

being attended by Δy , a small increment of the former, it may be expected that if Δx is doubled or increased by any not very large percentage; the corresponding increment Δy will, other things remaining unchanged, be increased by about the same percentage, whereas nothing like this can be predicated of the total quantities x and y . In this respect a considerable (or "integral") change in quantity x is a datum of less scientific worth than a small ("differential") change. For these reasons we are inclined to doubt whether it will be ever possible to make—what Professor Leffeldt admits that it is "too soon" to make—"a quantitative estimate of the inflation due to the War." It need hardly be added that the fine issues here raised nowise affect the main arguments and practical conclusions of Professor Leffeldt's masterly treatise.

The History of Trade Unionism. By SIDNEY and BEATRICE WEBB. Revised Edition. Extended to 1920. (London: Longmans, Green & Co. 1920. Pp. 763.)

THIS work comprises a revised version and a continuation of the History which was published in 1894. The reviewer of the first edition pronounced that the high reputation which the authors had already won independently of each other was sustained by their co-operation—then a new phenomenon. The second edition sustains a still higher reputation: that which has been earned by the collaboration of the well-matched consorts in many works of research and reflection during more than a quarter of a century.

In the new portion of the present volume, as well as in that which is reproduced, we admire the literary skill which has constructed a clear and impressive narrative from materials that are often deficient in personal interest and striking incident. The collection of recent facts does not, indeed, display the writers' talent for historical research so signally as did the earlier History. But if the task is less difficult, it is not less useful. It is convenient to have clear and succinct summaries of occurrences which though they have passed before our eyes, dwell confusedly in our memories. We may instance the enumeration of the various occasions on which Trade Unionism has been recognised and employed by Government since the outbreak of the War, or the description of the so-called "black-coated proletariat" who are joining the ranks of the trade unionists. The recent history is

often supplemented by information and reflections contained in previous writings to which a reference is given by the authors. Witness the elaborate study on "Professional Associations," which appeared in the *New Statesman* of September 25 and October 2, 1915; April 21 and 28, 1917.

Nor is antiquarian research wanting in the additions to the volume. The authors have utilised some Home Office papers relating to the early part of the nineteenth century, which have become available since the publication of their first edition. Thus, they have traced the "Trades Union" movement of the 'thirties back to the "General Union" which existed in 1818.

For our part, we are grateful, not only for the additions to the original work, but also for the retention of passages such as those relating to Owen who, it is confessed, from the point of view of the practical statesman, "showed himself something of a simpleton." When it is recorded that he expected the "New Moral World" to be established within six months, competition to be abolished and the change from the capitalist system to a complete organisation of industry to "come suddenly upon society like a thief in the night," these things might almost seem to have been written for an example to hotheads of the present generation.

More explicitly in the newer part of the volume, the authors dissent from the extreme sect who would place the entire management of business in the hands of associated producers. "This conception seems to us," they say, "too one-sided to be adopted in its entirety, or to be successful if it were so adopted." In this connection there should be consulted one of the previous writings to which the authors refer: *What Syndicalism Means*, by S. and B. Webb, 1912. We regret that this instructive brochure is not more widely known and read. It is accessible only—so far as we have observed—in a French translation which is to be found in the Library of the British Museum, under the title "Examen de la Doctrine Syndicaliste." The danger of producers abusing their monopoly to the detriment of consumers is exhibited here more fully than in the History. Life, we are reminded, is not all production. "A great part of the most precious services that we render to the world, even during our working years, has nothing to do with the production of wealth properly so called"—such as the education of children, the cultivation of the mind, the works of art. Inventors and artists do not always run well in harness. The folly of the "general strike," the tendency of "sabotage" to degrade the character, the impossibility of abolishing wages, otherwise than in name—these and other salutary

truths are taught more persuasively here than in treatises which might be suspected of "capitalist" proclivities.

This criticism of thoroughgoing syndicalism was not demanded in a history of (English) Trade Unionism. That it is not repeated at full length does not argue any *suppressio veri*. But there is one omission which is characteristic and, we fear, designed. We desiderate some allusion to the important truth which Dr. Marshall has lately expressed in these words: "Even the most advanced schemes for National Guilds, seem to ignore the fact that the State has been a borrower rather than an accumulator of capital: and to take little account of the superhuman ability required on the part of those persons in whom the chief functions of 'The State' are to be concentrated when called on by a guild to advance more capital in order to replace some that has been lost in an ill-fated venture, or to enable some new venture to be put through" (*Industry and Trade*, p. 65, and context). He who is impressed with this truth will not be in such a hurry as our authors to bring about what they tell us is "the object and purpose of the workers organised vocationally . . . and politically . . . namely, a reconstruction of society by the elimination from the nation's industries and services of the Capitalist Profit-Maker."

The historian can hardly be expected to put a favourable construction on the doings of a class which he wishes to eliminate. Our authors in their account of the great battles which Trade Unionism has fought in recent times—over the Taff Vale case and the Osborne case and in the great Railway Strike—are naturally not very kind to the faults of the Capitalist party. They shower disparaging terms upon the judges and rulers concerned in these transactions—"quibbling," "evasions," "equivocation," "flagrant unfairness," "heat and prejudice," "animus and partiality," "amazing degree of class bias." . . . We dare say that some of these terms are applicable; but we should be surprised if it proved that they were justly applicable only on the one side, as our authors leave us to suppose.

We recognise that the interpretation of human action involves an element of hypothesis. Acts can hardly be recorded in a literary form without assigning motives. Motives cannot be inferred so rigorously but that the inference depends partly on *a priori* assumptions—one's general view about men and things. At the tribunal of history, historians must sometimes appear as advocates. It is a part which they may play usefully if the reader plays the part of judge. We trust that some of the Trade

Unionists who, as advertised by the publishers, have already bought up 19,000 copies of the History, will endeavour to "hear the other side" presented by historians comparable with our gifted authors in diligence and talent and the art of persuasion. Writers who fulfil these conditions are, indeed, not easily to be found.

The Economic Causes of War. By ACHILLE LORIA. Translated by JOHN LESLIE GARNER. (Chicago: Kerr. 1918. Pp. 188.)

THE first edition of this book was published in 1912 under the title *Les Bases Économiques de la Justice Internationale*. It was reviewed by Mr. Norman Angell in the *ECONOMIC JOURNAL*, 1913. A further notice is now called for by the addition of a substantial supplement on *The Lessons of the Great War*. The translator has adopted a title appropriate to the present form of the work. Indeed, the original title was not well adapted even to the first edition. The contents would have been better indicated by the title which Mr. Norman Angell suggested: *The Operation of Economic Factors in the Evolution of International Society*. In that evolution as conceived by Professor Loria there are three stages. First, economic relations give rise to international law. At a later stage international law breaks down under the strain of opposed interests; and still later it is rebuilt by economic influences. It is with the second and third stages that we are here concerned. The newly added supplement purports to be a verification of certain generalisations relating to those stages.

The thesis that wars are wholly due to economic causes has one of its ablest advocates in Professor Loria. It is impossible within our limits to do justice to the learning with which he supports this thesis. It must suffice to cite some of the instances on which he relies. "Most of the wars of Athens were caused by the necessity of securing additional lands." "In Rome the Third Punic War was merely a revolt of Latin property, determined to repair its diminished revenues." "The sole purpose of the Crusades was to increase the income of European feudal lords at the expense of the Syrian or Oriental revenue." "The struggles of Pisa and Florence, the Italian wars of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, were due to economic causes." "Holland's struggle for independence against Spain was in reality simply a privateering war on the Spanish merchant marine and the Hispano-American colonial trade." "The war of England against