



GOVERNMENT'S ABJECT FAILURE.

TORIES DOMINANT.

SHIFTING THE BURDEN FROM THE RICH TO THE POOR.

BY THE RIGHT HON. A. V. ALEXANDER.

As I write this article we are within three or four days of the reassembly of Parliament. That reassembly will take place in what are surely unprecedented circumstances in our history. The National Government was returned by an overwhelming majority of the electors (misled by falsehood and misrepresentation) to deal urgently with the national economic and financial crisis and to redress the balance of trade. For three months the National Government has been deliberating as to what its policy should be. When Parliament reopens next week it will meet a situation in which the "National" Government is admittedly split from top to bottom on the question of the policy necessary to deal with precisely these problems.

TORY DOMINANCE.

We know, of course, that the Tories in the Cabinet regarded protective tariffs as the method which must be adopted, but we were informed at the election in Sheffield that the Tories had no desire to thrust tariffs down our throats. Some Liberals and one ex-Labour member of the Cabinet disagree, but stagger the world by saying that in order to assure the world that the Cabinet is essentially united on every other point they will not resign, but will continue in the Cabinet with the right to speak and vote against the protective remedy insisted upon by their Tory masters, and thus, for the first time in our Parliamentary history, the doctrine of the collective responsibility of the Cabinet is thrown overboard. The effrontery of the claim of the dissentient Ministers that their action will maintain the unity of the Cabinet in the face of the world is amazing, but will deceive no one. Rather will the hypocrisy of the situation be patent to all.

CABINET RESPONSIBILITY.

If these Ministers are honest in their opposition to the protectionist tariff policy of the Tories that opposition must be based upon the belief that a tariff policy will slowly murder British trade and prevent, instead of help, the return of prosperity. If, therefore, they are honest in their opposition to the Tories they cannot be honest in continuing to draw salaries as

Ministers in an executive Government and claiming freedom from responsibility for the executive's policy. Nor is it any use for them to argue that by staying in the Cabinet in such circumstances they may prevent worse things happening. That was the kind of argument put up when MacDonald and some of his present colleagues indicated that their adherence to the National Government plan of economy was to prevent the still worse disaster of going off the gold standard. In spite of their claim we are off the gold standard, with the purchasing power of the pound down to little more than two-thirds of its normal value in countries in which we must make large purchases. It is, of course, obvious that remaining in the Cabinet in such circumstances the opposition to the full-blooded Tory policy is bound to be half-hearted and ineffective.

DETRIMENTAL EFFECT OF TARIFFS.

Consider what we are told is likely to be the position. We have some of the gold standard, and this has been equivalent to an import duty of about 30 per cent. In addition, we have already imposed duties of about 50 per cent on a wide range of commodities. It is now understood from officially inspired statements that the Government will introduce a general tariff, with very few exceptions, of not less than 10 per cent, including taxes upon wide ranges of foodstuffs. This policy can have no real effect upon the balance of trade unless, as the Tories hope will be the case, the worker tightens his belt and produces more goods at lower prices, and even that most undesirable process would prove in the long run to be non-availing if the restriction of imports, as I think is certain, leads to a reduction of exports, a loss in shipping freights, and a reduction in our income from investments in industries overseas which have been in the habit of sending us goods.

SHIFTING THE BURDEN.

In the meantime, things appear to be going in many quarters from bad to worse. The economies effected by the

Government have had a disastrous effect upon some trades, particularly the building trade, and I have been informed this week that the operation of the Tory means that upon a destination basis has already resulted in a loss in grocery turnover of between 5 and 20 per cent. In these circumstances, the more to shift another slice of the burden of taxation on to the working-class consumer in new and widespread taxes upon food and other commodities, is going to react still further the purchasing power of the mass of our people at the very time when that purchasing power ought to be maintained at its maximum if industry and trade are to be kept going, and, if rumour is correct, the action of the Government is designing amongst other things, to secure a reduction of income tax in the next Budget.

It means, of course, as I have so often pointed out to Hillsborough electors, that the over-riding question in dealing with our post-war difficulties is "Who shall pay?" We claim that the taxation required to meet the needs of the State should be levied solely on the basis of ability to pay. The Tories, on the other hand, who are running the National Government, believe in the doctrine which is known as broadening the basis of taxation, and which will place taxes upon practically every article of food, clothing, and household requisites used by the poorest of the poor in order to relieve the burden of the taxation of the rich.

OVERTAXING CO-OPERATORS.

It is not surprising perhaps in these circumstances to find at this very moment a renewed and virulent agitation for additional taxes upon the surpluses of co-operative societies. What lies in store in that direction in the coming Budget no one, of course, can say. What is certain, however, is that co-operators will never submit to such grossly unjust proposals. Every co-operator is prepared to pay his just dues to the State. If his wages or income are sufficient he is assessed to income tax direct, and he is therefore surely entitled to spend his net taxed income in the most

economical way. Incidentally, if a co-operator's salary or income brings him within income tax limits he has to fill up an assessment form which specifically requires him to return his interest upon co-operative shares, and upon such interest he has to pay. The specious argument is now put up that surpluses distributed in discounts upon purchases might continue to be exempted from taxation, but that there is no case for the exemption from such taxation of surpluses placed in co-operative societies to receive. That would mean that whether our surpluses were taxable or not would depend not upon how they are created through our mutual principles, but to what use they are put. Such a contention can in no circumstances be accepted.

CO-OPERATORS AND POLITICS.

It is quite interesting in the circumstances to find a correspondent in the Sheffield papers raising again the old bogey of the co-operative movement and party politics. No better case could be advanced for the need for co-operative political defence than the present widespread attacks with a view to persuading the Government to raid co-operative surpluses. The suggestion made by correspondents in the Sheffield papers that participation in politics has injured co-operative trade is the biggest humbug that can possibly be imagined. Any examination of the annual returns of the Co-operative Union would show at once that taking the country as a whole and by districts the societies which have been politically affiliated during the last ten years show larger growths in membership, trade and prosperity than those who have remained outside political action. I hope at a meeting shortly to be held at our Institute to be able to support this fact in detail.

In the meantime, let all our supporters be of good heart. This Government is already proving its incapacity to deal with the situation, and revealing all the inherent weaknesses that Coalition has always produced. It cannot be very long before the country at large will realise the grave mistake it made in being so completely misled by the fraudulent methods of the General Election.

HILLSBOROUGH PARLIAMENTARY DIVISION.

THE RIGHT HON.

A. V. ALEXANDER

AND MR.

ALFRED BARNES

(Chairman, National Co-operative Party) will address PUBLIC MEETINGS on

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12th, at 8 p.m.,

In the

PYE BANK U.M.C. SCHOOL, Haywood Rd., Pitmeor Rd.
(Chairman: ALD. JAS. HAWNT) and the

WYCLIFFE HALL (Channing Street), Langsett Road.
(Chairman: OOUN. JAS. GILL.

ALL ARE WELCOME.



The Right Hon. A. V. ALEXANDER.



Mr. ALFRED BARNES.

AT THE CITY COUNCIL.

"FINEST MARKET IN COUNTRY."

ALDERMAN MARSHALL'S SPIRITED DEFENCE OF LABOUR'S ENTERPRISE.

"PROGRESSIVES" ATTEMPT TO DEFEAT TOWN PLANNING.

"We have built the finest market in the country. It is the grand standing example of the success of the Direct Labour Department in Sheffield," declared Alderman F. Marshall (Labour) at the January meeting of the City Council. And he silenced the Progressive councillors in their attempted criticism of the new Castle Hill Market with its adjacent shops and approach roads.

Alderman W. C. Fenton (Progressive) complained of a lack of information explaining the figures given in the Market Committee's report. He said the tender which was accepted of the Direct Labour Department was £35,268, and the scheme was completed at a cost of £50,869. He thought there should be an explanation of such an enormous increase.

Councillor J. Green (Progressive) said

there was no figure in the estimates to cover standard and general charges, such as would be incurred in an ordinary business.

They soon had an explanation. Alderman Marshall (the critics had ignored the committee) said the estimate for the fact that £36,268 was simply the builders' tender, and was not an estimate for the whole scheme. The estimate for the completed scheme, in January, 1928, was £445,993, and was passed by the Markets and Finance Committee and received the sanction of the Ministry of Health.

Additional financing had been obtained by the building of certain shops and separate works, including chopping blocks and refrigerators, and these were being built when the members should be in mind when discussing the report.

He contended that the report was the most complete the Council had considered in a long time. Certain "pettifoggery" little details could not be included in it, but it contained the most salient and important features. The tender of the Direct Labour Department was £3,200 lower than the next tender.

ATTEMPT TO DEFEAT TOWN PLANNING.

The minutes of the Highways and Sewerage Committee stated that Mr. C. S. Sandford (agent to the Fitzalan-Howard Estates) had interviewed the sub-committee concerning a shopping centre at the junction of Herries-road, Moonshine-lane, and the proposed new road of Herries-road on the Southey Estate. He had submitted a plan showing his proposals for shopping sites, but the sub-committee reaffirmed their previous decision not to agree to the proposal.

This brought the Progressive diards into immediate action. They alleged that in the development scheme of the estate the Council were jealous, avaricious, and adopting a dog-in-the-manger attitude.

Councillor P. J. M. Turner moved that the decision of the sub-committee be not confirmed, and said no evidence was given on behalf of the Corporation to justify their in building courses to development in an area which was ripe for it.

He suggested that the Council, because they were not getting people interested in their own shopping centre, were preventing others from building on another site, ideal for the purpose. By encouraging the development of the area they would increase the rateable value concerned.

His motion was formally seconded by Alderman H. W. Jackson (Progressive). The chairman of the committee, Alderman E. Atkin (Labour), described the amendment as an attempt to vary a town planning scheme, and said that if such a thing was allowed the end of town planning was well in sight. He said the plans were before the Council eighteen months ago, and there was an attempt to reverse the decision of the committee then.

The area mentioned was zoned as a residential one, and it would be unfair to the people in the area to erect shops there. It would also be unfair to Corporation tenants of shops in the district. They had not received any complaint

about lack of shopping facilities. Alderman W. Bancroft (Co-operative) retorted that the case as one of absolute selfishness. He contended that Councillor Turner was trying to lead the Council "up the garden path," and described the suggestions as "ridiculous." His initiative had been done to the owner of the adjoining estate, but if shops were placed where suggested they would be doing an injustice to those who had already erected premises. Councillor E. Wootensley (Labour) said he was a resident on the estate and was not enamoured of town planning. He did not believe that putting a lot of houses in one locality, without any consideration of road traffic, was town planning.

There were already numerous shops for shops in the district, but some of the shops already existing were not paying. There was only one thing that would pay there, and that was either a good club or a good pub.

The amendment was defeated by 47 votes for to 45 against.

HIGHWAYMAN GANDY?

Councillor E. Gandy (Labour) called his colleagues to laugh heartily when asked to state the amount of money wholly or partially expended, as he was I am always regarded as a highwayman, so perhaps I ought to dress the part," he said. Then he dined a highwayman's black man, but it failed to conceal his expansive mind.

To questions which had been asked concerning the assessment forms, Councillor Gandy replied that the Council were already working on the forms. There were 24,000 forms, and the total cost would be £24,000. Defining the terms "pantry" and "linter," the words were alternatives.

CITY HALL COSTS.

A resolution was moved by Councillor J. E. Bennett (Progressive) that the Finance Committee be requested to inquire into and report to the next meeting of the Council on the following items of expenditure by the City Hall Committee: (1) Excavation of the site, (2) substitution of Hopton Wood stone, £20,000; (3) asphalt tuck, £6,858.

Councillor R. H. Minshall (Labour), accepting the resolution, said he welcomed the inquiry, and he repeated his remark at the last meeting, that it was nothing to hide.

The result of a deputation to the Ministry of Labour by certain representatives members of the Council was reported by Councillor W. Abney (Labour chairman of the Public Assistance Committee), and it was decided to postpone consideration of the matter to come in line with the payment of transitional benefit to the unemployed. The committee were authorised to continue to administer the order at their discretion.

In reply to a question by Councillor F. Lloyd (Progressive), whether the manager of the Tramways Department admitted that trams interfered with wireless reception, and if so what steps were being taken to prevent such interference, Alderman A. J. Bailey (Labour) replied that the matter was being dealt with as a national question.



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would you get somebody else to make your own shoes?
Of course not!

And if you are a co-operator you are a part-owner of over a hundred factories and workshops, all producing C.W.S. articles for yourself and your fellow-co-operators—food, furniture, footwear, clothing, and many other things.

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A steaming hot breakfast — that needs no cooking



Hot milk on Shredded Wheat gives you a quick, satisfying breakfast. No cooking, no bother. Shredded Wheat, because it contains all the wheat, is healthier and sustaining, and an economical food in the truest sense of the word. For hard workers and growing children there can be nothing better. Give Shredded Wheat a good trial. Note the improvement in health which it brings to everybody, and how much further it makes housekeeping money go.

SHREDED WHEAT

The Remondini Wines Co., Ltd.,
7, Waterloo Street, Bristol.

"THE PEOPLE'S YEAR BOOK," 1932.

The outstanding feature of the year 1931, undoubtedly, has been the emergence of internationalism. Nothing is more striking as proof of this than the fact that six great nations of the world, who were allied to destroy the power of Germany a few years ago, now unite to save Germany from financial ruin.

It is not clear to all observers, more than ever, that no nation can live unto itself alone? Life is so complex to-day, and the well-being of nations so interdependent on one another, that what happens to one, be it good or ill, is bound to react on the others.

Such is the spirit of "The People's Year Book, 1932," which contains one of the most valuable series of studies of life in other countries to-day ever published. The question is asked, "Is there a higher standard of life in Europe?" The answer comes from the great economist, Mr. John A. Hobson, who analyses the situation in Great Britain; and from four other leading

native authorities who write of the hard life of the German, the awakening of France, the resurrection of Austria, and the remarkable economic progress of Sweden, while to crown all there is an amazing revelation of what is happening in the United States, by an American who knows.

Sir Leo Chiozza Money makes a searching inquiry into the cause of the world crisis, and sets it down to the wickedness of the peace treaties. The events that brought about the "political earthquake" in our own country are well sketched by Mr. R. B. Suthers.

"The People's Year Book, 1932," in addition, is the only volume in existence which gives an authoritative and detailed review of co-operative developments in Great Britain and over fifty other countries. A new feature added of great service is a well-arranged set of statistics, showing the progress of our own nation in essential respects.

The work, now in its fifteenth year, is from the Co-operative Press Agency, at 1, Ballion-street, Manchester, and sells at 3s. cloth, and 2s. stiff paper; postage extra.

JOIN THE CO-OPERATIVE PARTY: THE PARTY WITH A PLAN.

THREE AVENUES OF APPROACH.

SPEECH BY MR. A. E. WATSON (National Organizer of the Co-operative Party).

BELOW we print a speech by Mr. A. E. Watson delivered at Stoke-on-Trent, January 29th.

Mr. Watson was the first Co-operative Member of Parliament, and sat for the Kettering Division from 1918 to 1922.

The speech is an outline of the Co-operative Party's plan of reconstruction, which is detailed in a series of pamphlets, six in number, under the heading of "Britain Reborn." These may be obtained from the Sheffield Co-operative Party Office, 17, Bank-street, at 1s. the set, or 2d. per copy.

"There is no party which has yet brought forward a general policy such as is advanced in the series of 'Britain Reborn' pamphlets issued by the Co-operative Party," said Mr. Watson in his opening remarks. No interested citizen could be entirely complacent when he sees before him the world's economic existence and the whole world's economic machinery gradually being thrown into the pit of chaos and economic anarchy. Not even the experience of the aftermaths of previous wars seemed to guide the statesmen of the present day; they were joggling along with ideas that should be relegated to Queen Anne's period or the Victorian régime.

The "Financial News," the Young Commission, Lord Rothermere's Press, and the Basle Committee of financial experts urged the Governments to a policy of world economic unity and the abolition of tariff barriers. To that end the Co-operative Party was striving, and the more they examined the political development of the co-operative movement, the more they became impressed with the knowledge that the party was in a favourable position compared with others.

A Change Over.

The Co-operative Party stood for the complete transformation of society from an individualistic to a co-operative basis. With the co-operative economic system they visualised must be the ownership of essentially the material means of life, with such modifications as might be necessary to keep alive the desire for progress.

There were three avenues of approach to the common end. The first was the utilization of the machinery of the State; the second the machinery of the local authorities; and the third, the existing co-operative organisation. The machinery of State would have to be overhauled, and brought up to date, to work for the purpose in view. The Co-operative Party would work on two broad lines: on the establishment of co-operative commodity boards and the utilisation of transport and power supplies.

To secure control of the latter services, National interest "bonds" could be issued bearing a fixed rate of interest, not in excess of 5 per cent., the principle of which could be redeemed from its accumulated reserve or surplus. Such economies would give increased facilities to the services, increase the facilities to the citizens, enable a steady redemption of the bonds, and even improve the conditions of labour of the working personnel.

The Sheffield branch of the party is governed by a Central Council representing every section of the two Sheffield co-operative societies. It is organised in divisional committees, corresponding divisions of the city; in some cases into ward committees corresponding to the municipal wards of the city. Women's Sections, which meet weekly, have also been formed.

Full particulars of time and place of meetings, local secretaries' addresses, &c., will be forwarded to all applicants from the Party Office, 17, Bank-street.

The Sheffield Co-operative Party has established an individual membership scheme. Any reader wishing to join the party should fill in the form below, and membership card for the district in which applicant is resident will be forwarded by return.

To Mr. A. BALLARD, Secretary, Sheffield Co-operative Party,
17, Bank-street, Sheffield (Phone: 2392).

DEAR SIR,

I am in agreement with the principles and objects of the Co-operative Party, I wish to be enrolled as a member, for which I enclose membership fee of sixpence

Name (kindly state "Mr.," "Mrs.," or "Miss")

Full Address

An Inevitable Position.

They would all realise that unemployment under the present economic system was inevitable. Since the war capitalism had tried every conceivable method to solve the crisis, and it had tragically failed. It could no longer solve the problem of surplus and demand which had become a mechanical age. The problem required national thinking and national action. And they could get nothing with individual ownership.

The Co-operative Party was irrevocably opposed to the maintenance of a large surplus labour population. Transport schemes would absorb a large number; drainage of wasteland and the establishment of small-holding settlement on a co-operative basis would link up with the consumers' co-operative movement, would be another. These schemes were ready and ripe, and Parliament taking a part in the concern, could take full charge in the least possible time.

Agriculture.

Dealing with agriculture, Mr. Watson outlined the party's scheme for the establishment of National Co-operative Commodity Societies, which would eliminate unnecessary risk and lower the cost of distribution, negotiate terms and conditions with distributors and export agents, undertake publicity, secure effective displays of its goods, and secure and provide cheap marketing credits. All would be sold through national society on a certificate sale. Prices would be regulated by bodies of producers and consumers. One price would prevail, and the farmer selling his milk for manufacture would be compensated. The scheme would make protective tariffs and price maintenance unnecessary, and the home market would be secured for the producer by arrangement with the consumer.

An Imperial and Economic Development Council would be established with the Empire Marketing Board to bridge the gaps regarding the interchange of goods between all parts of the Empire. Home Trade Development Councils would also be formed by the Board of Trade for each industry which faces the problem of foreign goods on the home market. On this count both the retail and wholesale side would be represented, and its investigators would produce the reasons in order that the problem might be considered. In connection with this there was a need for international action on sweating, and where they found British money was producing sweated goods it could be checked.

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PEPPERGRAINS.

THERE is at present a great struggle to find new industries. According to Staines Stephen, the village undertaker is trying to anticipate later trade by the use of the slogan: "Eventually—why not now?"

Will somebody call the Government's attention to this slogan: they may decide to act on it!

The best one we have heard of up to now is the suggestion to form employment agencies.

A network of such institutions is to be formed, with many branches in every large town. Out-of-work directors and managers will be used to take charge. No matter how unskilled and lowly, every unemployed man can be used there for some purpose or other.

Some will be cleaners, others will look after the hot-water apparatus.

THE "INQUISITION" AND THE RE-VALUATION.

By COUNCILLOR E. GANDY, Chairman, Sheffield Rating Committee.

In consequence of a lead by the Press wherein much criticism has been levelled against the Form of Return issued by the Valuation Department, a brief survey of the requirements of the Rating and Valuation Act of 1925 with regard to valuation matters may be of interest to your readers.

Under the provisions of this Act all local authorities throughout the country must revalue every hereditament in their area every five years, and we in Sheffield are now preparing the second Valuation list which will come into force on April 1st, 1934.

When one realises that in this city there are about 140,000 rateable hereditaments, ranging from the largest steelworks to the smallest "little masters' workshops," from the large industrial residential areas to the smallest cottages of our workers; and in and about them all saloons of every degree, cinemas, billiard halls, public-houses, hotels, garages, offices, warehouses, &c., and situated in an area which extends from Woodhouse to Hallam Moor and from Shalgreen to Beaulieu, it must be appreciated that an easy commencement of the work of revaluation is a necessity.

The chief valuation officer, his deputy, and the staff are now busily engaged on the work of revaluing all this property, and, when the proposed assessments are completed, every hereditament will be embodied in what is called the "draft" valuation list. This "draft" list should be ready for June, 1933, when it is deposited at the Town Hall. Notices will be given in the Press that the public may inspect the list at the Valuation Department, for a period of twenty-one days. At the expiration of that time the list is sent to the Assessment Committee, who are required to lead objections made by ratepayers. In January, 1934, the Assessment Committee must approve the "draft" list and send it back to the Valuation Department where it is re-issued. In April, 1934, the new assessment becomes operative, and, even though persons may not have taken advantage of their privilege of objecting when the list was on deposit, they have the right to "propose" amendments at any time.

A Matter of Equity.

Owing to the fact that the details of the various properties in the department books have been, in the past, of a meagre character, it is necessary that a very careful survey should be made of every property in the city. The questions asked on the Return Forms give every occupier of property an opportunity of making a statement which will serve as a valuable check on our new records, thereby enabling us to attain, as near as is humanly possible, an equitable basis of assessment for all ratepayers.

Uniformity in Valuations.

I must take the opportunity, here and now, of refuting the charge that the "inquisition" has been sent out with the object of increasing valuations. In sending out of the forms and the preparation of new valuation lists is statutory. Our object first and foremost, is to create uniformity of valuation throughout the city. The importance of this word "uniformity" cannot be over-emphasised.

It means that each ratepayer will be called upon to pay the same relative share of the city's financial burdens according to the value of the premises he occupies. The amount of rate in the pound is the same for all; the total amount payable, being the rateable value, hence the equitable importance of securing an assessment or valuation throughout the city.

Removing Anomalies.

Many anomalies in assessments are being discovered and with the improved time to make proper investigations, together with ratepayers at large may be cured of the injurious valuation.

Almost all the questions we ask on the forms are embodied in the Statutory Form prescribed by the Minister of Health, and our duties as assessors shall assist us to the best of our ability in capably administering one of the most important Acts of Parliament passed in recent years.

A tenant, as distinct from an owner, is not expected to know the cost of the property he occupies nor the exact amount of land, but an owner-occupier invariably has that information on his title deeds, and with the varying cost of building during recent years and greatly varying rents, it is necessary to obtain the costs in order to arrive at a fair assessment.

Why Land is Included.

The words "cost of building" and "cost of land" mean the cost or purchase price of the premises owned. A tenant is required to answer the questions relating to rent, etc., and it is obvious that every ratepayer cannot possibly apply to all ratepayers. An owner, who is the occupier, pays no actual rent, therefore the questions as to rent do not apply in his case. A shopkeeper who holds his property on a lease answers the appropriate questions relating to his tenancy—terms, conditions, &c.

It must also be pointed out that information relating to the cost of property, etc., is almost invariably supplied to the Assessment Committee when a proposal is being heard for the amendment of the list, and in almost every case the relative costs of purchase and the period of building are used as grounds for the amendment of values.

In reply to the question as to how the area of the land affects the assessment of the whole property, it is fully obvious that an owner, purchasing a large plot of land on which to build his house, would want to know the return on his capital outlay in the form of rent, if he were to let it, then on a house without land. Rightly takes into account the cost of the land, the cost of the land, dedication, &c., and estimates the rent from the total cost incurred, just as a trader puts his percentage profit on goods he buys.

Labour's Minority Position.

In conclusion, an erroneous impression is abroad that the revaluation is being carried out at the instigation of the local Labour Party. Such statements are absurd, as the Rating Authority, are compelled to administer an Act of Parliament in accordance with the instructions of the Minister of Health.

The assessments which are now being made are all subject to the final approval of the Assessment Committee, a committee constituted of Council and social council members, with a minority of Labour representatives. The Assessment Committee's duties are not done by the Council, and they are not responsible to the City Council nor do its minutes appear on the Council agenda.

Finally, the services of the Valuation Department, very capably controlled and staffed, are at the disposal of any ratepayer who is in need of advice as to the filling in of forms, assessments, or other matters within its jurisdiction.

ADULT SCHOOL AT LONGLEY.

We understand that a branch of the Friends' Adult School has been opened in the Longley Co-operative Institute, Southey-avenue. Meetings are held every Wednesday at 7.30. Every shade of thought is afforded expression. Secretary: Wm. Gardner, 36, Southey-drive.

SHEFFIELD AND ECCLESALL CO-OPERATIVE CHORAL SOCIETY

(Under the auspices of the Parliamentary Department.)
Secretary: H. B. Hill, 24, Daniel Hill, The Arcade,
Beharalal each Monday at 7.45 in the Arcade,
Canterbury Road. - - - - - Hearty Welcome to All.

GOOD INTENTIONS.

"WHAT RUSSIA INTENDS," BY BRUCE HOPPER.
PUBLISHED BY JONATHAN CAPE.

This is a really good survey of "What Russia Intends," and can be recommended as an impartial and instructive summary.
So many people think of Russia as either the very worst place on earth or destruction; or on the other hand, consider it the best of all Utopias. Both views are wrong. It is a serious, vigorous national effort as Russia is finding parts should prompt everybody that he can on the subject. Here is one of the best books of itself.

A WORLD IN ITSELF.

Here is a little extract that is itself a revelation: "There are in the Soviet Union 182 nationalities, speaking 151 different languages or dialects. Of a total population of 147,000,000, noted in the 1926 census, 123,000,000 or some 77 per cent. are Slavs, and the rest Tartars, Georgians, Armenians, and so on, down a long list of Asiatic peoples. Less than 3,000,000 Jews live in Russia to-day. . . . Why, that is a League of Nations in itself. There must surely be hope for the United States of Europe, since people of so different language and race are intermingled in peaceful union in that shocking republican area of the East. Considering what trouble we have had with our sister island, it is a relief to find Russia doing so far more tolerable a people than we are. We used to have trouble with the Scots, and that that has naturally died down since the Scots subdued Ulster, and possessed this country. Doubters of the ultimate success of the idea of a really successful League of Nations say therefore take heart; several such leagues have been happily built up in the past, and are permanently blended in the large nations of to-day.

CONTRASTS.

If there are many people in Russia, there are also many types of scenery and climate. It extends from the frozen Arctic zone to the great forest tracts of the Black Soil (not too miles wide, and 3,000 miles long) to the sub-tropical South. Between extreme North and extreme South there is an average difference of temperature at any one time of 87 degrees. This wide range occurs in no other single country; even the United States has only a range of 46 degrees. Even at that, the variation in temperature at any one spot is beyond anything we have in this country. "There are instances recorded," says this book, "on the Khirgiz Steppe, of the mercury congeling in winter, and rising until it burst the tube in July." Again, "Much of Russia can be explained by the long winter night. In Leningrad, in winter, it is light from about half-past ten to half-past two. In summer, however, "from the roof of the Europa Hotel, Leningrad, you can see the last flicker of the sun setting to the west of Nova, and the first rays of the same sun rising to the east of North," at the same time. "After an evening of 12 minutes you come out into the fresh breeze of a new day. You travel on one of the many fine steamboats, sit round and enjoy the evening, and before you are ready to bed the sun is up and the steers are working in the fields along the banks."

RELIGION IN RUSSIA.

The following extract will no doubt be pondered by those who condemn Russia without limit: "The Moscow Church used the Church for political ends; the Church was the staunch bulwark of the autocracy right down to the end, in 1917. That should be remembered in considering the Bolsheviki hostility to the Church. "It was the Russia of "religious" times, those killed by the war, in which—of the 14,000,000 men mobilised, 12,000,000 died of wounds and disease, and 2,000,000 died of influenza, and then a further 15,000,000 cases of typhus followed by 18,000,000 cases. These were the statistics of which there was but slight knowledge in England, and even higher sympathy and assistance. In 1917, we unfortunately failed to contri-

bute to these disasters by our ill-considered invasion. It was surely a very serious and relieving thing to tackle the problem of public health, which the Bolsheviki have done to some tune.

MODERN HEALTH SERVICE.

"The health of the worker is a primary concern of the Government. And our record here is excellent. In the war there were 14,000 doctors; there are now 92,193, being some 10,000 more than last year. There were very few beds—almost double, with 400,000 closed—almost double the accommodation per head of Christ days. There are 12,000 travelling dispensaries, 250 roving medical detachments serving remote areas, and almost 10,000 maternity institutions. I myself have met Soviet doctors in the Arctic circle, 120 miles from the railway, treating the Lapps." "The facilities provided for any worker are incalculable. And if any worker is incapacitated "he receives 100 per cent. of his regular wage until he is able to return to work. He is excused from work on full pay for eight weeks before and eight weeks after his childbirth in manual labour, and for six weeks in clerical work. "All workers and employees, depending on their occupation, have two weeks' paid leave for every year, for which most of them flock to the sea-bones and health resorts which dot the Caucasus and the Crimea."

MOSCOW.

Conditions are a bit trying at times in Moscow. Housing is rather bad—but both these remarks apply to England, and even to Sheffield. "The population of Moscow jumped half-a-million within a few months. The hub of the capital city attracts 500,000 people a year as an addition to its industrial population from over Russia. There are, however, 1,282 socialised restaurants in Moscow, and almost 4,000 buffets (cafeteria type), supplying 100,000 meals a day. The service is not with hot meals. . . . The service is to be trebled this year." "The housing problem—as bad as anything we have seen—was so bad it was able, the Government began building houses for workers, and they, at least, are better off."

THE YOUNG COMMUNISTS.

"These are banded together in groups known as Komsools. They are "shock" troops, the enthusiastic missionaries of Communism. Here is a description of their activities: "If the transport is tied up, the Komsools turn out in large numbers to unload the cars. They clean up the cities. In 1927, the Government was unable to handle the homeless children, who swarmed the streets, stealing everything movable. All orders were ordered out, and within three days the streets were free of them to be seen. When the foreign visitors came for the tenth anniversary of the revolution, they were to be tucked away in monasteries and reformatories homes."

CO-OPERATORS AND INCOME TAX.

"This is a tip for our English societies. "But the co-operators do not pay dividends, but keep the profits. They maintain schools, libraries, newspapers and magazines, and conduct social work of great magnitude. "The following record as given by the writer of this book: let us look at the elements of slow progress of the elements of education of the population over the seven years of age, the following could neither read nor write:— "In 1926 (the last pre-war census), 71 per cent., males and females."

"In 1926, when for the first time in history the majority of the people could read and write, 43 per cent."

"In 1930, 39 per cent. "The abolition of illiteracy for all persons under forty-five years of age by the end of 1933." "Read this book, and get to know some of the worst and best of Russian conditions and ideas."

THE ALDERMEN.

LABOUR'S FAIR-PLAY POLICY: A HISTORIC SURVEY.

By ALDERMAN M. HUMBERSTONE, J.P.

I HAVE been invited by the editor to enlarge on my letter in the "Telegraph" of November 07, 1931, on the aldermanic question, which I willingly accept, and widely circulated that our action in 1926 was not of our seeking, but because of the arrogance and stupidity of the anti-Labour Party, and that our seat in the sand and could not—or would not—see that in time the electors would be determined to see that justice was done to the Labour Party.

I cannot do better than quote the figures given in my previous letter, and also show the effect of the Labour group (and when I speak of the group I include Co-operative representatives, as we have always acted together).

FORMATION OF LABOUR GROUP.

The Labour group was formed in November, 1929, with twelve councillors and one alderman. In 1929 there were thirteen councillors, and although the election of aldermen took place that year the anti-Labour party failed to give us another seat. In 1931, when the next election took place, we had twenty councillors, yet no seat was given to the Labour group. Our first seat was given to the Councillor Bailey was given a seat on the aldermanic bench, who was not at that time a member of the Labour group. Our classmate the seat should be given to Mr. Cecil Wilson (who was then councillor for Darnall Ward). The Council was then made up as follows:—

Anti-Labour, 15; councillors, 31, Labour, 1.

Aldermen, 2; councillors, 20.

NEGOTIATIONS WITH SIR WILLIAM CLEGG.

It was at this juncture that as secretary of the group I opened negotiations with Sir William Clegg, and pointed out that unless some arrangement was reached we should, at the first opportunity, make a clean sweep of the aldermanic bench. The correspondence was carried on for two years; the answer always being the (Sir William Clegg) was not going to do any of his friends who had been in the Council many years to stand down. I want to point out that it was not a question of anyone standing down; our request was that we should fill the vacancies as they occurred. Had the anti-Labour party agreed to that Sir William and his friend might have been in the Council to-day. As between 1920 and 1926 there were seven vacancies through deaths; had we been given our proportion of those there would have been no need for a clean sweep. All our offers were refused, and then Sir William told us that the Council meeting of February, 1926, that he would neither accept nor compromise. It was then to the voters must go the spoils." As this was a distinct challenge to the Labour Party it could do no other than accept it, and fought the election on that issue, and having got the victory it would have been a betrayal of the trust the electors had placed in us had we not taken the spoils.

ALDERMAN J. G. GRAVES.

Yet, instead of taking all the vacancies, it was decided to honour Sheffield's greatest benefactor by giving one to Councillor J. G. Graves, who had been so long overlooked because he would not be known to the electors.

The Council was then, as follows:—

Labour, 15; Aldermen, 9; councillors, 28.

Anti-Labour, 8; councillors, 35.

Can anyone challenge this as being unfair? What did we do was practise what we preached, viz. that one alderman for every three councillors, no matter to what party they belonged.

FAIR PLAY IN THE HOUR OF VICTORY.

I now come to 1930 when seven new

wards were created. (At the November election Labour secured forty-two members on the floor of the Chamber, anti-Labour 25. Again, had we been so minded we could have elected a further fifteen councillors to the aldermanic bench, and so have 'dug' ourselves in, as it were. Instead, we confined ourselves to the aldermanic bench to every three councillors, and only took seats for seven, leaving the other for the anti-Labour party to fill. I wonder what they will do if ever a similar opportunity is given to them: Will they follow our example and play the game?

The constitution of the Council after the 1926 elections was as follows:—

Labour, 16; Aldermen, 16; councillors, 47, Anti-Labour, 11.

TREATMENT OF LABOUR ON COMMITTEES.

I need hardly remind the public, also, of the treatment meted out to us in regard to committees on the Council. In 1926 the Labour group was only given thirty-seven places out of 279. On the Electric Supply, Establishment, Finance, and Parliamentary Committees, we had no representatives. Highways, Markets, Watch, Water, one seat on each was given. Tramways we had two, but both members were on this committee before the Labour group was formed. The same applies to the members of the Watch Committee, and it was not until November, 1922, when the group refused to serve on any committee until they were given representation on all committees. That we were allotted seats on all the committees of the Council. If space permitted I could show how the elected representatives were treated by the anti-Labour party as not being consistent with either common-sense or sound judgment, and was bound to create a bitter feeling amongst those who would have to tolerate it for six long years.

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION.

When Labour took control in 1926 we set out at once to establish the principle of one alderman for every three councillors, and the right of Labour to make their own selection as to who was to be Lord Mayor without any interference by the other parties; further, that Labour should have the right of selection every other year. I therefore claim that the action of 1926 has been all for the good. And whenever the election is held, or next November, we shall not wait to accept our defeat in the same manner as we did our victory in 1926, and at once again commence to build up the Group.

The following is a summary of the number of aldermen in the two parties in relation to the number of councillors, from 1910 to 1929:—

	COUNCILLORS.		ALDERMEN.	
Year.	Labour.	Anti-Labour.	Labour.	Anti-Labour.
1910	36	12	15	1
1919	35	13	15	1
1921	39	12	15	1
1922	31	20	16	1
1923	31	20	15	2
1924	39	22	15	2
1925	39	22	15	2
1926	22	28	8	0
1927	21	29	8	0
1928	25	25	8	0
1929	25	47	8	16

"Election of Aldermen.

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WAGE ATTACKS LOOM AHEAD.

BY COUNCILLOR W. G. ROBINSON.

The present intensification of the post-war crisis has been marked by the spreading of the paralysis from the private side to the financial machine. This has led to important changes in the class grouping of the "thoroughly comfortable." This is a crisis taking place under conditions of monopoly capitalism, and the effect of the last three months, coming on top of the previous period of decline, has been enormously to concentrate the power of the particular section of the financial group who control the big trusts, both in the production and distribution, and also control the financial machine (bankers' credit, &c.).

This group has been able to take the brunt because of the weakening, on the one hand, of the industrial capitalists and of the middle classes, and on the other, of the pure financiers, international money lenders, commission agents, &c. The storm has washed away the basis of many of the latter's profits, and it has left the finance group, the controllers of trusts, the big reniers (after all, the bankers and other institutions hold a large proportion of the National Debt, of debentures, &c.), and also the landlords with the big pay rolls, in control. They are interested, first of all, in increasing their share of the declining mass of surplus value—or profits. Hence the pressure through the bankers, through taxation, and through the Estate office on the middle class and industrial capitalists.

Their second object is to increase the mass of surplus value from the workers at home and overseas.

Though they have increased their control they have very heavy obstacles in carrying out this task, obstacles which are rooted in the collapse of their system.

Tariffs.

In this situation the financial group has been driven to tariffs. In the application of tariffs they are also faced with contradictions. It should be noted that it was the spreading of the production decline to the paralysis of the financial machine, signalled by going off the gold standard, which made tariffs inevitable.

First of all they wish to hit at rival countries; the new fortification duties are aimed at France, U.S.A., and Germany. The first motive for imposing tariffs is, however, a negative one. The positive side is that they wish to win more profits from British and colonial workers; and this is done because tariffs lead to greater monopolisation. The effect of a tariff is to give the home industry a minimum price guarantee in the home market.

The second effect is to enable the big trusts to introduce rationalisation and mass production. The big trusts,

linked as they are with finance, can, on reorganisation, get a dip in the capital for this purpose where they are not actually already equipped. The big trusts can then intensify labour power. They thus drive the smaller fry to the wall. First of all this is done by a price war. When the ground is clear, prices in the home market can be raised and the goods dumped abroad.

The third purpose of tariffs is that they reduce real wages. They do by constantly raising prices. The manufacturer and distributing trust can, therefore, get constantly increased increments of profit, while the real wages of the working class fall. We are thus on the verge of a move to reduce the standards of the workers to a new low level.

But this will also be done by direct cuts in actual wages. Tariffs are thus a means of increasing the bulk of profits to the hands of the financial group. As a result of doing this, it causes them further restrict purchasing power.

Further, they hope by encouraging the Empire growth they are facing bankruptcy to keep the Dominion bourgeoisie from becoming industrialised and to remain dependent on British manufacture and distributing trust can to increase super-profit, especially if they can by Empire agreements get them into their monopoly area. This is all pretty futile.

We can, therefore, see that while the Finance Oligarchy has got more power, there is no real improvement in industry as a result of gold abandonment or of tariffs. In many respects the position is worse. They are therefore desperate. In their effort to get increased surplus value they will launch a renewed attack on the workers. We are on the eve of an effort to lower the whole standard of the workers; and the resistance of the workers is their final obstacle. Therefore, it is essential to be organised in the trade unions, in the Co-operative Movement, and in the Co-operative Party. In resisting a well-organised attack of this kind only a good democratic organisation can succeed.

SHEFFIELD REPERTORY COMPANY.

One of the most interesting plays that the Repertory Company have presented for a long time will be given for seven nights, commencing February 13th.

This is "The Tragedy of Nan," by the poet Laureate, John Masefield, a very successful dramatic writing, which is rarely presented in the commercial theatre, and which all lovers of the drama should make special efforts to see.

Josephine Wilson will play the part of Nan.

Beginning on Saturday, February 27th, Frederick Lonsdale's amusing comedy, "Aren't We Kilt?" will be played for seven nights.

CO-OPERATIVE PARTY NOTES.

NEEPSEND.

The Neepsend Co-operative Party held their annual meeting in the guild-room on Wednesday, January 13th. Alderman Bancroft gave an interesting report, reviewing the work of the City Council during 1931. Report and minutes were read and account of the meeting were accepted at the same meeting. Mr. L. Baines was reappointed secretary, Mr. J. H. Allen was appointed secretary, Mr. Grenville, vice-president, and Mr. Cox assistant secretary. * * *

The Women's Section reopened their meetings on January 14th, when the officers and committee for 1932 were elected. On January 21st Mr. J. Williams gave an interesting address, and the 15th Mrs. E. Velland gave an address on "The Works of Charles Dickens." The services of all the speakers were highly appreciated. * * *

The annual children's treat was held on January 16th; there were 150 children present. The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayores (Alderman T. H. and Mrs. Watkins) attended. Other Neepsend representatives included Alderman Councillors Mr. Stokes and Mrs. Speight. The children were entertained at the piano by Miss Stokes, Miss Heppelstall, Mr. David Ward, the celebrated month-organist, also entertained the children. Messrs. Willis and Venn provided ice-cream, and each child received an orange, apple, and a toy. The arrangements were carried out by Messdames Watson and Fletcher (secretary and president, Women's Section) and the Men's Guild and the Neepsend Co-operative Party.

SOUTHEY AND NORWOOD.
The Southey and Norwood Section of the Co-operative Party held their annual meeting on January 20th, which was addressed by Alderman Bancroft and Mr. A. Ballard (party organiser). It was decided to inaugurate an intensive party membership campaign on the estate; to fix up a number of social events; and carry out a detailed programme of meetings in the guild-room. Secretary: Mr. A. H. HOLDEN. * * * J. Crowder, Close.

The Women's Section opened the session on January 21st with a very successful evening of Mrs. Lee and party giving an excellent entertainment. Nominations for officials took place on the following Monday, January 18th. Mr. D. Green was appointed president, Mrs. Fisher vice-president, and Mrs. E. Allen, of 163, Everingham-road, secretary. Meetings held on the Monday afternoon at 2-30 in the Longley guild-room.

SHEFFIELD AND ECCLESALL.
The annual meeting of the Sheffield and Ecclesall Section was held on Monday, January 18th, when Mr. E. Billem was reappointed president, Mr. A. E. Mosthor vice-president, and Mr. G. H. Green, 27, Sile-street, secretary. Mr. Goldburn gave an interesting address on "Jewish Poor-Law." A good number of members were present, containing the Co-operative Party programme, "Britain Reborn," were sold. * * *

The Women's Section held their annual meeting on January 21st. President, Mrs. Fletcher; secretary, Mrs. J. Billem, 20, Mitchell-street. Meetings held in the Mount Faber classroom, Wellington-street, Thursdays, at 2-30 p.m. Meetings for February: 4th, Mr. E. Billem on "Rationalisation"; 11th, "Co-operative Party Notes" and discussion; 18th, Councillor Wells; 25th, Councillor J. A. Longden (chairman, Sheffield Co-operative Party). The annual report of the Women's Section showed that they have had a very successful year, maintaining a high standard of speakers, with good discussion. Almost every phase of political and educational work in the co-operative movement has been dealt with. The section has been well represented at most of the conferences during the year, and interesting reports have been given. The section proved of immense help during both the Municipal and

Parliamentary Elections, and they are not allowing the disappointments in results to deter them from more strenuous propaganda during 1932.

HILLSBOROUGH.

The Hillsborough Co-operative Party income and expenditure for 1931 was well attended. Financial report revealed a healthy financial position. Reports of the Social Committee, Hillsborough Executive, and Central Executive were received with appreciation. A resolution of thanks to the retiring officials was carried. The following Officers for 1932: President, Mr. A. Wallis; secretary, Mr. W. H. Bottom; treasurer, Mr. H. Slack; financial secretary, Mr. Harvey; social secretary, Mr. A. Grenville. The party has set out to double its membership in 1932. The social events for the year have all been highly successful. City Council reports, lectures, &c., have been well received. The new social committee have been formed. The party have arranged for a pie supper, carnival dance on St. Patrick's Day, and a number of other social functions. The whist drive and dance held on January 21st was a success, although there was a counter co-operative attraction at the Cutlers' Hall the same evening. Mrs. Hilda, Miss C. Bottom rendered concert items.

Meetings held every Thursday evening at the guild-room, Hillsborough Co-operative Party, 7-30 p.m. * * *
The Women's Section held their annual meeting on January 11th, and reported a large increase of membership. Meetings during the whole of January have been remarkably well attended. On the 18th Mrs. Velland (secretary of the Burngreave Women's Section) gave an interesting address, and on the 25th Mrs. Womersley (wife of Alderman Womersley) acted as speaker, in lieu of the Alderman, who was unavoidably absent. Mrs. Womersley dealt with "Sheffield's Water Supply."

The section is making provision for the annual excursion, and already a record number of members have joined the Savings Club. Officials for 1932: President: Mrs. M. Brooke; vice-president, Mrs. M. Ballard; secretary, Mrs. M. Wood; 73, Ellersburgh-place. Meetings held every Monday, at 2-30 p.m.

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