



SHEFFIELD'S NEW PUBLIC HALL

WHY NOT A NEW CENTRAL LIBRARY?

ADVANTAGES OF A JOINT SCHEME.

We have before us the annual report of the Public Libraries Committee for Sheffield. This shows that since the re-organisation in 1921 there has been a consistent and tremendous extension in the library service. In 1920-21 there were 712,355 books issued, whilst in the period covered by the present report there were 1,054,582, representing an increase of 47.5 per cent.; and, as the committee point out, the recorded issues do not include the extensive use made of the directories in all the libraries. There has been additions to stock in the same year totalling 21,777 books; whilst the number of borrowers have increased to 69,560.

Central Library.

The increases at the central library are of such a character as to make the accommodation totally inadequate. The place may be said to be almost bursting with books. During the year under review 491,022 books were issued, this represented an increase of 53,011 over the previous year—an average daily issue of 1,444; and as indicated in the report, very soon the library must be either extended or must fail to offer satisfaction to its borrowers. The position is that the shelving accommodation is now taxed to its fullest possible extent, and important books have to be stored away from the public shelves; so that the open access system is not working in its true sense even with the present borrowers. The total stock carried on the shelves is 32,000. This could not be done but for the fact that there are permanently 13,000 books on can. No other books can be added to the open shelves without placing the present books in the stockrooms inaccessible to the public. Moreover, the two old buildings containing ranges of useless rooms are structurally unsafe for book storage, and unsuitable for public use.

Why Stagnate Progress?

Are we to limit this growing and commendable habit of the Sheffield people to make "the fullest possible use of their library"? The public library has been justly called "the poor man's university"; but as everybody knows it is accessible and used by every class in the community. Through the enterprise of the committee, of the librarians, and of his admirable staff, a demand has been stimulated, and now it is overwhelming the people who are encouraged to give of their best in the interests of adult education. It should be remembered that if the enthusiasm of the staff and the interest of the public is once denied by the inadequacy of the facilities offered, it may be years before such splendid service and interest can be stimulated again to its present pitch.

There is one further point, the central library buildings are not and cannot be attractive. To have succeeded in obtaining so many borrowers to this out-of-way, dull, unattractive place is a tribute to the people responsible, but such buildings are a disgrace to a progressive city. The argument that we would legislate in advance of the ideas of the people will not bear examination

in face of the figures we have given, and the obvious desire of the public to use the library in increasingly large measure.

What is the Remedy?

To build a new public library would, of course, cost an enormous amount of money. If built on the present site it would involve practically closing down the present library for two or three years. Even 99, Surrey-street is not the ideal place for a central library, and the city cannot afford a new central library for many years to come if it is to proceed with the building of the public hall. The suggestion of the present writer therefore is that instead of the public hall with an estimated accommodation for 4,000 people, the city should go for a large central library worthy of the city and capable of meeting the increasing demand.

Solving Other Problems.

To build a library on the present site for the public hall would solve a number of problems at the same time: (1) It would solve the problem of the central library itself; (2) it would solve the question of a permanent memorial to those who gave their lives; (3) in all probability it would cost no more to build a hall of reasonable size, and a library, in one building, than the proposed memorial hall would cost by itself, so that it would solve the financial difficulty; (4) the municipal buildings at the Town Hall are also totally inadequate for the administration of the city's affairs. These offices could be extended on the present library site gradually, without any greater cost than

will be involved by extension in any other way.

Revise the Scheme.

We understand that the plans of the proposed new hall allow for two small lecture halls to accommodate 400 each, and one a little larger to accommodate about 800 people, in addition to the large central hall to accommodate 4,000. We have no practical knowledge of architectural or building difficulties in this connection, but it would appear quite within the realm of reasonable possibility that a combined hall and library could be designed which would accommodate say 2,600 or 2,000 people, and the hall could be let at a rent within reach of all the various organisations in the city likely to make use of it.

A Library.

The proposed public hall would admittedly serve the people on special occasions but it could not possibly be used to its fullest seating capacity for more than twenty or thirty times per year. In the interim, it would be "sitting its head off" in standing charges, and when it was let, the price—to be anything like adequate—would be prohibitive to most organisations. If the city could afford to build a large hall of this type, and also a library, no one would cavil at the idea. We must, however, face up to the facts, and, compared with the suggestion of a library, and remembering the financial position of the city, a large public hall as suggested in the original scheme would be a luxury.

The idea of the City Hall was first mooted by the Citizens' Party. The

present Labour majority is not necessarily committed to the scheme; in fact, their first action was to postpone the carrying out of the scheme on account of the financial position; so that it would appear that the whole matter should be looked into again in the light of present conditions.

The Long-Projected Library Scheme.

Sheffield has talked about a new central library since 1895. The idea of a children's library has been put forward on many occasions, as also has the suggestion of students' rooms, &c. The reference library is too small, the technical library is congested, the staff is badly housed, the storage is certainly detrimental to important books, moreover valuable legal deeds, charters, &c., have to be stored in the strong rooms of the Town Hall because there is no safe storage in the libraries.

It may be objected that £3,000 has already been spent for architects' plans of the public hall, but £5,000 would soon be lost in revenue if the scheme was proceeded with; and the problem of the library would still need solution. The advantage from the financial point of view, therefore, is that a hall likely to be almost self-supporting could still be built in lieu of one which would undoubtedly be a charge upon the rates. Without pretending to any knowledge of the difference in cost between the proposed public hall and a combined library and hall, we venture to suggest that the cost of the alternative scheme would be even less than the original one.

(Continued in column 1, page 3.)

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**MR. BALDWIN PRAISES
CO-OPERATION.**

WHILE the private grocers in national conference assembled at Sheffield have been denouncing "The Co-operative Menace" (as they call it) to their profits, no less important a person than the Prime Minister has been going around the Empire praising the co-operative movement, and pointing to it as the solution of our agricultural difficulties. This is what he told the Lincolnshire farmer.

I wonder how many of you have followed what the farmers of Canada have done. For years they were "monkeyed" about by dealers and speculators in wheat, but in less than five years, the marketing method in Western Canada have been revolutionized, and depression has given place to optimism. That is one reason why wheat is going there.

All this has been done by the farmers themselves. Controlled by the slump during the post-war period, they coalesced together and formed a pool of the great wheat producing provinces, and this pool was governed by a central body. They disposed of 20,000,000 bushels of grain grown on 16,000,000 acres of land, or 70 per cent of the total crop of the whole Dominion. That gigantic effort by self-help and keen work saved tens of thousands of Canadian farmers from disaster.

A movement like this has its critics, but not the radical ones who would prevent the glazing of the market, smoothed out the prices, and ruled out the middlemen.

Your problems at home are less in magnitude, but much more complicated in detail, and I should like to see them faced with the same kind of organized and co-operative business ally as that with which your brothers in Canada have tackled their problems.

Since that speech Mr. Baldwin has been to Canada to see co-operative farming at first hand. He is enthusiastic about it. In plain words he says, "The growth of co-operative fruit and dairy farming in Canada gives an excellent lead to us in England."

"Done" Both Ways!

Some defenders of private profit are very cross with the Premier's speech to farmers at Lincoln, in which he advised farmers to follow the example of the Canadian farmers by co-operatively marketing their produce, and to cut out exorbitant middlemen's profits. Others have tried to get round Mr. Baldwin's blunt recommendation of the co-operative principle by stating that he only meant co-operative selling of produce, and that (we are told) is a vastly different proposition to the economics of the co-operative retail store. Such apologetics have missed an unobtrusive reference to retail prices, which Mr. Baldwin's Lincoln speech, which is worth recalling, Mr. Baldwin said:—

"Now is a time, or not, that the average farmer gets retail prices for what he buys, and receives wholesale prices for what he sells? In other words, does he, or does he not, 'do' 'done' both ways?"

Is it true that whenever there is a small market there is a ring, and if there is a ring the producer suffers? Why? In order that those who live by their wits may live. The question I ask you farmers is: Are there too many intermediaries? Cannot you get rid of some of them?

For Mr. Baldwin's information, as well as the farmers, it can be stated that in co-operation both for retail buying and bulk selling it is possible to eliminate the middlemen that prey on the two processes. The Premier knows that too well that there are intermediaries standing between the people and their food, and as a consequence non-co-operators, farmers, labourers, and craftsmen alike are to use Mr. Baldwin's own phrase, "done 'done' both ways!" The remedy is obvious as it is easy. Join in co-operation.

After this we hope Mr. Baldwin will curb the wilder spirits in his party, who have from time to time given vent to a desire to change and bury the co-operative movement with unfair taxes, restrictive legislation, and all the disruptive forces of manufactured Press campaigns. Now that Mr. Baldwin has told us plainly that hope for the stricken industry of farming lies in co-operation we shall perhaps hear less from certain quarters of "The Co-operative Menace."

The Co-operative Union delights in coming to the principles of co-operative effort for production and distribution, and if all admirers of Mr. Baldwin heed his words they will get in touch with the movement (if they are not already in it) to share its benefits that await the worker and the consumer alike who have the good fortune to be banded together in our great fraternity.

Sheffield Co-Operator.

OCTOBER, 1927.

**CO-OPERATION AND
LABOUR.**

THE Labour Party conference has again demonstrated the increasing interest that is being taken in the co-operative movement by the various sections of the democratic army. It is some years ago since the Independent Labour Party made it a definite part of the constitution that the co-operative movement should be assisted in its work and should form a definite part of the industrial machine in any new social order. The Joint Committee of Trade Unionists and Co-operators had a similar object as part of their constitution. The Trade Unions Congress many, many years ago laid it down as a vital principle that every trade unionist should be a co-operator and every co-operator a trade unionist.

Since that time great strides have been made in the realm of co-operative achievement. Large societies up and down the country have taken their way more and more into the capitalist system, and every week indicates new developments in the way of increased trade in the distributive sphere, and a larger share in the ownership of productive concerns.

At the present Labour Party conference the agenda contains quite a number of resolutions in support of the co-operative movement on its purely trading side as well as the motion to the co-operative and Labour political agreement. Indeed, nearly every public pronouncement by Labour leaders has, nowadays, some definite reference to the co-operative movement, which is being recognised not only as a vital factor in the transition period to a new social order, but as of fundamental importance as a definite part of the new social system that the workers are endeavouring to establish. Every attempt at unity amongst the workers is invariably met by attacks from those who at present control the means of production, distribution, and exchange in the interest of profit-makers, with the object of splitting the workers' movement. The co-operative and Labour agreement exemplified this to an amazing extent, the whole of the capitalist Press pretending to see in a simple working agreement the absolute submission of co-operation to "Socialist agitators" and spendthrifts. There is now the question of municipal

trading arising from Labour majorities on local councils, and already our opponents are attempting to prove that this also will mean submerging co-operation for municipal Socialism.

The fact is that the awakening consciousness of the workers to their enormous power as a united force is alarming the upholders of the capitalist system. Any and every argument will be used to prevent this growing consciousness of power in unity. We would our valuers therefore beware of the attack that will be launched in Sheffield during the forthcoming municipal elections, when, undoubtedly, there will be an attempt to show the municipal enterprise and co-operative development cannot proceed together. Co-operators should beware of the new-found advocates whose real object is to maintain their power on local and national bodies and prevent the development of collective control.

In Sheffield there is no danger of the co-operative movement suffering in any way whatever as a result of the Labour majority on the City Council. Every one of the Labour members are co-operators, and quite realise that co-operation has an important part to play in the city's affairs. So far as retail trade is concerned, the Labour Party recognise the long experience of the co-operative movement in this connection, and value the system which prevents profit-making, guarantees purity in food supplies, and the best quality in all its productions, whilst maintaining the best possible conditions of employment amongst its workers.

Mr. Ramsey MacDonald, in his book on "Socialism," Mr. Stanswell (late Minister for Mines), and other Labour leaders have not only given definite assurances about co-operative security under a Labour Government, but the Labour Government itself gave a greater representation to co-operators on important committees than ever they had had before, and in every way during the Labour régime facilitated co-operative development. The relationship between the Labour movement and the co-operative movement is so close and their principles so allied, that any possibility of antagonism or even limitation is impossible ultimately.

The co-operative movement has set up a committee to deal with the relationship between municipal and co-operative trade, whilst, as we have shown, the Labour Party is prepared to guarantee absolute freedom for co-operation in this respect.

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COLONEL LAWRENCE has written us the story of his experiences in Arabia, under the title of "Revolt in the Desert." Incidentally, the book has a forbidding price (isn't it, 30s.), but it is a rattling good yarn of adventure that makes one gasp. Kingston and Henty, Pennington Cooper and Manville Penn were dead when we were boys, and stepped right out of the middle of smoky Sheffield into Australia or Afghanistan, Peru or Pernambuco, and had hair-breadth escapes and stirring adventures galore. But, somehow, we thought all that kind of thing was merely a tale that had come at least that it came to us years ago. "Tramcars and "wireless," trains and aeroplanes must surely have put an end to such strange happenings—even if they ever did happen!

Yet here, in "Revolt in the Desert," we have served up for us hot and steaming the most extravagant fare in the way of adventure—a record of experiences during the Great War.

Colonel T. E. Lawrence.

Lawrence is an unusual sort of man. Curious bits of information have leaked into the papers about his strange ways; a man of culture and refinement who lived a barbaric time with the Arabs—and not the sheiks of the "pictures" at that! He could disguise himself as an Arab, could speak their language, and think as they thought. His work was to stir up the Arab tribes and consolidate them as one nation, principally to aid the cause of the Allies in war. It is rumoured that this man, who took his instructions direct from Allenby, was in the inner council of the eastern phase of the war, left and joined up afresh after the war as a private!

But the strangest thing of all is that (according to recent newspapers) he is withdrawing his book from sale, as it has now paid for the cost of production, and he is not interested in making profits."

He must be a very refracting man, one whose like we seldom see. One wonders how the capitalists and the Professors of Economics explain him away. Suspect, no doubt. It is unfortunate that so health-giving a sun does not shine oftener—but most heads, we suspect, are too thick to be affected.

A Masterpiece.

This book is a masterpiece—of experience, and of writing. We have no love for war, or the glitter and panoply of war, but cannot help liking a book of this kind, which is principally about the war of the human spirit against the forces of nature with an incidental background of bloodshed. Lawrence knew that all war was madness, that the world was mad, and that the madness must pass or the world would be lost.

Men have vowed themselves to poverty and hunger for a religious ideal: here was one who found satisfaction in desert solitude with Arab companions, who could lie down by his camel in the open spaces supple, because of the certainty of a good meal the following evening after another day's camel ride. He drank at times from puddles, and from a pond in which dead camels were rotting. And withal, he preserved a steel will and a hard, crystal-like inner refinement, and found joy in a book of romance (Sir Thomas Malory's "Morte D'Arthur") kept in his saddlebag.

Conquering Humanity.

The wonder is that any man of flesh and blood could go through so much judgment. Once, in the winter, it had been his intention to ride all night after doing so all day, along with a group of Arabs. But a mist came down... hard, broke rottenly beneath our weight deep at every stride. The poor beasts bumped down so often that they were made unwilling work for the new difficulties. They halted for a few steps, and then stopped abruptly.

It froze again, and the stubby valley became ice. The rock we crouched on came loose, compact group, tails to wind and snuggled down beside them for warmth and sleep. I was once, only to wake with a start. My slow fingers seemed to stroke me. I stared out into a night livid with soft snowflakes. They lasted a minute or two; but then followed a rain after it, more frost; while I squatted a tight ball, aching every way but one to move, till dawn. I was hesitant again, but I was over in the mud to see my men, kneeling in their cloaks, covering themselves against the beast's flank.

Daylight.

"Along we struggled about. The camels were too done to carry weight (all but my own died later in march)... and it was so cold and in the clay bottoms that we, our ally and fell like them."

And once, finished with hunger, stray ostrich-egg was found, and accepted as a delicacy. The desert has no twigs, they could cook the egg by burning shredded pelicans. It was done, but on the shell being broken the appalling stink which was upon them made the egg's remains very hasty matter.

Lawrence's Work.

His task was to carry on such work would harass the Turks and convince the Arabs against the British. As the British forces could not cope with the main armies of the Turks, Lawrence, and he schemed and planned, to promote the unifying of the Arabs into one people—apparently as an end quite apart from the special interests of the war. He blew up railways, bridges in the nights, and planned and argued in the daytime.

More than once he criticised some of the British officers very candidly. When General Barrow arrived on the scene, Lawrence had "his head under a full speed to prevent the fatal mistakes by which the organization which with the best will in the world, had deprived the acquiescent nature of discipline of responsibility, and created a situation which called for years of agitation and successive reforms of riots to mend." There one has a good deal of condensed history; India, China, and the United States.

Disciplined.

Lawrence lived on terms of comradeship with his own bodyguard of Arab and here is his comment after the arrival of British forces: "The reaction of the British officers toward their struck horror into my bodyguard, who had never seen personal inspection before."

He is most scathing upon this matter of class distinction as exemplified in the army, but pays great tribute to some of the British officers—notably, Allenby. And this criticism is from a conqueror mark you!

Here and there, there peeps out the mind of a lover of peaceful scenes; some heartful descriptions of sunset maybe, slipped in between the adventure of the day and the adventure of the night. There is a sense of orderliness, and a recognition of the worth of life. He encourages the disturbed city the development of a sanitary service, fire service, and all the things needed for tolerable conditions of social life.

There is blood, and loot, and destruction—but there is also striving for something else in the way of betterment. There is no sparing of self, and the result is a fine tale plainly told. When men work for peace and progress among us again, let us assuredly, strenuousness will bring about the destruction at the hand of their enemies, and their memory will, in those sacred,

CIVIC ART AND ITS POSSIBILITIES.

BY COUNCILLOR A. BARTON.

An exhibition of Lancashire and Yorkshire Artists opened at the Mappin Art Gallery, Friday, September 2nd. There was a large gathering. Councillor A. Barton, the chairman of the Art Gallery, gave an address. He said:—

"We have before us a most interesting exhibition of pictures by Lancashire and Yorkshire artists. The average of artistic ability is certainly high. All the pictures will not please all—that is only to be expected—but it is possible to recognise artistic power even when the canvas is not one which we would care to have always before us."

"There is at present in the art world a school which holds that the subject of a picture and the appeal to emotion, by intellect, or anything beyond pure decoration—do not count in a picture, and who seem to deliberately try to make their pictures as distasteful as possible, artists who violently criticise these illustrations, as they call them. There is something to be said for this point of view, of course. The mere fact that a picture is a good illustration of, say, a historic scene, or good imitation of a landscape, is not sufficient. A picture should appeal to the picture-weaver of decorative instinct of our nature, first of all. But then, if a picture is simply a colour or line pattern, how does it differ from a carpet, a tapestry, or an embroidery? From the very beginnings of art, from the time when the cave man drew those wonderful pictures on the walls of caves in Dordogne and Altamira, man has sought to delineate something; he has tried to find not simply a decorative but an emotional and imaginative stimulus in pictures. Surely the definition of a good painting should be, not that its imaginative content is of no value, but that that content, that subject, that intellectual and emotional pattern, should be so perfectly blended with the decorative pattern that they become indistinguishable parts of a greater whole. Just as, to take a literary illustration, the sentiments expressed in the Book of Job are far from uncommon; but in the prose of the Old Testament they become terrible and inspiring."

"Modern Art suffers, perhaps, by the instability, the lack of conviction in the present; for, for the age in which the artists live always has a tremendous influence on their work. And here I would like to make a mild suggestion,

which will also be of interest to our local civic authorities.

"If our theological convictions are less powerful than those of earlier days, there is one thing which, if anything, seems to grow more vivid with the changing days—the civic sentiment, the pride in our civic achievements and possibilities." So far, it has not risen much beyond the honourable but more materialist considerations of health, housing, transport, &c. But, occasionally, a city blossoms in an architectural flower of excellence, as, for example, a large public building in Sheffield. We propose to have a public hall of magnificent proportions. Now, how is it to be decorated? If it had been in medieval times, for example, the world would have been an opportunity for the artists of the day to distinguish themselves, and incidentally, no doubt, to improve their fortunes—for even artists must live. Manchester led the way some years ago by its magnificent frescoes in the Town Hall, of Ford Madax Brown. The history of Sheffield has, perhaps, not many exciting incidents to memorialise, but, surely, there could be a series of pictures representing the life of Sheffield and its people. Pictures of scenes of beauty like the Rivelin valley; of the huge furnaces and their human servants; of the life of the streets and the parks; maybe the pathos of poverty and the unemployment—for it is wise to realise our shortcomings; perhaps our hospitals and their work; notice the beautiful picture of a nurse in the exhibition here—and as you know, one of the finest pictures representing the life of Sheffield is the 'Anatomy Lesson'; and even suggestions of the city of the future. I am not suggesting frescoes, but a series of panels in our great hall forming a great colour scheme of decoration and making the hall a thing of glorious beauty. It would cost money, no doubt, but even from a commercial standpoint it would be worth it. People will be a hundred, nay, thousands, of miles to see a fine picture. A series of pictures, painted under the influence of a great imaginative idea, as I suggest, would make Sheffield a place which people would cease to slum, and having once been, would come again to enjoy its natural beauties, which are inferior to none in other cities, and which will be still more apparent when our Smoke Committee has done its work."

THE TRIUMPH OF DIRECT LABOUR IN J SHEFFIELD.

BY COUNCILLOR W. G. ROBINSON.

THE direct labour building system has always been of the utmost interest to me, and as the Co-operative and Labour Parties promised last November to inaugurate this system, I am delighted to report what has already been achieved in this connection. The scheme is under the control of the city architect, a manager with practical as well as theoretical knowledge, and a bricklayer-foreman with long practical experience. In fact, the supervision and organization in every case is of the best.

Ridgeway-road Scheme.—Section 1.

This comprises eight parlour type houses for sale (price £500). They contain a parlour (with bay window), living room, scullery, larder, and coal place on the ground floor. On the first floor there are three bedrooms, bathroom, and separate w.c. They are all equipped with electric light so well as gas supply. The work commenced on April last, and is to be completed on or before September 30th, 1937, in order to get the full subsidy. Most of the houses are sold now, and the owners have not got a splendid bargain and full value for money. There has been no attempt to save by defective work, the houses are substantially built with workmanship and materials of the best quality. Roof of red tile, front elevations with splendid designs, and pointing is cut out, making the joints look small and neat—a new venture not operated by private enterprise.

Ridgeway-road.—Section 2.

In this scheme there are twelve bungalows to be let to aged people at 6s per week rent, exclusive of rates. The full plan is to build fifty bungalows on these lines. They consist of living or sitting-room, bedroom, scullery, bathroom, larder, coal place, and w.c. The ten that have been completed are tiled with rosemary and beaumont tiles, which make the roof appearance very artistic. The water supply system is a combination of hot and cold water from the same tank known as the Royalist system. They are built in pairs of different designs, some are pebble-dashed and others fronted by neatly pointed brickwork, which gives them a very smart appearance. The ground floor in every case is above the road level, which is all to the good from the point of view of dryness. The bungalows are well built and are a credit to the builders.

Twelve houses on the Manor Estate. These are for sale with a slight variation in price owing to a decrease of

the subsidy at the end of September. They vary slightly in the elevation, which makes them more pleasing to the eye. Instead of concrete or stone appears to gather several courses of bricks are used which gives a much prettier effect. There are also elevations to light the staircases in front elevation instead of the end, with a large concrete front canopy full length of door and window. The concrete for foundations and underneath the joist to stop dampness and growth of vegetation is composed of broken stone, sand, &c., not breeze aggregate, as hitherto used on the estate. The mortar on the houses and bungalows is hand-made sand and lime, which is more substantial and will not require pointing for many years; another contrast with private enterprise.

Pipeworth-road School.

This school is also being built by direct labour. The site is 15,730 square yards, and the school is to accommodate 1,470 children. Manual training rooms, medical inspection and waiting rooms, laboratory, cookery, and industry rooms; large assembly hall connected to all blocks by verandahs; grass-covered quadrangles surrounded by the classrooms, and so on, are features of the design. The school is an entirely new design with all the comforts and amenities possible for the benefit of the workers' children, and the latest schemes in the way of giving a maximum of light, warmth, and comfort to the children, as well as beauty in the design.

Cost.

The question of cost in the case of direct labour as applied to houses has received a good deal of publicity. The estimated cost of the parlour type house is £495, and the estimated cost of the bungalow type is £375. There may not be a large saving as compared with the normal price between direct labour and the contracting system, as builders have cut their prices considerably since the inauguration of the direct labour scheme, but they have cut prices as a result of the scheme. There will, however, be a very substantial indirect saving on repairs, &c. The estates committee, which has paid a visit to the four estates mentioned, are more than satisfied with the progress of the work and the quality of the workmanship. In short, direct labour is a success up to date. To demonstrate this to its fullest extent we shall need the support of every progressive ratepayer next November.

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BOYS' RUGBY SUITS - 10/6 to 15/6
BOYS' RAINCOATS - 15/6

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GENTS' PJAMAS - from 12/6
MEN'S, YOUTHS', & BOYS' CAPS, IN ALL THE LATEST SHADES

A GREAT NEW CAMPAIGN

CO-OPERATORS have an ideal of life that has been proved beneficial. The essence of our movement is that it is open to all to share in the responsibilities and privileges. We want a whole nation and then a whole world of co-operators. To do that we must let the world know what awaits them. Education is the key to all the success that will raise the voice of co-operation loud above the din of everyday life.

That is what was done last year in the first National Co-operative Propaganda and Trade Campaign with the result that thousands of new members were made in a fortnight of intensive publicity, and trade returns boomed up, especially in areas where the campaign was most keenly conducted.

Encouraged by that initial success, the Co-operative Union is pressing forward with preliminaries for a new and greater national campaign to be held early in February of next year. All the give will be directed to the task of making co-operative publicity carry its message into the homes of the people. But, however excellent the staff work may be, it will not yield its benefits without the help of the rank and file. Every society should clear the decks for action in February, and every member should see how he or she can best help in the concentrated drive to enlist the hitherto unresponsive and uninitiated people whom we desire to transform into co-operators.

The Honeyeater,

They were newly married and on their honeymoon trip. They stopped at a fashionable hotel. The bridegroom felt a little indisposed, and the bride sold the several slip out and do some shopping. In due time she returned and tripped blithely up to her room, a little awed by the manner of which that looked alike. But the woe was of her own, and gently tapped on the panel. "I'm back, honey, let me in," she called, tapping loudly. No answer. "Honey, honey, it's I—your Queenie; do let me in!" There was a silence for several seconds—then a man's voice, cold and full of dignity, came from the other side of the door: "Madam, this is a bathroom—not a beehive."

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WIDOWS AND OLD FOLKS
DISILLUSSIONED.

FRAUDS AND PITFALLS IN THE CONTRIBUTORY PENSIONS SCHEME.

It is now two years since the Tory Government, amidst eloquent expressions of their generous consideration for the widows and the aged, placed upon the statute book the Contributory Pensions Act.

At the time of the measure's passage through Parliament, the Labour Party pointed out that it was full of "catches" and pitfalls, that instead of increasing the income of many of the beneficiaries it would leave them worse off than they were before, and that instead of providing generously for a deserving class of the community at the expense of the public funds, it was a profit for nation, it actually made a profit for the public funds, and the members of the working class in general.

Disappointed Widows.

Experience has shown that all Labour's criticisms have been fully deserved. Thousands of the men and women who were compulsorily brought within the scope of the Act have already been disillusioned.

Sixty thousand widows have already been told that in consequence of the man and arguably manner in which the Act is framed they are not entitled to any pensions at all.

Many other widows with children, who were granted pensions when the Act came into operation in January of last year, have learned that their pensions—and the allowances in respect of their children—are shortly to be taken away, on their children attaining the age of 12½ years.

A further large number of widows have found—and the same fate awaits the old folks when they begin to draw their pensions at sixty-five next year—that their family income is lower than it was before the benefits of this "generous" Tory scheme were conferred upon them. Just how this anomalous state of affairs comes about is worth considering.

Woes Old Than Before.

It happens in this way. Under the working of the Act, the pensioner, as soon as he (or she) begins to draw his (or her) pension, has in the majority of cases to surrender the 18s. a week unemployment benefit which he may have been drawing (15s. a week in the case of a woman) as well as any disallowance benefit that he may have been receiving under the Health Insurance Act, whilst in practice also, the amount of any Poor-Law Relief of which he may have

been in receipt is reduced by the amount of the pension.

It is difficult to imagine that an Act of Parliament masquerading in the name of generosity could be so mean and despicable. Yet the facts of the matter are indisputable. With regard to unemployment benefit, the report of the Government actuary states that the pensions scheme will relieve "the unemployed liability from the present considerable liability entailed by the payment of unemployment benefit to persons over the age of sixty-five" and he adds that this will mean a cut in unemployment benefit of £2,100,000 a year.

With regard to the deprivation of Health Insurance benefit, the Government actuary also says that "the bill provides for the termination of the right to sickness and disablement benefits . . . under the National Health Insurance system at the age of sixty-five, when the new pensions will accrue," and he adds that this will save the exchequer £400,000 a year.

The Net Result.

The net result of the scheme to many widows and old persons, therefore, is as shown in the following table:—

What the Act gives:
10s. a week to widow.
10s. a week to aged man at sixty-five.
10s. a week to aged woman at sixty-five.

What it takes away:
10s. a week off her Poor-Relief.
15s. a week Unemployment Benefit.
15s. a week Unemployment Benefit.

The Net Result:
No better off.
8s. a week worse off.
8s. a week worse off.

So far as the national economics of the scheme are concerned, instead of its representing a generous concession to the aged and widows out of the surplus wealth of the nation, it actually reduces the responsibility imposed upon the taxpayers and the ratepayers, and thus, in effect, makes a profit for the public funds. The Government Actuary, in his report, shows that on the first three years' working of the scheme there will be a surplus of £16,500,000, and although in the subsequent years the payments out of the fund will increase, the official figures show that even if the first ten years be taken as the period of calculation, the saving to the public funds amounts to something in the region of £13,000,000.

MUNICIPAL CO-OPERATIVE

BY "GO-OPTICUS"

Whether the much-advertised fight between co-operation and municipalisation (when it eventually will be as acute as it now appears to be) is a matter of essential health, and whether those who are most anxious to see services in disinterested hands are often than not enthusiastic, and whether it is difficult to imagine deliberately entering into competition with the organisation that has been consumers so long and so well, in my personal view, the writer has no opinion that co-operation, municipalisation, in practice, will be complete.

If municipalities do cooperate co-operative societies in the way of bread, milk, coal, and such necessities of life, then it will be due in many instances to the enterprise and public spirit of the societies. Where a complete, and reasonably cheap co-operative service exists, a municipality would be foolish to venture, and it would be difficult to obtain legislative aid for public services properly and quickly conducted by more efficient organisations.

The danger lies in the apathy of societies here and there which content to jog along on conventional lines without making provision for extensions of urgently needed services. Co-operation knows no frontiers; it should know no boundaries; it should know no boundaries.

Fervent municipalisers are clear during the elections that they do not intend wastefully to spend co-operative preserves when co-operative services in question are carried out in an efficient way. Such avowals, founded on an ego basis, will clear the air a great deal and do away with the pseudo-divisions between those who have heart the progressive betterment of civic and co-operative services. Co-ordinated, the interests of the payer and the co-operator are identical.

An Easy First.

A well-known author was talking to a country-man about his books. "I know," he said, "I often get paid for a book, but I don't like to be paid for it." "Oh, that's nothing so wonderful," the old man said. "Whenever I write a book at the rate of five shillings a week, 'What?' gapped the writer. "It's a fact," was the reply. "Whenever I write a book, my publisher pays me tax oblige."

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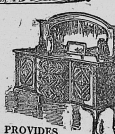
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CONSERVATIVES AND THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT

WHILE the Labour Party conference is in full swing at Blackpool, the Conservative conference is also sitting at Cardiff.

The annual report submitted to the conference contains the following reference to the co-operative movement— "The Labour Sub-Committee, which has been active during the year, notably in regard to the Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Bill and the co-operative societies. Although the endeavour to prevent the ratification of the agreement between the Co-operative and Socialist Parties was not successful, the decision of the Co-operative Congress has aroused such widespread opposition to the agreement as to make it already of doubtful value. The sole object of the steps that have been taken, and will be continued, is—in the interest of the members—to prevent the co-operative societies from being captured by the Socialists. Members of co-operative societies should be urged to take a greater part in the management of the societies in order that they are carried on partly trading concerns."

The Conservative conference will in most things show itself behind the Government; but upon two scores there have been signs of conflict, and upon both the differences are largely due to questions in these sections of the Press which live upon sensations.

The second point upon which Conservatives are not united is the question of the reform of the House of Lords.

One of the proposals in this connection is that instead of the non-hereditary members of the Upper House being nominated by the Government, they should be elected by the direct taxpayers.

MR. A. V. ALEXANDER AND EMPIRE DEVELOPMENT.

COMMENT BY "THE TIMES TRADE SUPPLEMENT."

JUST before the autumn adjournment of Parliament, Mr. Alexander made an important speech on the present state of British trade; he was then discussing the statement made by the President of the Board of Trade. He rejected the notion that the Dominions should be asked to confine their productive activities to the production of "primary goods" only, and he went on to advocate that the Home Government should enter into consultation with the Dominions in order that future industrial development might be regulated in the interests of the entire British Commonwealth.

Mr. Alexander's statement has since found support in a rather unexpected quarter, being very favourably commented upon by "The Times" in its "Trade Supplement."

It will be remembered that Mr. Alexander was the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade during the Labour Government's period of office; and also that he was subsequently appointed as a member of the Empire Parliamentary Delegation to visit the Dominion.

In his speech in the House, Mr. Alexander urged that the time had come when the British Government, without interfering in any way with the fiscal autonomy of Australia and Canada, should enter into far closer consultation. "The Times" points out that such a pronouncement is in favour of orderly development and merits the most careful attention, and goes on to say—

If Australia, for instance, finds that her future prosperity depends on the development of her woolen textile industry, it is a matter for Australia to decide whether to manufacture from this country. Similarly, if India decides to develop her cotton industry, or Canada thinks it essential to encourage the manufacture of boots and shoes, it is not for the people of this country to complain. But it seems clear that in the interests of the Empire as a whole it would be an enormous advantage to define the aims and objects of its different parts in order to secure a more symmetrical development than is at present manifest. It may be urged that such an idea is impractical. It is true that can only be considered if it is admitted that the statement of the Empire are unable to envisage its orderly development on a logical basis.

Obviously it would be of great advantage to manufacturers here if they could have some assurance that there would not be sudden and unexpected changes of fiscal policy in the Empire, but we are thinking less of the interest of these islands than of the whole Empire in the years to come. Clearly the ideal would be to reduce to a minimum competition within the various parts of the Empire and to concentrate an orderly development. The belief that the Dominions should merely produce food and raw materials in exchange for the manufactured products of Great Britain is no longer tenable. For good or evil, the Dominions have definitely decided

to become self-contained economic units to a greater extent than formerly. That being so, it seems eminently desirable to discuss plans for the future with all the courts on the table.

It is encouraging to see that in industry organized research is taking the place of haphazard empiricism. Hilberts in this country everything has been left to individual enterprise, and although nothing can take the place of personal initiative in the development of trade, many professions cannot be satisfactorily served without organized investigation. In this field the State can most usefully co-operate with industry. Directly the State embarks on business enterprise complications ensue, and except in rare cases disaster follows, the research which leads to the discovery of information that can be placed at the disposal of individual citizens is a proper and legitimate function of government. An investigation to be jointly financed by the Australian Government and the Empire Marketing Board, into methods of conveying for oils and minerals within the Empire will shortly be undertaken, and should have the most valuable results. The extent of the field to be covered is shown by the fact that it is anticipated that the work will take two years to complete.

This comment is interesting, for whilst it re-affirms the intense belief of "The Times" in the value of private enterprise, it shows that "The Times" leader writers are beginning to think co-operatively, and after all, that is the chief function of Co-operative representatives in the House of Commons—to introduce the co-operative system in place of the effect and disastrous system of "every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost."

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HELLO!

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- Monday, 7.30 to 10.30 p.m. Island Dance — 9d.
- Tuesday, 7.45 p.m. Walk Drive — 9d.
- Wednesday, 7.30 p.m. Women's Boston Meeting
- Thursday, 7.30 p.m. Members' Supper — 6d.
- Friday, 7.30 to 10.30 p.m. Island Dance — 9d.
- Saturday, 7.45 p.m. Open Air Party Purposc — 1s.
- Sunday, 7.45 p.m. Walk Drive — 1s.

Secretary: Mr. F. TEBBUTT, 184, Greenford Road, Darnall.
Women's Secretary: Miss A. TREV, 11, Stanley Road.

SPECIAL NOTE—Committee R. 22, Mitchell will be in attendance at the Labour Day every first Friday in the month, and Committee Hamilton every third Friday, from 6.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.
Socialist Sunday School held every Sunday at 11.30 p.m.

Every SUNDAY EVENING at a PUBLIC MEETING will be held.

- PROGRAMME FOR OCTOBER.
- October 2—Committee R. 22, Mitchell.
- 3—Mr. Wilson.
- 4—Mr. J. Davis.
- 5—Mr. J. H. Walker.
- 6—Mr. J. H. Walker.
- 7—Mr. J. H. Walker.

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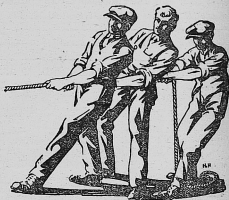
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