usual type of public schoolmaster, with a main idea of fees and of storage.

"I remember," says Wells, "my pleased and his library." "I recall books by Bernard Russell and Bernard Shaw. There was a public schoolmaster aware that the world was still going on." It wanted books.

In his early days at Oatdale, Sanderson met all manner of opposition—especially from the boys, who had inherited the traditions of public schools in general. But he was a mighty intellect of the case, but he did not lay on his laurels in the orthodox place as approved by public school conventions. Even this was strongly objected to by the boys, who did not mind the world so much as the authorities.

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"The method how much finer, and how more fruitful was the mutual stimulation of common and rather than the vulgar effort for a class place. The clever boy under a traditional system loses the shrewd and the duller, who make the running easy, but a group of boys working for a common end and they will induce with striking force. The school, he declared, was to be a guild and not an arena, and a miniature copy of the world. A boy should leave school and step into larger co-operation with humanity. School and State alike, in his opinion, were to be a community of co-workers, not so organized."

He died suddenly at the close of a lecture he gave to the National Union of Scientific Workers in 1912. From that lecture, which was the result of forty years' experience in the teaching of boys, we take the two following quotations:

"We hear a great deal about methods of teaching longways, mathematics, science:

they are all trivial. The great progress is to bring the boys or girls in the service of life."

"An important question which we have been conversant with for at least three years is: 'What is China?' Who ever started writing about geography—geography? We want to know about China. You will have to take the boys and let them find China, whether, after all, the Chinese are so simple folk as they like to show on what, while labor? Do they want to know the world geographically, but not the history, and China? It brought into the classroom and the boys are finding out about it. I think, one of the deepest and greatest tasks to be undertaken."

"We should like every member at the Sheffield Education Committee to read this book—and especially our Director of Education. And we should also like all co-operatives to read it, for 'co-operation'—working together, not trading for mutual advantage in particular, but simply public schools may become successful co-operatives, so that it may not be impossible for the rest of us—if we can improve some of the antiquated professionalisms in our educational methods."

J. H. H.

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THE First Assurance of Safety in the "Safety First" Idea is to secure perfectly PURE, RICH MILK FOR YOUR BABIES! We are prepared to supply . . .

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At the 1907 the Board of Directors decided to supply members with milk. Milk is the lifeblood of the community—infants and grown-ups alike. It is a difficult problem to supply them with pure, clean milk. To accomplish it, it was decided that supplies should come from the Derbyshire Dale, and to build a "plant" which would safeguard members.

At first cows, checked for safety and vaccination. Passed to the morning milk and then to the separator. The separator is called by the name of "Borden's." Refrigerating plants, the air being kept dry during the night, an excellent plant is being built in order to later on, and supply what will follow the average cow dropper.

At weekly output, upward of 14,000 gallons, delivered by tank and lorry. Members can secure a supply of pure milk by purchasing either at the branch shop or by post to the delivery, and no risk of illness and illness. However, members can be supplied by ordering a supply of milk and milk from milk through a dairy contractor; they can also supply of milk and post through.

Do not forget about fully milk: get five milk from the Brightside and Carbroom Co-operative Society.

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