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THE LABOUR CANDIDATE FOR THE HALLAM BY-ELECTION, JULY 16th, 1928.

On the day of his adoption for the Hallam Division, Charles Richard Flynn and I were sitting facing each other at the tea-table. It was the first time I had seen him.

Frankly, I had expected a heavily-built Irishman, pugacious in type, and here was a mild-looking man who might have sprung from any English shire. He was born in Gateshead, in fact, but with a name like his it is useless to attempt to disguise the fact that his forebears were Irish!

"No," said he, in answer to a question of mine, "I have had no spectacular happenings in my life; it has been rather of the uneventful order."

This was true enough, no doubt. But he has excellently filled the posts that have fallen to his lot: fifteen years in the clerical department of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, secretary of the Gateshead I.L.P. as far back as 1900, and still a member. He represented the Newcastle movement at the International Socialist Conference in 1904, and is now the Northern Divisional Officer of the National Union of Distributive and Allied Workers, for whom he has long been organiser. For many years in succession he has been sent as delegate to the Trade Unions Congress, and is a strong co-operator.

Obviously then, he gives personal adherence to all the four branches of the workers' movement: the Labour Party (of which he is the official candidate), the Trade Union, Socialist, and Co-operative movements.

But though he is not burly and truculent, he is none the less a keen and vigorous fighter. His spare features suggest having been sharpened in the continuous contests he has waged for a larger measure of justice for the great mass of people.

When I asked him about his platform speeches, the reply was characteristic: "I can joke with anybody, but one must be so intensely in earnest in this matter of politics that joking seems out of place."

I ought to add here that we in Hallam are pretty keen critics; we have no room for place-seekers and dilettante politicians. We have sought carefully for one who will serve us—the working class—meaning by that especially who lives in houses rented up to about £20 a year, the rest can look after themselves! In fact, Hallam has hitherto always been represented by men who have had their sole, connections, interests, and experiences with the well-to-do of the division. If Flynn is supported as he ought to be, he will have a ten-to-one majority on this ground alone.

Clerk, shop assistant, or tradesman living in Nether Green; how much have the members of the Hallam Division known about your lives, and your difficulties; even if they were consumed with a passionate zeal on your behalf? Nothing at all. Artisan and labourer,

worker of all kinds in Crookes, Springvale, Kelvin, and Upperthorpe; how much have they know of you? Nothing. They have never visited you except scantily at election times. Here is a man who lives amongst such as you; who knows your way of life; who has similar hardships, and whose only axe to grind is your axe, which, Heaven knows, has been blunt and rusting too long already.

Make no mistake; Flynn does not desire to get on other than peaceful lines in his attempt to improve. He has a record as a pacifist of which he is proud, and will be a strong supporter of international peace. The only shillabib he carries is that of argument; the finest weapon he has is that of goodwill—which he will explain at his meetings. There is no weakness about goodwill; it most essentially implies justice for those who have never had it. With these two weapons—argument and an abounding and triumphant goodwill, he and his helpers will gather together an array of progress during the next fortnight that we anticipate will win the day at the poll on July 16th.

Mr. Flynn has been told by one or two that his chances were not over healthy in a division like Hallam, which had hitherto sent nobody but supporters of the very wealthy to Parliament. It was a sort of "pocket borough" of local wealth, he had heard. Nothing of the sort, so far as its future was concerned! His opponents, Liberal and Tory alike, were no doubt both estimable men, and strangers like himself; but they really represented one party only! Why, they actually got together on one platform every October, in readiness for November 12.

I had a word or two with him about the present Government and rates.

Do you know why rates are high in Sheffield—abnormally high? Solely because you have a Government in power which would rather tax and rate the poor than the rich. The one thing wrong about rating is that the poor and the middle-class are asked to pay too much, and the rich too little. This has been intensified by the present Government by putting more rates on houses and less on works (Rating and Valuation Act), and by a number of restrictions on local grants. It has arranged to do a good deal more along the same lines; and the best thing you can do to stop rates going higher is to make sure Flynn is returned with a thumping majority.

If Carmarthen can get within fifty of a majority on a wet day, Hallam can send Flynn to Parliament with a bumper majority any time.

Tom Garnett is the election agent; workers wanted by the hundred; money wanted in sums from one penny upwards; good humour and being instant on winning wanted in all helpers!

FOR HALLAM ELECTORS. WHAT MR. FLYNN HAS TO SAY.

Your editor has asked me to address a personal word to the readers on the issues involved in the forthcoming by-election. I gladly accede to the request, especially in view of the fact that owing to the shortness of the fight it will not be possible for me to meet more than a very small proportion of the electorate.

The main issue can be summed up in a very few words, but necessarily the discussion of means proposed to translate our intentions into fact will take a considerably larger space than is here available. The purpose of this fight, from Labour's point of view, is the well-being of the community against the vested interests of a comparatively small number of people, whose income is



Mr. C. FLYNN.

derived from rent, interest, and profits. That in order to maintain in comparative luxury a favoured few of the human family it should be necessary to subject the great majority of our fellow-citizens to an existence of penury and uncertainty as to the future is surely ample grounds upon which any system stands condemned. The life of the hand and brain worker is one which is surrounded by degrading poverty, or at best by constant worries regarding the acquisition of the material things of life. The present system can surely be superseded by a more rational system, securing at least to men and women a guarantee of adequate nourishment, clothing, education, and decent, healthy housing amenities. That wasteful and demoralising luxury should be allowed as a price of the degradation of millions of adults and helpless children is surely revolting to the minds of all people of goodwill, and Labour claims the support of all the decent elements in Society to bring about a newer conception of the relations and responsibilities of the community to its units. We believe that by the wise use of the political machinery of our country, both national and local, the wide gulf now existing can be bridged, and the public conscience awakened to the great disparity which exists between the lot of the wealthy citizen burdened by poverty, unemployment, and uncertainty and the lot of those who live on the results of the toil of the many!

The average decent man and woman will at once subscribe to the foregoing as being a desirable object, but at once they raise the question: How can it be done? Undoubtedly, if people can be converted to the practicability of our proposals, the Labour Party will ultimately sweep the country, and be placed in permanent power to work out the future co-operative state. During the election, by platform and pamphlet, we will explain in detail the transformation plans; but just as the co-operative trading movement has shown how the distributive trade can be transformed, so also the productive and transport trades of the country can be changed by a realisation of the true objects of these industries. In short, to realise that distributing, production, and exchange are not ends in themselves, but merely the means to provide and promote the happiness and health of all members of Society. When we recognise the mastery which mankind has secured over the forces of nature, when to-day the human brain knows no barriers in discovery and invention, surely we should spare a little of our attention to the problem of living. And this is the practical problem which faces us. A community which can weigh planets, analyse suns, and encircle the earth in a few seconds will not always be content to live like dogs in a midden, quarrelling over a meatless bone. The good things of life can be produced in abundance; their distribution can be widely diffused, and comfort and security can be made the right of all instead of the privilege of a few.

This is the object of the Labour movement, and politically great instalments can be secured; and I ask for your vote on July 16th, as your contribution to the great social regeneration proposals of our party. The first steps to the new social order must be undertaken by the first Labour Parliament, and at least ways and means must be found to deal with the following:—

- (1) Poverty and unemployment must be attacked and diminished.
- (2) Rates must be reduced by more general taxation, and by the local authorities from national funds.
- (3) Development schemes which will increase the nation's production must be set on foot.
- (4) The school leaving-age must be raised, with provision for adequate maintenance grants.
- (5) The burden of the National Debt must be lightened.
- (6) The fear of war must be abolished by a more enlightened foreign policy being adopted, and all international trade barriers removed.
- (7) The standard of life must be raised, and greater opportunities for leisure and culture must be afforded to the worker.

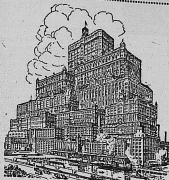
The foregoing provides a task for our next Labour majority, and backed by the votes and support of our fellow-citizens it can be realised.

I ask you in the name of those who are suffering to-day, and in the interests of those who have to follow us, to give unhesitatingly your vote for LABOUR on July 16th.

Yours very sincerely,
CHRIS. FLYNN.

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CO-OPERATIVE WHOLESALE SOCIETY LTD.

LOOK TO YOUR VOTE

The Qualifying period for the new Register is the THREE months ending on June 1st, 1928, and the last day for claims to be registered is August 7th, 1928. A house-to-house inquiry will be made throughout the area. Make your claim when the inquiry is made, and make sure your name is included when the electors' lists are published on July 15th, 1928.

To Get a Parliamentary Vote.

- (1) A MAN must be 21 years of age on June 1st, 1928, and have resided in any one of the Sheffield Divisions for three months previous to that date.
- (2) A WOMAN must be 30 years of age, and have occupied premises, dwelling-house, or unfurnished rooms for three months previous to June 1st, 1928, in any one of the Sheffield Divisions.
- (3) EVERY WOMAN who is 30 years of age, and whose husband is qualified to be on the register as occupier of premises, dwelling-house, or unfurnished rooms, is entitled to a Parliamentary Vote.

To Get a Local Government Vote.

- (1) A MAN OR WOMAN is eligible to be on the register for Local Government elections if he or she is 21 years of age, and has occupied premises, dwelling-house, or unfurnished rooms for three months previous to June 1st, 1928, in the City of Sheffield.
- (2) WOMEN who are 30 years of age, and whose husbands are qualified to be on the register as Local Government Electors, are entitled to a Local Government Vote.

Further information can be obtained from Mr. A. BALLARD, 17, Bank Street, Sheffield (Telephone: Central 22033).

REMEMBER that the qualifying period is the THREE MONTHS ending June 1st, 1928.
That all claims must be made before August 7th, 1928.

CO-OPERATIVE PARTY NOTES.

WALKLEY SECTION SOCIAL.
Mr. A. V. ALEXANDER, M.P., met his Walkley supporters at a social evening, held in the Hillsborough Co-operative Institute, on Friday, June 8th. Mr. Alexander gave a short address dealing with the present political situation, and urged his supporters to keep the organisation intact in readiness for the next Election. Mr. A. Ballard (organising secretary of the party) outlined a scheme of organisation for the winter months. Both speakers were given a cordial reception. The musical part of the programme was provided by the Sheffield and Ecclesall Co-operative Orchestra. Between three and four hundred members were present.

JUNIOR SECTION SCHOOL.

The Junior Section week-end school, held at "Birchfield," Hope, on June 16th and 17th, was a great success. Between seventy and eighty students attended. The Saturday evening lecture dealt with the future of the Junior Co-operative Party in Sheffield. On the Sunday, Mr. Alexander's two addresses on "Co-operation and the State" and "Co-operation and the Municipality" were not only followed by very keen interest, but called forth many questions and long, interesting discussions. Judging by the number of students attending, and the general expression of opinion since, it is quite clear that this will be the first of many schools run for the benefit of the juniors.

N.U.R. FLAG DAY.

The members of the Co-operative Party are to assist the Sheffield District Committee of the N.U.R. in their flag day, to be held on Saturday, July 21st.

Mr. A. V. Alexander, M.P., is to open the hospital fête at Hillsborough Park on Thursday, July 26th, at 3 p.m.

EXCURSION TO LONDON.

The Sheffield and Ecclesall Women's Section of the Co-operative Party paid a visit to London on Thursday, June 28th. They were met at the House of Commons by Mr. Alexander, who conducted the party round the Commons and the Lords, explaining the architecture and general features of the building. The party made many other interesting visits during a charabanc tour round the city.

"CO-OPERATORS' DAY."

The arrangements for "Co-operators' Day" are now well in hand, and already a big demand has been made for the programmes, thousands of which have been sold through the co-operative branches and the Co-operative Guilds. A new feature in the procession is

the fact that it will be comprised entirely of motor vehicles, each of which will contain tableaux representing some aspect or department of the co-operative movement. The British Empire Marketing Board have also arranged an ingenious tableaux which will be contained on a huge motor lorry and trailer representing British empire products. The tableaux takes the form of a huge Noah's Ark, details of which cannot be given here, though we understand it will cause much interest and amusement when, proceeding through the streets of Sheffield. The procession will commence at Broughton-lane, Attercliffe, at 2.15 p.m., and proceed along the main roads through the city to Woodseats, returning via Abbeydale and Ecclesall, and subsequently visiting Crookes, Hillsborough, Neepsend, Plimsour, and Brightside. Full details are printed on the programme.

We have no doubt that many of our readers will take the opportunity on July 7th, not only of celebrating "Co-operators' Day" but by visiting the newest and largest public park in the city—Graves Park. The concert party and entertainment platforms, children's dancing, public dancing, &c., will all take place on the field near the Derbyshire-lane entrance. Altogether, nearly 600 children will take part in the dancing, and will form a delightful sight. The combined choirs of the two Sheffield Co-operative Societies are also to give an excellent programme.

As the Sheffield and Ecclesall Society are already responsible for the catering at Graves Park, nothing will be left undone in satisfying the "inner man" in this respect. Additional marquees will be erected to cope with the crowd. Our readers are invited to bring the youngsters along to take part in the sports which are open to all children from five to fifteen years of age. Entries can be made on the field. The committee have been fortunate in securing Mr. A. V. Alexander, M.P., as the speaker on this occasion.

LOOK OUT FOR THE BALLOONS.

Everything depends on "the way the wind blows." July 7th will be no exception to the rule, for, as on previous occasions, fire balloons will be sent up from the Park, each balloon containing a tin coupon entitling the holder to a prize. If any of our readers cannot get to the Park they should keep a look-out for these lucky birds of passage.

Also, each programme contains a number which may entitle the purchaser to a valuable prize. Winning numbers will be exhibited in the branch shops after the event.

As a final word! Get your programme to-day!

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**"You've started
cooking early
Cousin Mary**

Cousin Mary: Ours is a large family. I have to get three off to the City and two to school. All of them want breakfast about the same time. Can you wonder I have to start cooking at seven o'clock?

Mr. Hayland Hearty: I can understand it if you serve that sort of breakfast. But why do so? Haven't you heard of Shredded Wheat? All you have to do is to serve it with milk—hot or cold, whichever you prefer.

Cousin Mary : I have to cater

for large appetites. Do you think Shredded Wheat would be enough?

Mr. Hayland Hearty: It is made from the pure, whole wheat in the form of crisp rolls. Two of them are all one needs for a substantial breakfast.

Cousin Mary: I suppose it is rather an expensive dish?

Mr. Hayland Hearty: Bless you, no. It is the cheapest ready-prepared cereal food on the market, and when you consider, too, the money you'll have saved in gas or coal you'll realise there's nothing more economical.

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FOOD**

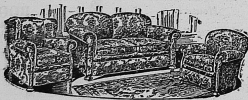
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BOOK REVIEW

In the daylight on these fine summer days there is only one book

which is so engrossing that we turn to it again and again—to leave it reluctantly when the light fades. It is the great book of Nature open round about us; a sort of universal guide-book, a devotional handbook, a book of stories both simple and profound, and the prince of all picture books.

The few lucky ones amongst us are on a wheel to dip into its pages, the wise ones maybe go afoot and look about them more leisurely, the tired ones sit in park and woodland in and about our city. Yet there is one essential way in which one must read the book of Nature: it must be at the cost of personal effort of limb, the long, steady plod on shank's mare. Whilst all other ways have certain advantages, this has them all!

Richard Jefferies.

A generation ago, the Nature-lovers spent their leisure moments at home on the works of John Richard Jeffries. His greatest teacher was his father, who made him acquainted with the wonders of Nature and taught him to make use of his faculties of observation. But the journalist, he was appointed editor of the "North Devonian" in 1866—no doubt that paper was quite insignificant compared with modern journals. A letter to "The Times" on the Wiltshire labourer brought him into public notice, and in later years, he wrote books which are now classics: "The Gamekeeper at Home," "The Story of my Own Life," "The Life of the Gamekeeper's Open Air." He takes one through field and by hedgerow and talks in the fresh wind of the things of life.

Henry David Thoreau.

Although of an earlier day than Jeffries, is better known among the rank and file of reading folk nowadays. Perhaps that may be because he had very few just outside the circle of the few who were civilisation, call it "work" and equally so for wealth. He passed through Harvard University without making an impression, but spent two self-made stints in the woods near Walden Pond (1845-1849). Here he lived observed on a trifling sum, in sympathy with nature and beast. Few have lived so simply and so well. He has been largely overlooked, and read only by those who are burning hot politicians, but you will be the better politician for getting the notion that there is a better way.

The record of Thoreau's life—his famous book "Walden"—can be bought for a shilling or so, and it is a refreshing joy on a Saturday evening to read it in the places like High-street and Fargate.

Emerson

One of the most entertaining stories of him is in connection with a visit he received from his friend, Ralph Waldo Emerson, under rather exceptional circumstances. Thoreau was a very active kind of "conscientious objector" in the war in the States of North versus South, and found himself jailed for his absolute resistance to all forms of military service. To the prison cell came Emerson, no doubt with intent to reprove and correct the erring Thoreau, to whom laws were less than nothing if they conflicted with his conscience.

"Why are you here?" he began, so far as I remember the account of the meeting.

"Why aren't you here?" replied Thoreau; which clearly carried the attack right into the other camp straightaway.

As for Emerson himself: he was a Nature-lover, but rather reflective than observing. He was a transcendentalist

which, nowadays, perhaps, would be better understood as "highbrow." This is rather a free translation of a beastly word; but then, no doubt you have a dictionary. Emerson talks to you in his study about Nature; Thoreau lets you live with him in his shanty which itself is hardly an intrusion on wild Nature. Emerson lectures in sonorous phrases

Thoreau merely explains how he carries on from day to day: his interests and occupations with bird, insect, beast, and flower, and tells you how these affect his thinking and conduct.

Two Double-You's

Walt Whitman and William Wordsworth are far too good for their works! It seems that nature there could be no similarity between them (and occasionally group) in the spirit of Wordsworth on the one hand and the disappointed, vigorously pulsing energy of Whitman on the other. The poet's strength, the contact with Nature; Whitman, the contact with the flame of a man, restrained by the warmth by the sight of great things, great meditation upon them. Yet they both loved and encouraged similar love of the open space, the sense of kinship with all living things. The two were both quietly determined to be essentially the same message. They were both great walkers too. It is always a pleasure when you would have seen a motor car that they had been with now, and they very certainly would have been critics of the new tar-spreaders on the petrol stations, and the modern advertisements. They would have been great motor-actors as Russian poets, and they would have been great naturalists! Still, I think that Wordsworth might have bored me at times; but Whitman, as a part among men and women's as well as among the solitary countryside, you want to look up these two "Walt Whitman and William Wordsworth," any cheap edition of Wordsworth's works, and from these you may saunter to the end who has something of both these poets.

Edward Carpenter.

and be able to get into touch with the larger aspect of Nature—of woods, fields and stars and human feelings of which he writes, because it so happens that the environment of his greatest creative work is not at hand is visited by you. Turning to two great American writers of recent days, whose works happen to occur to me, there is (was) Gene Stratton Porter, whose work is very varied in quality, and would be in the hands of a reader who is not a naturalist who saw vividly the portrayals as vividly as she saw, and if perhaps, on the whole, only managed to improve on the then current *School* prize-books. David Grayson is another order, a sort of amateur, who has been so successful in that he has written a book called *What I think of him* (with this question?) in such books as "Essays in Contentment"? This happily, is no set essay, but a rambling among the rambles who is reported progress, and will find its purpose well enough if it is not a book, but a book that does not know, one bookmaker's sole inspiration is to buy in the open air.

George Borrow was a very unattractive traveller, who rambled over Spain selling bibles, and what a fine story he can tell! Really, if you do feel that you had better turn away from "The Bible in Spain" because you are not theologically inclined, get the book (about a shilling) on this very strong recommendation. The likelihood is that you will inspire it. Borrow's old job happens to be vacant after reading his account. As for Gilbert White's "History of Selborne": it is wonderful, but merely quaint to the general reader now.

The First Book.

And when all is said and done, with them all for the moment, what are they but reflections, what original is outside calling? No man can take me so well what a field of buttercups looks like as the field itself, when the sun is out. That fine tonic air of the countryside, flavoured with earth and blossom, and the sunbeams, is absorbed headily with the sunbeam, is absorbed abundantly and freely (as yet it is) in great, green chalcids that sparkle with gold, or in wild flowers set out of their faces. Drink deeply and long; it is wine that strengthens, that makes heart and mind bigger, and cleans body and soul.

TORY FAILURE.

MR. ALEXANDER'S TRENCANT CRITICISM OF GOVERNMENT INACTION.

Mr. A. V. Alexander, M.P., has spoken in the House of Commons on many occasions recently, and it is impossible to give the full details of his many speeches in a monthly journal of this kind. We print below some extracts from Mr. Alexander's speech on the Board of Trade note. During this discussion Mr. Alexander criticised the inaction of this particular department in furthering the development of British industry. After drawing attention to the very serious position in leaving an adverse balance of trade against us, Mr. Alexander said:—

Danger of Capitalist Combinations.

"We on this side have pointed out frequently that the inevitable result of the working of the capitalist system, sooner or later, would be that those who have always been the protagonists of the competitive individualist system would be forced to see that competition was bound to fail, and that a great effort would be made in the direction of forming amalgamations in industry. We are that while there is a great deal to be said for the securing of the economies which are possible and the increased efficiency which may be achieved by the elimination of competition, and the strengthening of trade combinations, there is also very great danger to the whole community, if the Government do not keep a proper watch on these developments. If the Government do not, by administrative or other action, apply the necessary remedies the ultimate effect will

be not to improve, as we on this side desire to see them improved, the avenues of employment, the general standard of life of the workers, and the position of the community in general, but will be to create special advantages for those who are enabled, by means of the ownership of capital—and owned by them, although controlled in amalgamated and combined concerns—to secure far too large profits at the expense of the community. This matter is difficult to handle in the Committee of Supply, because it is not possible to suggest to the representatives of the Government what legislative action ought to be taken. I think, however, we are quite in order in drawing attention to the failure of the Board of Trade, under the administration of the right hon. gentleman, to take advantage of current discussions in Parliament upon legislation. I think we are entitled to comment upon the attitude of these at the head of the department towards legislation which is passing through the House of Commons.

Powerlessness of Food Council.

"I would like to draw some attention to a point, in the administration of the Board of Trade which I think has not been mentioned before to-night. Previous occasions on which I have addressed the Committee on the Board of Trade Vote have been many, and I have usually had something to say about the operations of one of the sub-departments of the Board, and that is the work

of the Food Council. I appreciate very much the self-sacrifice and devoted attention to the subject-matter which is brought to the Food Council by many of the members of that body, and I believe that the publicity achieved with regard to certain of the matters with which they have dealt has been helpful; but I also believe that the Government have not gone anything like far enough to make it possible for the work of the Food Council to be really effective. I should have liked the representative of the department to have told us whether or not the reply of the Prime Minister in the House the other day with regard to the powers of the Food Council is to be actually implemented.

Consumption and Production.

"I close with a note about the reply of the Parliamentary Secretary to the speech made by my hon. friend, the Member for Linnithgow (Mr. Shinnell). In the course of a reasoned argument, my friend made a very strong case with regard to the relation of consumption to production. It is a point to which the Board of Trade might very well, in considering their general policy, give far more consideration than they have yet given to the matter. It is true that the Balfour Committee, in their report, make it clear that, in some of the countries in this country, we are still below the standard of efficiency in production that can be produced in evidence from other countries; but, speaking generally, it is true to say that very largely the problem of production have been solved; and, in fact, where we have still a great deal of progress to make, it is pretty certain that we shall make progress as the result of the development of our twenty years of real co-operative research work. So we may say that, generally speaking, the problems of production, if not already solved, are being rapidly solved. What we are not solving in this country, or in any of the great industrial countries of the world, is how to relate the consumption of what we produce to the constantly increasing powers of production. The Parliamentary Secretary replied in a rather jocular way to my hon. friend, and said that, of course, if you at once double the purchasing power of the working-class community in this country, you would not really help yourselves very much. In fact, you would create a kind of industrial and commercial chaos, upset the balance of industry, and begin to change about the various demands which at present exist for good in the community; but the Parliamentary Secretary must know quite well that any properly-thought-out policy and scheme which is adopted to improve the consumption of the people in relation to the increasing powers of production would not seek at once to double the purchasing power of the people. That would itself create chaos.

Co-operative Example.

"We ask that every possible step should be taken to see, first, that the existing trade of the workers should be made, as far as possible, a real wage by the elimination of profiteering; and secondly, that when you have produced in the way of wealth in goods and services by industry, you should see that the worker gets such a share of the profits that he becomes a much more highly efficient factor in the demand for goods than he is at the present time. All the Government seem to do to device schemes for the relief of this and that industry, making it more and more possible for profits to be made for those who have capital in industrial production, whether in single joint-stock companies or in actual amalgamations and combinations. When large profits are made, it is quite plain that they are used again and again for reinvestment in some productive plant for high powers of production, before the problem of how to sell the increasing amount of production has been solved. I will put my point again from the co-operative point of view. It will not be accepted by many of the industrialists in the House, and by many of those who deal with finance in industry. We believe that some return on capital is necessary in order that you may replace wasted assets, and in order that you may provide for further capital development; but,

(Continued at foot of next column.)

Sheffield Co-operator.

JULY, 1928.

CO-OPERATORS' DAY.

On Saturday, July 7th, co-operators throughout the world will again be demonstrating not only the fact of their great economic achievements, but also setting before the people the highest ideal for any and every community—a complete and world-wide Commonwealth. Since the inauguration of "the day" more and more societies and more and more countries, under the auspices of the International Co-operative Alliance, have taken part in the celebration. The effect of which has been to demonstrate throughout the world that there is no reason why barriers of creed, colour, or religion should prevent our working together in our trading, commercial, and general relationships, on the principle of "All for Each, and Each for All."

Co-operators throughout the world are agreed that the root cause of national rivalry and war is the spirit of individualism and profit seeking. They believe that the remedy for this, for national and international rivalries, provides in itself the strongest hope for the betterment of human life and the strongest guarantee of international peace. It is to the end that this idea should be propagated wider and still wider that co-operators throughout this and other countries will demonstrate on July 7th. To the end that this idea should be heard to join in their rejoicings at Graves Park, where, given a fine day, it is hoped thousands of members and even non-co-operators will be invited to hear again a message of hope for the workers from the lips of well-known speakers. All our readers are given a cordial invitation.

[Continued from previous column.]

taking the longer years of experience which have been gained by us, although I agree what we probably produce to a rather more certain market than is the case with some other productive factories, we have proved conclusively that even the co-operative wage-setter in production, a return of capital employed in industry 5 per cent. cumulative, introduced in return. 'Free of Income Tax?')

The Real Remedy for Unemployment.

Mr. Alexander, continuing: "The hon. member falls quickly into error. There is no share in co-operative capital which is free from income tax. All members of co-operative societies who are themselves liable for income tax are liable for it on their share capital. The point which I want to make is that over a long period of years we have proved that we can get all the capital required to cover the two primary things of replacing wasting assets and providing capital for further industrial development. We can, for example, return 5 per cent., using the whole of the rest of the balance on productive industry for increasing the purchasing power of the consumer. We believe that, under any system of co-operation introduced into our general industry in this country in which we could really relate the powers of production to the actual consuming powers of the population, we should not only finally improve production, but we should practically do away with unemployment. There is no other cure for unemployment but that. It is absolutely vital in this country, and yet I welcome the fact, which was mentioned by the President of the Board of Trade, that to-day the home market of this country is of very vital importance. But if that be so, the purchasing power of the people is of vital importance, and it is because the purchasing power of the people is kept so little in relation to the total wealth produced by productive industry, that our home market is not such a good factor as it ought to be. It is from that point of view that I think that the Board of Trade are lacking in constructive policy, and that we have decided to-night to raise this question with the Government."

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FACTS FOR CO-OPERATORS.

WHY WE ARE IN POLITICS.

FURTHER EVIDENCE IN FAVOUR OF THE CO-OPERATIVE PARTY.

(I.) Proprietary Articles Traders' Association.

"His association now controls" nearly 8,000 proprietary articles, and its practice is to refuse supplies to co-operative societies unless they agree (a) to give no dividend on the sale of such articles, or (b) to add to the fixed price the amount of the dividend. Congress called the attention of the Government to this matter by a resolution in 1920, which demanded the introduction of legislation to abolish the abuse. Since then no one has attempted in Parliament to deal with the general question of such rings and close corporations except the Co-operative Members' Bill of 1925 and the Labour Government's Building Rings' Bill in 1924. Neither could be passed into law without more consumers' representatives. Yet there is abundant evidence that our dominions recognise the menace of such combinations by their legislative and administrative action.

Canada passed in 1923 a Combines Investigation Act, and as the result of an inquiry held under that Act, the P.A.T.A. has been declared to be an illegal organisation in that dominion.

New Zealand has passed two Acts, viz., the Board of Trade Act, 1919, and the Prevention of Profiteering Act, 1920. An inquiry into the working of the P.A.T.A. in New Zealand has been held under these Acts, and as a result it has been condemned in the Report on exactly the same grounds as in England, and the Government recommended to prevent it from operating in New Zealand.

In this country, where the action of the P.A.T.A. (according to the report under the Central Profiteering Act) "strikes at the root of the principle on which co-operative societies operate," no such legislation exists, and there is no remedy until, by political action there is an alteration in the present balance of political power.

(ii.) Photographic Manufacturers and Dealers' Association.

This is a new departure in the photographic trade under which manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers, will bind themselves to deal only with members of the association. The council of the association will have the right to settle who may or may not become members of the association in the future. They are to be selected from "suitable types of traders," and in selecting them regard will be paid to the number of photographic traders already in the district. Traders urged to join the association are asked in the prospectus: "Do you want more photographic dealers in your neighbourhood? If not, here is the remedy." Obviously, there will be little consideration for co-operative societies desiring to open new photographic departments, because not only are members of the dealers also chemists and members of the P.A.T.A., but we already know that Kodak and other camera and photographic manufacturers refuse to supply us.

The Parliamentary Committee have taken a deputation to the Board of Trade on this matter, with no result, nor could any satisfactory action be brought about except when we know that the Government have steadily rejected legislation, and that the Parliamentary Secretary who received the deputation was formerly the secretary of a trade association.

(iii.) Gramophones and Records.

Equal restraint of trade, aimed against the co-operative movement, comes to the light in the case of the gramophone industry. The Columbia Gramophone Company, the Gramophone Company, the Edison Bell Company, the Parlophone Company, the Vocalion Company, and the Zonophone Company, have all agreed not to supply their products either direct or through factors to co-operative societies. The object is to maintain prices, and it is considered that the co-operative dividend constitutes a cutting of price. Yet so enormous are the profits in this business that there is an unprecedented

rush for the companies' shares, prices in some cases being quoted as much as five times to six times the real value. Yet ten to fifteen times the number of these wealthy combining companies are not determined to combine to save the be allowed to combine to save the middleman's profit, and the law allows but this to go on. There is no remedy but to amend the law by political action.

(iv.) The Press.

We talk a great deal about the menace of the capitalist Press, especially since the recent amalgamations. We propose to counteract the menace by a Co-operative and Labour Press, yet all that exists is a powerful amalgamation between the Retail Newsagents and the Stationers' Association and the Newspaper proprietors and some publishers to prevent co-operative shops from being allowed to stock any of their periodicals. In the case of *Surrey v. Smith*, it was held that it was not an illegal restraint of trade for an association to take steps to coerce wholesale newspaper distributors in order to prevent them from supplying certain retailers whom the association did not wish to be supplied. Again, it is obvious that there is no remedy, and therefore very doubtful prospects for a co-operative Press without an amendment of the law, and this can only be secured by political action.

(v.) Dividends Upon Health Insurance Prescriptions.

It may be imagined that the above cases are sufficient proof of the case for political action, but no doubt many "non-politicals" will say "get your legislative reforms through the existing parties." Which parties? Mr. Lloyd George, whilst Premier, had specific recommendations submitted to him by the Standing Committee on Trusts, and the sub-committees under the Central Profiteering Act. They were completely ignored, and of course, the fact is that it is not difficult to discover leading Liberal business men in the new Companies, Press and otherwise. There is no hope there. What of the Conservatives? It might well have been argued that we had already sufficient knowledge of the business associations of Conservatives to regard it as quite hopeless to approach a Conservative Government, but the present Government has settled

that issue by coming down definitely on the side of the exploiter against the co-operative consumer in a manner and in circumstances which can only be described as outrageous.

There are now co-operative drug departments in about 200 areas in the country and a large business is done dispensing prescriptions under the National Health Insurance Act. There is a scale payment to the chemist of 5d. per prescription, and many sections therefore give a dividend check to the member for 5d. Some three years ago the Retail Pharmacists' Union approached the Parliamentary Committee requesting that co-operative societies should drop the practice of giving drug dividends. They, of course, declined on reasoned grounds to agree to anything which was inimical to the basic principle of our movement. The Committee received the view of a prominent official of the Ministry of Health that there was nothing in the co-operative practice either morally or legally undesirable.

But on April 17th, 1928, without any further consultation, the Ministry made a regulation under the 1925 Health Insurance Act to the effect that: "A chemist shall not give promise or offer to any person any gift or reward whether by way of a share or dividend on the profits of the business or by way of discount or rebate or otherwise, so as to induce him to or in consideration of his presenting an order for drugs or appliances on a prescription form provided by the committee."

A circular issued by local insurance committees states that this has been done at the request of the Retail Pharmacists' Union. Be it remembered that these people are the principal opponents of the Proprietary Articles Traders Association, and that they have persuaded the Government to adopt the P.A.T.A. principle against co-operative societies in administering an Act of Parliament. The co-operative member fought a great fight against this legislation by regulation, but were defeated by two to one. Not a Tory voted for the co-operative societies, and only in Liberals out of forty-one. Yet there is no remedy for this matter except in the House of Commons.

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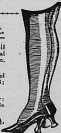
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