



# ARE RATES OUT OF DATE?

There is no doubt whatever that "The Rates" is a serious drawback to the growth of social ideas, that they prompt lukewarm supporters of a Labour and Co-operative Council to hesitate in throwing in their full weight. There is no doubt, either, that to hosts of poor householders, and to traders, they are very frequently a bugbear. Nor can it be seriously doubted that "high" rates have hampered productive industry very considerably, and do still weigh heavily on all but productive industry.

The last Government went considerably on its way to be unfairly generous to productive industry, the burden being distributed partly over other ratepayers and partly on the municipal funds. The very poor and the tradesmen have not only got no relief—they have had their burden increased! And the blame (in Sheffield, at any rate) has been placed on the Labour Council by the unthinking part of the community.

### Social Expenditure.

Let us first consider the value of social expenditure, and its highly economical nature. There are working men—and perhaps other folk, too—who would gladly bear of a six months' rest from all rates! The result of any such rest would be to startle them inside the first few weeks!

Half the schools would be closed, and half the teachers "sacked" for six months, which alone would bring about a pretty problem. In the lives of the children that six months would never be wiped out; we should have its result for a generation. Nor could we expect the teachers to take the discipline of unemployment without making trouble about it. The parks would be closed, and all corporation employees would be dismissed. The bursting ranks of the unemployed. The lamps would not be lit in the streets, the number of policemen would be reduced by half, there would be no street sweeping or cleansing, and no sanitation would slow down. Not even the dust bins would get emptied—and a fortnight of that would bring most folk to their senses. Sheffield would become a disease-ridden den of filth, and perhaps a quarter of us would die off within six months. No; the price of a reasonable chance of keeping on living is not to be had in a place like Sheffield.

We allowed all kinds of money-makers to build the worst, smallest, and most densely-packed houses for more than half-a-century, with the result that very few of us have a chance of keeping the whole town moderately healthy to be adopted.

### Cheap Services.

Our social dentitude, therefore, is an absolute necessity; but it is also relatively cheap. A man in a £10 house pays a penny a week as his household's share of the cost of public parks. If he goes over to the Isle of Man he will pay £4 for an odd afternoon for himself (nearly the price has lowered of late) in Croule Glen, where the scenery is no better than Embsay and Whitley Woods! Cheap? Why it is dirt cheap. If we had to pay for the emptying of the celebrated bins to any limited extent, there would be fifty times as many mud-trap laps, and a very much higher cost. They would make the cost 'high, to begin with, by some such nonsense as weighting our rates at each lap, and increasing the charge on us according to the weight to be removed.

If our parks were run by limited companies they would not only want to make a profit out of us, but they would make the cost higher by printing entrance tickets, and having a man at the door to take them. All these wasteful, roundabout, and hampering devices are invented by the private speculator out for profit; and are rigorously ruled out in our most essential public services, which are therefore brought down to bed-rock cost. It is no wonder that our parks, cheap as they are, are the sole holiday resorts of thousands of the population! Why, a family of five persons, have been known to have a ride on a socialised tram—for a solitary penny!—on a socialised road, to a socialised park. The tram fare alone would have driven a railway director to write in hot expostulation to "The Times": the rest of the story (if he realised it) would drive him to suicide. For the sake of making matters very clear, let us now set down all the forms of expenditure paid for socially, and not by a special and separate charge, like a tram fare.

### EXPENDITURE ON

- Education.
- Health.
- Cleaning.
- Removal of Refuse.
- Hospitals for Infectious Diseases.
- Hospitals for Tuberculous.
- Care of Mental Defectives.
- Welfare of the Blind.
- Maintenance of the Poor.
- Highways.
- Severage.
- Street Improvements.
- Libraries.
- Museums.
- Art Galleries.
- Parks.
- Fire Brigades.
- Lighting.
- Police.

Does anybody seriously suggest stopping any of the above services, and, if so, which?

### Sheffield's Civic Income.

Having set out the kinds of expenditure, we will now set down clearly the way in which we pay for the above services:—

- Income Tax.
  - Rates.
  - Grants from National Funds.
  - Profits from Trading Concerns.
- There are one or two minor sources of income, not important enough to warrant consideration seriously. As to trading profits—as nearly as possible, no profits should be made by supplying public necessities.

When we have got all we can out of the national funds, therefore, we must provide the rest out of the rates. That is, roughly, £1,500,000 a year in Sheffield, which seems a big sum, but is really ridiculously low. Half-a-million people at £3 a head! It costs them more than that for mere house-room; and houses cheap as they are!

### The Absurdity of Rating.

Now rating, as a method of raising local income, is an absurd, unjust, and entirely unjust institution. Roughly, the "annual value" of a house, a shop, an office, or a factory is the rent at which it might be supposed to let for a year. Obviously, it is only a supposition, for all kinds of irrelevant and unforeseeable things, from fashion to the state of world-trade, affect this

"annual value." A residential rate becomes a bus route, and the "annual value" of the houses in the road goes down! A plot of land opposite new houses is unexpectedly taken to a public park, and the "annual value" of the houses goes up! Yet supposing "annual value" was able to be correctly determined and stabilised, its absurdity for the purpose of assessing a tax is beyond belief.

Even when the assessment is made, it is an *measure of the taxpayer's ability to pay*. Let us take one or two examples. A newly-married man and his wife usually require but a small house, but when they have a couple of children something larger is required to secure equal health and comfort. Yet a larger house necessarily means more rates! Trade union wages do not increase because of this; and just at the time when a man needs more income he actually gets less, because Sheffield wages more out of him for rates! That in itself should seal the doom of the rating system for ever—and will do when the people wake up to it.

### Trader and Professional Man.

A shopkeeper in a popular street is rated high—because his rates march along with his high rent. Compare this with the lawyer, or moneylender, or doctor, who requires a relatively low-rented office or surgery, and who, therefore, pays but little rates. Yet the shopkeeper's actual income may be very low—he may, in fact, be making a loss, while the professional man's income can run into the thousands. Here again is a flagrant inequality. Their contribution to Sheffield's exchequer bears no sort of relation to the money they make in Sheffield.

A few years ago an elderly Sheffield man died and left £1,750,000. He had preferred to live in an old house in a poor district, and paid only as much in rates as many do with £500 a year!

### The Proper Way.

There is only one true test of capacity to pay, and that is actual income with due allowance for dependents. Many well-to-do and very rich people in Sheffield do not occupy a fair and proportionate contribution to the city funds because they pay as tenants instead of as receivers of income. All the working class are taxed too much by far in proportion of their income. Generally speaking, shopkeepers pay too much and professional men too little. Every shopkeeper receives his rates from his customers in the price he gets for his goods; so that, as purchasers, the poor pay still more rates.

Every cooperative scheme (one which makes no profits, but distributes its surplus as dividend), their premises in Sheffield pay £45,000 a year in rates, all of which is a reduction of the amount available for dividend, and therefore a further loss to their members!

In view of these facts it is time we had a more equitable inquiry into the preparatory to the establishment of a more reasonable method than rating.

A municipal income tax, a regional income tax, or an unburdened addition to the national income tax for purely local purposes ought to be inquired into with a view to applying whichever of these was considered most suitable. It is true they have been the subject of

inquiry on earlier occasions, but we have now the tremendous burden of rates on the backs of the poor, and on the shopkeepers as a body. Circumstances have altered; a rating system which was confederate imperfect, blighted by a great difficulty in procedure, has now become an obstacle to progress. In addition, notions on taxation have changed; we begin to demand a larger measure of fairness in our civic affairs, and to ask that they may be charged according to our capacity to pay. There is only one way in which we can satisfy these needs—income must become the basis of our local contributions, and rating must follow the health tax and the window tax into oblivion.

In Mr. E. D. Simon's book, "A City Council from Within" (1926), he gives the following remarkable table, showing average income per annum at various levels, and the percentage of that income paid as the average, as income tax, and as rates. The table refers to Manchester, and shows clearly that rates cause the poor to pay too much, and the rich too little:—

Income per annum	Percentage of total income	Percentage of total income	Percentage of total income
£100	21.13	21.13	21.13
200	19.17	19.17	19.17
300	18.18	18.18	18.18
400	17.19	17.19	17.19
500	16.20	16.20	16.20
600	15.21	15.21	15.21
700	14.22	14.22	14.22
800	13.23	13.23	13.23
900	12.24	12.24	12.24
1,000	11.25	11.25	11.25
1,100	10.26	10.26	10.26
1,200	9.27	9.27	9.27
1,300	8.28	8.28	8.28
1,400	7.29	7.29	7.29
1,500	6.30	6.30	6.30
1,600	5.31	5.31	5.31
1,700	4.32	4.32	4.32
1,800	3.33	3.33	3.33
1,900	2.34	2.34	2.34
2,000	1.35	1.35	1.35
2,100	0.36	0.36	0.36
2,200	0.37	0.37	0.37
2,300	0.38	0.38	0.38
2,400	0.39	0.39	0.39
2,500	0.40	0.40	0.40
2,600	0.41	0.41	0.41
2,700	0.42	0.42	0.42
2,800	0.43	0.43	0.43
2,900	0.44	0.44	0.44
3,000	0.45	0.45	0.45

Clearly, at the very least, the percentages in the middle column ought to apply the other way up! For the sake of any Liberals who may read this, the following quotation from Mr. Simon's book should be added: "The only complaint that could be made about the Manchester Finance Committee to-day is... that it accepts the present rating system as if it were heaven-sent and unalterable." Sheffield, happily, is not so bad as that.

### A Word to All.

If any reader of this article has objections to raise, let him write to the Editor, where they will be dealt with in the next issue. And should Mr. Current Topics bring out some long-died but still-unnecessary argument on the matter, see to it that you are present. He has chosen his own spot to be stung by.

### THE "SHEFFIELD TELEGRAM" AND MR. ALEXANDER.

THE following appeared in the "London Letter" of the "Sheffield Telegraph," July 26th:—

"Alexander is the most dangerous, a front bench Conservative able to me this afternoon, in discussing the qualities of Socialist Ministers as revealed during the long session which is now closing. He did not mean that Mr. Alexander had been the most dangerous opponent of the Opposition during that session. He was thinking of the future. He had a broken-down, boundless efficiency coupled with addressness and good temper of the First Lord would do more to save the Socialist Party from wreck, or to bring in for a Conservative case than the woefully-minded idealism of the Prime Minister or the better obstinacy of Mr. Snowden."

# AT THE CITY COUNCIL.

BY ALDERMAN A. BARTON.

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## "OUR CIRCLE" MONTHLY - ONE PENNY

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At the meeting of August 6th, the new "Progressive" Party which is also the old reactionary party, were very much in evidence.

**Ambulance.**  
Councillor Turner endeavored to take up the rôle of sympathiser with the poor on a proposal to increase the charge for ambulances in case of accidents in the West Riding and Derbyshire from 1s. to 1s. 6d. a mile, but Alderman Humberstone pointed out that those who could not pay were not charged at all, and that it simply referred to those who could pay and to public bodies, and that as a matter of fact it was simply bringing the price up to what Sheffield had had to pay to keep the system financially sound.

**Markets Superintendent.**  
Councillor Hunter moved an amendment that instead of the present Superintendent of the Abattoirs being appointed to control the Markets, that a separate Markets Superintendent be appointed. He maintained that they were entirely different kinds of jobs. Alderman Marshall pointed out that in many ways the work was similar, and that they had no desire to create another salaried post.

Alderman Blanchard sneered at the fact that the Markets and Abattoirs were not making a profit, but as Alderman Watkins pointed out, it was admitted by all parties that the Abattoirs were erected mainly for health reasons, and that it was expected they would make a loss, at any rate for a time.

## The New Central Library. Objections to City Architect's Honorary Appointment.

Alderman Barton had a warm time in replying to questions about his minutes. Councillor Milner moved an amendment to the proposal to give two sums of £500 to the City Architect for his work in designing the Central Library and Art Gallery. He finished up with "I only wish I had the literary ability and I would outline the greatest poet in the Chamber on such matters as this." Not only is he lacking in literary ability but even in the common courtesy of mentioning that Alderman Blanchard on behalf of the Citizen's Party had agreed beforehand that they would accept the proposition.

Alderman Graves made a good reply. He pointed out that the designing of especially grand buildings was not in the day's work of any city architect, and the Opposition had recognised it when they gave to the Abattoirs. There had been an enormous extension of work in his department which had been done very satisfactorily. But this was a special job demanding special abilities. If the City Architect had not gone out of his ordinary way to do it, it would have cost the city about £7,000, and the £1,000 was only 1 per cent. instead of the 6 per cent. he should have had to pay. "I hope we will do the honourable thing and not carp and be mean-spirited," he concluded.

The amendment was lost by 44 to 24. It is strange that the people who just before were arguing for a new official for the Markets should suddenly pretend to be desirous of saving the ratepayers £5,000. The architects, who are a well-organised body of specially skilled people have not looked with favour on the City Architect designing even such buildings as the Markets, and the Fire Station, &c., but specially so on such a building as the proposed Central Library and Art Gallery, which is necessarily a more important building in point of design than ordinary municipal buildings, and any other municipally would have put it out to competition at a cost to the ratepayers of about £5,000. So that the payment of £1,000 means a saving to the City of £4,000. The real objection was not to the honorarium, but to doing the job by our own architect instead of letting it go to private competition. Unfortunately, the opposition Press carefully advertised the fact that we are paying £1,000, but forget to say what the city is saving on the transaction.

## A Breeze About Direct Labour.

Once more the Lamentics came in for a. In reply to questions Alderman Barton stated that tenders had varied from £81,977 to £99,430; that the estimate of the Direct Labour Department was £86 above the lowest tender, but that such a small amount would easily be made up on the savings effected by the possibility of working more conveniently with our own separate staff.

"It is very pleasant to private enterprise," said Alderman Harold Jackson.

Alderman Smith made a witty speech in which he dealt with Direct Labour as it affected the schools, showing that they had saved money and got better work from our own department.

**Fifth Park Library.**  
Alderman Barton referred to the new Fifth Park Library, and pointed out that no less than 16,566 books had been issued in the nine days since opening, an average of 1,741 per day, and of this total 4,354 were non-fiction books. Alderman Graves said he had visited the Library and was surprised and delighted to find such a beautiful building, so suitable and well-designed and so appreciated by the people of the district.

**Unemployment Schemes.**  
Alderman Blanchard criticised the Unemployment schemes which the Finance Committee had put forward. When they were in power, he said, 2,000 people were employed in relief schemes. Then he criticised "extravagance," in other words the spending of money. How the unemployed can be found employment without the spending of money he didn't say.

Alderman Barton pointed out that the Labour Party had done their best for the unemployed by spending money on useful work, which was of permanent benefit to the city. As a proof of what they had done, there were 2,500 extra men permanently employed by the Corporation, which was considerably more than the citizens had ever employed on temporary work.

## Hospitals and the Penny-in-the-Pound Scheme.

In a previous issue I regret that I gave a wrong impression. I said that all the hospitals in future would be open contributors to the penny-in-the-pound scheme. As a matter of fact the proposal was made to the Hospitals Council, and L. J. H. others, expected they would jump on the suggestion. I am sorry to say that the Voluntary Hospitals have refused to alter their arrangements, so that the municipal hospital is still compelled to charge for maintenance any extra contributors to get a portion refunded by the Hospitals Council. It is a great pity the voluntary hospitals should act in this manner. The City Council reaffirmed their former position that the Hospitals Council should pay a sum to the Corporation out of the fund in return for the penny-in-the-pound contributions. I hope contributors will take up this matter with the Hospitals Council.

## Lighting Improvement.

Councillor Garnett called attention to the improvement of lighting in the city since the time, when, to quote Councillor Asbury, Sheffield streets "degraded for their lighting on the road fish shops." Sheffield was now, thanks to our efficient Lighting Inspector, Mr. Colquhoun, one of the best-lighted cities in the country.

## Maternity Hospital Annex.

It was agreed to spend £2,585 on the annex for Nether Edge Maternity Hospital.

## Landlords' Improvements.

The law allows landlords to charge an increase of rent amounting to 8 per cent. on the money spent on structural improvements such as conveniences, &c. I thought to stop this, Councilor Asbury moved a resolution, and pleaded for the poor property owner. Councilor Asbury had evaded their responsibilities. The amendment was supported by the "Progressive" Party, but lost by 35 to 13.

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## ASHFIELD BRAND HOSIERY AND UNDERWEAR

**CO-OPERATION AND THE "DAILY EXPRESS."**

"Express" Off the Rails.  
THE aid of the Press has been enlisted in another attack on co-operative societies, the continued success and expansion of Co-operation having aroused the animosity of the supporters of private trade. The "Daily Express," for example, in a recent leader, was roused to fury because a political publication of the London Society had the temerity to criticise capitalist trade and commerce, or what the "Express" preferred to call "legitimate" trade. The old fable that co-operative societies "pay no income tax" was trotted out once more, and, with deplorable lack of logic, the "Daily Express" declared the alleged exemption from income tax was responsible for the Co-operative Movement spending money on political action and propaganda. It would be truer to say that attempts to impose unjust taxation on co-operators has been largely responsible for the entrance of the Co-operative Movement into the active field of politics.

**Straight Questions.**  
The mis-statements in the "Daily Express" regarding income tax provoked an immediate reply in the form of a letter from Mr. R. A. Palmer, (general secretary of the Co-operative Union), and as the "Daily Express" have not seen fit to publish the letter in its entirety, we take the opportunity of doing so here:—

July 26th, 1930.  
"The Editor, 'Daily Express.'  
"Sir,—There are certain mis-statements in your Friday's leader—"This Co-operative Robbishi"—regarding co-operative societies and income tax, which call for correction. As regards the attack on the policy outlined in the publications of the London Co-operative Society's Political Committee, we can leave that body to speak for itself.  
"But the Co-operative Union cannot allow to pass unchallenged the inference that co-operative societies are not 'legitimate' businesses. Co-operative

societies pay considerable sums in income tax upon their properties, and no co-operator by virtue of his membership of a co-operative society is exempt from payment of one penny of income tax which he would normally be required to pay. Most co-operators' incomes are below the taxable limit. Does the 'Daily Express' propose to impose upon the small and legally limited savings of these people a special tax which cannot be applied to them as individuals?

"Co-operative 'profits' are not profits at all, but the surplus arising from mutually pooled trade. Co-operative stores are owned by the people who trade therein, the share holding being legally limited to £200. Successive Chancellors of the Exchequer of all parties, special committees, and Royal Commissions have agreed that co-operative societies are escaping no legitimate taxation. Chancellors of the Exchequer are aware, too, that any attempt to tax co-operative societies would yield no return, for the vast majority of co-operators below the tax-paying level could immediately claim repayment of income tax deducted from their share of the surplus.

"The 'Daily Express' should be more explicit. Does it stand for the special taxation of co-operative societies, taxation which would be nothing else than unjust taxation of thrifty people who trade in the most economical fashion open to them? Income tax in essence is a tax on profits. Does the 'Daily Express' propose that co-operative societies should be taxed for not making profit?—Yours faithfully,  
R. A. PALMER,  
General Secretary."

The real reason why private traders and their protagonists desire to hampering the Co-operative Movement by special taxation is because co-operative trading progressively increases the freedom of the consumer from commercial exploitation. The private trader makes profits from the consumer, whereas co-operative societies are designed specifically to return any surplus arising from mutual trade to the consumer in proportion to the amount of purchases.

**THE MUCKRAKERS.**

A PARABLE OF 1930.

By E. FRENCH.

ONCE upon a time there was a clever and industrious people who lived in a land which was very fertile, and had great stores of precious minerals. They toiled hard six days each week, and on the Sabbath day they rested, and in their temples they sang "Work for the night is coming."

By their toil of hand and brain they invented wonderful machines and produced a great abundance of good things. They spanned the country with their ways of iron, the seas with their ships, and the air with their flying vessels. Great was the produce of their hands, and in their midst the stream of wealth flowed wide and strong.

And their wealth became not a blessing, but a curse unto them.  
Then some amongst them cried, "Why is there so much poverty in the midst of plenty?" And those who were in authority answered, "It is because too much has been produced." And they replied, "It is wail. Let us then share in this abundance." But they were forbidden so to do.

They cried out again that they might be fed and clothed, and the rulers answered them saying, "Ye must work harder, and from sunrise until sunset." And they replied, "Shall we not then produce more, and our state be made worse?" And it was so.

Then said their masters, "It is because ye do not send the mighty works of your hands to far countries." And they replied, "What shall it profit us if we send into a far land that of which we ourselves are in need?"  
Therefore were they greatly perplexed, for the number of them who might look upon, but not consume, that which they had produced waxed exceedingly.

Now in that day there arose one amongst them who said unto them, "Do you not see what is wrong?" And they answered him, "Nay, it is a

problem. Our wise men are confused in their counsels, and can show us no way of salvation."

And he made answer, "Yes, many there be who talk, many there be who write, but few there be who think. Ye have eyes and ye see not, brains and ye think not. Can ye not read the signs of the times?" And with one voice they replied, "We want not to read, we want not to think. We want work."

Then stood he up in their midst and cried, "Oho, blind and foolish and selfish generations! Have ye not read in the most ancient writings that work was sent as a curse and a punishment? In the beginning your fathers sinned, and for their transgression they were condemned to work until their brows did sweat. Why do ye ask for more punishment?" And they answered him, "Say on."

And he said, "Know ye not that the days of the curse are passing? For ages did your fathers toil, but the earth gave to them small reward, nor had they rest from their labours. Of nothing had they sufficient, except work. Then were the eyes of your fathers opened, and they saw a way of escape from the curse. The way led through invention, science, machinery, power, and organisation to wealth and plenty. Now is the age of toil and woe ended. Wealth is now no more a fountain sealed. Drink deep. Then shall ye build Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land."

And some that heard him marvelled, and many laughed. And a few trembled, for they had great possessions. But none understood the things whereof he spoke.

The Workers' Educational Trade Union Committee have arranged a one-day school to be held in the Hartshead Schoolroom on Saturday, September 13th, when Mr. J. Roper, B.Litt., will deliver two lectures, at 3.15 and 6.15 p.m., on "The State in Relation to Big Business." The secretary, Jas. W. Staniland, 60, Moorview-road, Woodcotes, will forward particulars to anyone interested.



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The fruits of summer will soon be gone. Make plums and Shredded Wheat a standard dish just now and see how everybody likes it and benefits in health.

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CO-OPERATIVE NOTES.

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A few minutes in our Department will convince you that never before has such Smartness, Comfort, and Quality been offered.

The Longley and Norwood Co-operative Party are reopening their winter season with tea and social, to be held in the Guild-room (over the Co-operative Store), Southley-avenue, tickets—(price 6d.) Tea at 4-30 p.m., obtainable from Mrs. Allen (secretary, Women's Section), 6, Everington-road. Social at 7-30 p.m. An excellent musical programme has been arranged. Councillor J. A. Longley (chairman of the Sheffield Co-operative Party) will preside.

The committee are fixing up their winter programme as follows—  
First Wednesday: Mock Event, Play-Reading, &c.  
Second Wednesday: Business Meeting and Council Report.  
Third Wednesday: Speaker, Lecture, and Discussion.  
Fourth Wednesday: Social Evening.  
When there are five Wednesdays in the month, concert, whist, or partner drive will be held.

In addition to this weekly programme arranged for three concerts in Longley Council School, the first to take place on Monday, October 20th. The "Sharrow Melody Minstrel's" engaged for October 20th, Miss Poppleton's Dancing Troupe is booked for one date, and the Don Amateurs are to pay a repeat visit. Admission to these concerts 6d.; children, 3d.

The Junior Co-operative Party is forming a new section at the Longley Estate. Meetings will be held every Monday in the guild-room at 8 p.m. A meeting for the appointment of officers and committee will be held in the near future.

The members of the Neepsod Co-operative Institute held their annual meeting on August 20th, under the chairmanship of Councillor F. W. R. Stokes (the president). Mr. C. Sell (the secretary) gave an encouraging report of the year's work. Mr. A. Ballard (the auditor) gave the financial statement, which showed a substantial profit. Councillor Stokes was re-elected president, Mr. Sell secretary, and Mr. A. Ballard auditor.

The Neepsod Co-operative Party have continued their ward meetings during the summer months. Councillor A. Robinson gave the report to the July meeting, whilst Alderman T. H. Watkins reported the August Council meeting. There was a good attendance of members on both occasions.

The Cycling Club has increased in membership, and has enjoyed many fine runs during the last two months—July 13th, Dorevald; 20th, Torkesey; 27th, Youlgrave; August 3rd, Cresswell and Welbeck; 10th, Duxton; 17th, Retford; 24th, Denby Dale. Secretary, Mr. L. Boines, 142, Harvest-lane.

The first annual Flower Show of the Hillsborough Co-operative Party was held at the Institute on Saturday, July 20th, when the Rt. Hon. A. V. Alexander, M.P., First Lord of the Admiralty, opened the proceedings, outlining the work of the Government during the past twelve months. Alderman T. H. Watkins and Councillor R. E. Jones, J.P., were also present. In the evening a largely-attended dance was held.

The Hillsborough Women's Section held their final meeting before the summer vacation on July 21st, when Miss L. Harford (secretary, Sheffield Council of Social Service) gave an interesting address outlining the work of the Unemployed Allotments Committee and the general service rendered to the poorer people by the Council of Social Service. Miss Harford instanced the establishment of the coffee van for the out-patients of the Royal Infirmary which had led to the opening of excellent work accomplished at the Boys' Hall at Hillsborough was also discussed. The club had a membership of 300, and the boys were taught the arts than to rely upon charity. The free legal advice and the general helpfulness of the Council were shown to be the means by which their need for assisting of money, rather than by the

About eighty guild members attended a one-day school held at the Chequer Chess Hotel, Castleton, on Sunday, August 22nd, when Mr. J. H. Hughes delivered two lectures—"The Co-operation and Rationalisation." An excursion to Baxton was organised for the afternoon, special busses having been arranged from Sheffield for the students, whilst about thirty or forty travelled by train via Hope.

The Brightside and Carbrook Educational Committee have arranged classes for the employees in English, arithmetic, elementary "business methods," bookkeeping, shop practices and credit, millinery, salesmanship, display, and window dressing. The Educational Committee invited the students to a social evening at the Cutlers' Hall on Monday, August 23rd. Alderman T. H. Watkins (member of the board of management) distributed the certificates to the successful students. Mr. A. Ballard (president of the committee) took the chair, and gave a short address. Afterwards a successful dance was held, music being provided by the Comrades' Dance Band.

Although August is the holiday-makers' month, the Hillsborough Comrades' Circle reports well attended meetings. During the month an address on "Esperanto" was given by F. Young, and an address on "Amalgamation of the Two Sheffield Co-operative Societies" by Mr. A. Ballard. A debate one evening on "The Better Road" was given by Mr. J. H. Hughes. Transport is Better Than Rail proved by the discussion that road transport was the better.

NO DEPRESSION IN THE CO-OP.

SHEFFIELD SOCIETIES STILL INCREASING IN TRADE AND MEMBERSHIP.

The half-year's sales of the Sheffield and Ecclesall Co-operative Society total £556,551, and when added to the previous half-year's trade represents a total of £1,100,000 for fifty-three weeks. Comparing this proportionately with the fifty-two weeks of a year ago, the increase represents £58,586. This is spite of the fact that there has been a fall in prices of the chief commodities. The membership has also increased to 43,659, there having been added 5,473 new members during the fifty-three weeks under review. Increases are also shown in the trading club, pass-book depositors, and share capital.

The society announces the opening shortly of the new dairy at Hillsborough, from which will be sold bottled pasteurized milk on a much larger scale. In spite of the continuance of the industrial depression in Sheffield, the Brightside and Carbrook Society report continued progress. The sales for the half-year ending July 30th, 1920, amounted to £783,850, an increase of £38,855 when compared with the corresponding period of last year. The turnover for the twelve months ending July was £1,288,453, representing an increase on the previous year of £138,768. The amount standing in the credit of shareholders has been increased by £24,200 during the year. There has been an increase in the amount deposited through the penny savings clothing club, and the 3 1/2d. club.

The society has decided to dividend of 1s. 8d. in the pound on purchases for the half-year, after purchases interest and depreciation amounting to £21,350, special depreciation of £1,500, and carrying forward a balance of £1,326 to the next half-year.

The directors report prospective developments on several of the Corporation's estates in other directions. The popular fashion garments manufactured by the City Stores have been so successful in the past that they are to be repeated with some slight modifications. The next mannequin display will be showing the Autumn fashions, to be held on September 10th, 11th, and 12th, at the City Stores. See our advertisement columns.

Sheffield and Ecclesall Co-operative Society Limited.

**COAL DEPARTMENT**

These are the prices, at time of going to press, of our leading line. It is more than likely that Colliery advances will take place before publication.

SUPERIOR QUALITY.

Delivered Free. **33/-** Per Ton.

If compelled to raise retail prices, customers are assured that the advance will be only such as will make our prices competitive, and our values, as always, UNBEATABLE.

BAG COAL

Per cwt. Extra out boundary. **1/7½**

**DEPOTS**

Queen's Road and Heeley Stations :

**C** Latest Prices on application at all Grocery Stores.

**Sheffield Cooperator.**

SEPTEMBER, 1930.

**THE "PROGRESSIVE" PARTY.**

THE so-called "Progressive" Party in Sheffield has had its inaugural meeting, much to the amusement of Sheffielders, who have been watching the antics of its personnel for some time. There is a familiar ring about the names of the officials. We believe that Alderman Blanchard's name has been used before in connection with the Liberal Party, then the "Citizens' Party, now the "Progressive" Party. It would appear that the element of consistency is not to be a feature at least of the officials of this organisation! Then Sir Charles Clifford, whose periodic appearances as a Conservative, or Unionist, and even as a "Citizen" could be quite understood and appreciated, but Sir Charles Clifford as a "Progressive" takes a bit of swallowing. The resolution establishing this old gang with a new name was seconded by Alderman Ernest Wilson, who it will be remembered previously resigned because Alderman Jackson had been put forward as Lord Mayor, but who has now been induced back into the fold presumably by the term "progressive"! The lion is to lie down with the lamb in spite of the very popular choice of Alderman Jackson as the next Lord Mayor. Councillor L. N. Ledingham, a well-known reactionary has also joined the "Progressive" Council. W. J. Hunter, who was appointed treasurer, is another excellent example of "progress." Major Whittaker (Conservative organiser) is to be one of the joint secretaries of this new "non-political" body. This is perhaps the best joke of all. An entire stranger to the city appointed for the obvious and ostensible purpose of running a purely political organisation, and that in the Conservative interest, to act as secretary for a "progressive" party and a "non-political" organisation is really good!

We shall have the usual slogan that the new party represents ALL classes, but writing with a full knowledge of the Co-operative and Labour Movement, we can assert that not a single direct representative of the working-classes has been asked to join this organisation, or has been consulted in any way in its formation. There has been no democratic vote taken, no ballot, but a series of hole-and-corner meetings, behind-the-scenes arrangements, and, finally, a big Press show by the local Conservative paper. Where are the working-class representatives amongst the officials or the members?

What exactly do our old friends with the new name mean by the term "progressive"? Is it "progressive" to oppose every advance in education that has been made during the last few years? Is it "progressive" to oppose the giving of the Freedom of the City to democracy's great poet? Is it "progressive" to prevent the carrying of a scheme of water supply which would have given employment to hundreds of Sheffield working men? Is it "progressive" to oppose the city doing its own printing? Is it "progressive" to oppose direct labour in the production of a better class of house for the working people? Is it "progressive" to oppose a municipal council that is guaranteeing to the city a pure meat supply for the first time? In short, is it "progressive" to oppose the development of essential social services in the interests of the people? If this is what is meant by the term "progressive," then the people of Sheffield will have to revise their terminology.

But what's in a name? The old Citizens' "Ass" has already been re-labelled, and we have more confidence in the average Sheffielder than to believe that he will be misled by this new label used to cover up once more the combination of lawyers, property owners, and private traders who have misappropriated under the term "Liberal," "Conservative," and "Citizen" previously.

**SHEFFIELD ACQUIRES A GREAT PICTURE.**

A COALLEAVEY WHO BECOMES A FINE ARTIST.

It is easy to speak of great pictures. But an artist whose work has been extolled by critics and purchased for Public Galleries in Buenos Aires, Madrid, Rome, Paris, New York, and London, as well as by private purchasers, one of whom is the Prince of Wales, is certainly in the front rank of modern artists.

Benio Quinquella Martin is quite a young man. A few years ago he worked as a docker, coalleaver, and general labourer in the Boca at Buenos Aires. La Boca means the Mouth, that is the mouth of the River Plate on which Buenos Aires stands. One associates the Argentine with wide, ranging pampas and vast herds of cattle, and it is somewhat strange that from such a country should come the finest and most vivid delineations of modern industry in all its drastic power and energy. But such is the case; even the Argentine is rapidly becoming industrialised. Martin had that magic power of not merely depicting the life in which he lived, but of transferring it body and soul to the hearts and minds of men unconsciously he was a great painter.

Happy he was not doomed to waste his powers as the desert air of Buenos Aires accidentally came in contact with some of his work, and immediately realised its value. He at once took Martin out of his struggling life, gave him colours, training, and opportunity, purchased his pictures and set him on his feet, so that with the money he received for the sale of his work—the municipality of Avellanda gave him £1,000 for one of his pictures—he has been able to visit Europe, and held exhibitions in Paris, London, and other capitals.

Although acclaimed by the world, Martin is still unpolled. He is not ashamed of his fellow workers, and has consistently refused to paint pictures of ordinary landscapes, &c. He realises that his power is in vivid realisation of the industrial world, and he is content to go with that. He is not a conventional painter, that is, he suits his medium to his subject, and the thick masses of colour and the figures of men, crude in degree but giving a marvellous feeling of tremendous activity are wonderful in their impressiveness.

The chief characteristic of modern industry, of that magnificent if abstruse conquest of the forces of nature, is its dynamic energy, and dynamic energy is the very soul of Martin's work. There is only one other artist I know who comes near to his standard and that is Constantin Meunier, Belgium's greatest sculptor, and perhaps Emile Verhooren, who expressed the modern world in poetry.

Most of Martin's work deals with ships and docks, and we should have liked to have described the work of Sheffield, had they not all been sold. "Twilight in the Boca" is a magnificent conception of the bulk of a great ship, full of sombre power, just as Stron Sunbe's gives us the same impression of power, only this time with restless activity and burning light and heat.

The picture the Mappin Art Gallery has acquired for Sheffield is called "The Rolling Mill," and is perhaps specially appropriate to the city. It is a picture of which any city might be proud, and Sheffield is remarkably lucky to have gained this modern masterpiece.

It is worth everyone's while to make a journey to the Mappin Art Gallery to see this splendid work.

APART from the interest of the permanent gallery, which is always well worth looking at, the Mappin Art Gallery has every year, usually in the month of September there will be an exhibition of works by the Sheffield Society of Artists, which is always worth viewing. Sheffield has produced and has many fine artists, though it is unfortunate to have to leave the city to gain a reward for their efforts.

SHEFFIELD & ECCLESALL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY LTD.

**DECORATING DEPARTMENT, CEMETERY (325) ROAD.**

**SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER**

**Important to House Owners**

**EXAMINE YOUR PROPERTY CAREFULLY AND REMEMBER—**

—that, once started, rot in wood quickly spreads.

—that it is useless and wasteful to paint rotten wood.

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**Reveal Your Home with SUNSET ENAMEL.**

Obtained by all Grocery Branches.

**LET us paint your property with C.W.S. WHITE LEAD PAINTS. We welcome both analytical or practical tests for purity and service.**

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OUR 30 YEARS' EXPERIENCE IN EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR WORK, and LET US QUOTE YOU NOW.

We are prepared to give a guarantee with every ounce of material we supply.



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The Newest Shades and Shapes  
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**CO-OPERATIVE NOTES**

**Deem of "Competitions."**

THE announcement of a great merger of multiple shop grocery undertakings draws attention to the helplessness of consumers who are not trading members of a co-operative society. The theory of Co-operation has always been that competition was a mischievous waste of money which might be turned to the benefit of consumers. For years the capitalists have proclaimed the virtues of competition as being essential to the maintenance of good service and reasonable prices. Now, however, even the capitalists have abandoned this pretence and adopted the idea of eliminating competition within their own ranks. They have adopted the theory of Co-operation, but not its practice, for whereas all the economies of true collective trading flow to the benefit of the member of a co-operative society, the economies of the new grocery combine merger must inevitably gravitate into the hands of the shareholders.

The vital difference between the co-operative structure and the capitalists' structure is that the former is designed to turn trading surpluses to the benefit of the consumer and the latter to make profits out of the consumer for the benefit of people whose only interest in the concern is financial.

**Great Multiple Shop Merger.**

For some time past many of the largest multiple shop concerns have practised good buying, but the terms of the projected merger provide for the complete amalgamation of the following firms, viz.:-

- International Tea Company,
- Maypole Dairy Company,
- Meadow Dairy Company,
- Home and Colonial Stores,
- Liptons Limited,
- Pearls' Dairies.

The person who trades with any of these companies will never in future be able to express disapproval of any purchase by transferring their custom to another shop, for such a change would be merely withholding money from one till of the same organisation and putting it into another.

The total nominal value of these concerns is over £12,000,000, but the market price is nearer £40,000,000. The merger is also more extensive than the mere announcement suggests, in that the companies to be amalgamated are not only controllers of a large number of subsidiary distributive and manufacturing concerns, but are themselves under control of the gigantic margarine amalgamation known as Unilever. As "The Times" says:-

This announcement really means that the International Tea Stores is being merged with the group of companies already under the control of that great industrial combination known as Unilever Limited, which controls the Home and Colonial Stores, and through it the Lipton, Maypole, Meadow, and Pearls' companies. The Meadow Dairy also holds a controlling interest in Broughs Limited, Sherry's Dairy Company, and Neale's Tea Stores. The Maypole Dairy controls the Maypole Margarine Works Limited and the Erith Oil Works Limited. The International Tea Company's Stores Limited owns a controlling interest in Kearsley and Tongue, and Ridgways Limited, and has also acquired the Star Tea Company.

**Co-operation Means Better Conditions.**

The Co-operative Movement has a conscience regarding its employees as well as the consumers who benefit through the co-operative system. At the present time a select committee of the House of Commons is investigating the hours and conditions of shop workers. One member of the select committee, Mr. Elyas J. Davies, M.P., a former Under-Secretary of the Home Office, writing in the current issue of the "Co-operative Review," says:-

What is the object of the Co-operative Movement in this inquiry? The movement can say without hesitation that a maximum forty-eight hour week is already well established for its employees, and that to legislate that maximum would not adversely affect its business in any branch of retail and wholesale trade, in fact,

a considerable proportion of co-operative trade has been done for years on much less than forty-eight hours. But it is worth noting that the total number of co-operative distributive employees is not more than 200,000 out of the total of 7,500,000.

One way in which the 200,000 co-operative employees can be increased is to concentrate purchases at co-operative stores. An amount of co-operative trade goods, so too, with the number of co-operative shop assistants employed under fair conditions of labour, would be sufficient, therefore, can help to raise the general standard of life among the country's workers by trading co-operatively. In doing so will not only extend the area of fair wages under better conditions, but also secure to himself and his family greater value for money. Only a relatively small proportion of workers' wages are spent at the co-operative store. An increase of 20, 30, or 40 per cent. of the present proportion would have an exact effect on the amount of co-operative employment.

The purchase of co-operatively produced goods has a dual effect, for it increases the number of co-operative workers in mills and factories as well as the number of people behind the counter, and is a safe estimate of this beneficial effect would be that for every new assistant behind the counter necessitated by the increased purchase of co-operative manufactures there are three new employees needed for the actual productive work.

**CHOIR FESTIVAL IN SHEFFIELD.**

THE North-Eastern Section of the Co-operative Union are holding their sixth annual Chorus of Co-operative Workers' Hall, at the Attercliffe Western Hall, at 10.15 a.m., 2.15 p.m., and 6.15 p.m. Admission 6d. each session. Dr. J. Stanton (Chatterfield) will act as adjudicator.

Up to date there are fifty-seven soloists entered and this contest will take place at the morning session. There are fourteen mixed voice quartettes, and seven male voice quartettes. Ten mixed voice choirs have entered from districts as far apart as Grimsby and Huddersfield.

**MR. ALEXANDER AT THE HILLSBOROUGH HOSPITAL FESTIVAL.**

THE Rt. Hon. A. V. ALEXANDER, M.P., First Lord of the Admiralty, was the principal speaker at the Hillsborough Hospital Festival, held at the Owlerton Football Ground on Sunday, July 27th. Mr. Louis Smith, M.P. for the Hallow Division, presided. Mr. Alexander said that although he and the chairmen may differ on many points, they were agreed on the particular method of "safeguarding" represented at that gathering, namely, safeguarding the sick. Although he had had a constant increase in the social services, there was still a great deal of humanitarian work to do, and the Joint Hospital Council for Sheffield were doing it. The best way to retain the humanitarian spirit in this work was a dovetailing of voluntary effort along with the public services.

Nine-and-a-half million pounds had been spent in 1929 on hospital treatment. This money took a good deal of raising, but it resulted in a high skill and the latest scientific discoveries being placed at the disposal of the poorest members of the community. There had been an increase in mental trouble, due to the increased stress and strain of modern life, to caring care brought about by unemployment and so on. £250,000 had been devoted to social research work in connection with the care of the mentally diseased.

We simply could not afford, as a Christian people, to neglect our responsibility in this connection. Great Britain had always led the way, but still the hospital services were inadequate to meet the growing need, and he made a special appeal to those present not only to give, but to give to the point of sacrifice in the interest of suffering humanity.



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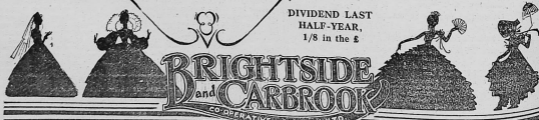
A specially attractive feature will be the Pageant of History (Period Fashions) in the history of Sheffield Castle at both morning and evening sessions.

**Q.** What to wear for Autumn, and where to buy it? Questions you may answer for yourself by visiting this our second Autumn Fashion Parade.

**A.** After the Parades Lunch or Tea in the Cafe will make a delightful finale. **ATTRACTIVE MENUS PROMPT SERVICE**

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