
BOOKS

BUSINESS PROFITS AND THE SOCIAL WELFARE.

Work and Life. By Ira W. Howerth. Published by the Sturgis & Walton Co., New York, 1913. Price, \$1.50 net.

"Work and Life" is a presentation of the social problem of today. While searching life for our present problem, the author finds that history has always manifested one in some phase. At one time it was a struggle for religious freedom; later, for political freedom. The present he sees as a struggle against capitalism. Hence, how to organize and conduct our economic institutions so that their benefits might be justly shared by all members of society, is the burden of the study he has undertaken in this book.

Having examined current political economy and quarreled with its inadequate nomenclature, he repudiates the whole science as too restricted to contain a solution and turns to sociology as the more inclusive sphere. Here, the problem resolves itself into a conflict between two warring factions: the business man's working for selfish ends—for profits, and the social viewpoint, which considers the highest welfare of society its aim. Harmonizing these two is the author's solution. It is to be accomplished by two main reforms running side by side: the moralization of the business man, and a collective effort to improve the industrial system. To the former, education, the "higher patriotism" and religion are to be contributory factors. The latter is to be brought about by the realization of a high social ideal comprising three elements: (1) social intelligence, (2) social economy and (3) voluntary co-operation. The formation of a social intelligence devolves upon the press, the pulpit and the school. The utter annihilation of our present system of competition—a regime of "free competition" he says cannot be conceived—will result in the highest social economy. Finally, legislation evolving through extended suffrage, Proportional Representation and the Initiative and Referendum will usher in a co-operation that will put an end to the conflict between our two ideals, "industrial individualism" and "collectivism."

The author excites a deep sense of admiration for his sincere, academic search for truth. If occasionally we find such a dogmatic assertion as, "The social regulation of industry, its progressive socialization, is in accord with the principles of social solution, biological and social"; if we are told much of ruling classes and not of their instrumentality; of privilege and control, but only in general; of profits—there is also much of profit

in his book. For it is surprisingly free from the many prejudices that befuddle these same channels of thought through which others reach a like solution for our problem.

And such observations as that "the cure of the evils of democracy is more democracy," and that "economically the pauper class and the 'leisure' class . . . exemplify the parasitic method of getting a living," and again that "the common talk about capitalists 'giving' employment to labor is calculated to provoke a smile from those who have really looked below the surface of economic phenomena," these remarks warrant us in hoping that the author will not rest satisfied with such truths as he has thus far found; for his reasoning as here set forth leads him to conclude that "there is no immediate and final solution for this problem." Such a sense of futility usually proves but an added spur.

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PAMPHLETS

Report of the Secretary of Labor.

The formation of the Department of Labor involved, consciously or otherwise, a recognition of the need of economic reform. The first report of that Department has therefore a peculiar interest. The organic act creating it declares its object to be promotion of the welfare of wage earners and advancing of opportunities for profitable employment. That would seem to involve an admission that their present welfare is not what it should be and that opportunities for employment may be increased. It is well to note that the report denies that any grant of special privileges to wage earners was intended. So in order to promote welfare and advance opportunities, we may safely assume the Department must devote effort toward removing privilege from others. If so, it will prove to be the most important and beneficial of all the Federal Departments. The report describes the activities of the Department in labor disputes, immigration matters, compiling of statistics, operating of a children's bureau and other matters of interest. The only definite recommendation made is one that is reasonable and modest. It only recommends that the sending of armed men across State lines be regulated in the interest of public peace and order. Of course, much more than that is needed to solve the labor problem, but the Department must fit its recommendations to the Congress with which it has to deal. It begins by asking that a strike should not necessarily be allowed to become an excuse for establishment of government by gunmen. It is by no means certain that the present Congress will concede so much. The report is surely not open to just criticism for lack of moderation. As the Department grows its reports must fill the place of an official record of important happenings in the industrial world and will be valuable and interesting to students and investigators of social conditions. These should not fail to se-