

The Reaction to Working Class Unrest, 1911-1914

by

John Douglas Pratten

A thesis presented in candidature for the degree
of Ph.D. in the Department of Economic and
Social History of the University of
Sheffield

September 1975

John Douglas Pratten 'The Reaction to Working Class Unrest,
1911-1914'

The period 1911-14 has, until late, been largely ignored by historians, and, like so many other periods, even when it has been covered, there has been little attempt to investigate the attitudes of the people of the time to the events. This thesis endeavours to compensate for this, at least to a small degree. It examines the class structure of the period, and then looks at the working class unrest of the time from the eyes of the community. It was an especially strike-prone age and for the first time, there were national stoppages and sympathetic walk-outs, with the threat of Syndicalism lurking in the background. Some believed that revolution was imminent. Unfortunately, the sources have been limited by the availability of material, but, nevertheless, the thesis represents the nearest approximation possible to public opinion. It reveals that the nation did not have a single view on any of the major disputes, and that the split was not entirely along political lines. Some Tories were quite sympathetic to the working class, whilst certain Liberals were extremely traditional and authoritarian. Moreover, attitudes did not remain constant, but changed with events. Finally, the results of this study are looked at in relation to several theories on public opinion, and, as such, virtually represent a case study for sociological theorists.

Contents

Chapter I	Public Opinion in Edwardian England	1-28
Chapter II	Social Stratification in Edwardian England	29-94
Chapter III	Attitudes to Legislation in 1911	95-104
Chapter IV	The Strikes of the Summer, 1911	105-168
Chapter V	The Industrial Council and its Failure	169-182
Chapter VI	The Coal Strike	183-225
Chapter VII	The London Dock Strike of 1912	226-256
Chapter VIII	Two Railway Disputes, 1912 and 1913	257-275
Chapter IX	The Strikes of 1913-14	276-313
Chapter X	The Outbreak of War	314-329
Chapter XI	Conclusions	330-374
	Bibliography	375 - 420

Preface

This thesis began as a private study of the militant unionism in the pre-war period, and developed into its present form simply because the information was not available. The reaction of the Irish and Scots has not been included simply because they are different in attitude, and each would require a separate thesis. All money is in £ s. d., and has not been converted into decimal currency. The standard conversion table is printed below.

£ s. d. to Decimal

TABLE 1

TABLE 2

shillings	new pence	shillings	new pence	old pence	new pence
1	5	11	55	1	$\frac{1}{2}$
2	10	12	60	2	1
3	15	13	65	3	1
4	20	14	70	4	$1\frac{1}{2}$
5	25	15	75	5	2
6	30	16	80	6	$2\frac{1}{2}$
7	35	17	85	7	3
8	40	18	90	8	$3\frac{1}{2}$
9	45	19	95	9	4
10	50	20	100	10	4
				11	$4\frac{1}{2}$

For sums in shillings and pence read the shillings equivalent Table 1 and the pence from Table 2.

Add the two figures Example 15s 8d = $(75 + 3\frac{1}{2})$ p
= $78\frac{1}{2}$ p

Many people have contributed to the completion of this work, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their assistance. I am grateful to the Social Science Research Council for financing the project. Professor S. Pollard has acted as Supervisor, and his cogent and swift advice has been invaluable. Dr. David Martin has opened his door to me, and has given aid, succour and encouragement. Many other members of the staff of the Department of Economic and Social History at Sheffield University have given up their time to assist me, and I would like to record my debt to them. Librarians in many parts of the country have provided a rapid and sound service, without which this work would have lasted several years longer. The greatest burden of work has, naturally enough, fallen on my own University's Inter-University Library Loans Service, and I would like to thank the staff - Miss Ruth Wells, and her two assistants, Mrs. Deborah Mitchell and Mrs. Janet Holmes for the several hundred books they have obtained for me. To my typist, Mrs. Leslie Conlin, for her accuracy and patience, and to Mrs. Emmie Mitchell, for her aid. Finally, to my wife, for her constant encouragement and understanding. If other people have not been singled out, nevertheless, I am extremely grateful for their help.

Chapter I

Public Opinion in Edwardian England

Politicians regularly claim that their actions have resulted from the force of public opinion, yet it is very doubtful that the whole of a community has ever felt the same way on any issue. A war is usually taken as an excellent example of a united nation, but the Second World War, for all that it demonstrated a remarkably determined body of people, nevertheless, produced a small group of Britishers whose political sympathies lay with the Nazis, and, as such, hoped for a German victory. In addition, there were those who disapproved of all wars on principle, and merely wanted to see an end to bloodshed, rather than the defeat of the enemy. Despite this, most people would maintain that everybody supported the war efforts: public opinion was with the Allies.

Any attempt to analyse public opinion will be hampered by a shortage of sources, for the whole population will not have recorded its views on any particular issue, even presuming that everybody would have adopted an attitude, which must be regarded as doubtful in itself. Hence, it is only possible to look at the material which does exist, and to hope that this gives the differing opinions on the events. The most obvious disseminator of information, normally with comments ~~is~~ the mass media. In Edwardian England, this meant the press. The politicians themselves are crucial, for their actions can help to determine the course of events, and are the result of the demands of the nation - or, perhaps, merely

*But make qualifications
on limitations*

make that claim. The economic and social background of the politicians has to be considered, as these factors could influence a man's behaviour. To determine their attitudes, the speeches of politicians have been studied and also their private papers, so as to eliminate the difference, if any, between their private and public utterances. Contemporary articles and books, including novels, biographies and autobiographies have also been used. Despite the dangers of relying on such material, there is little alternative. Within any group, some will always dominate, through wisdom, ability, sheer loudness, or other means. Because they are able to influence others, their opinions are of importance, and it is such people who are most likely to have left a permanent record of their views.

The Press

In a society that lacked radio and television, the press provided the information on world and domestic affairs that the public required. In Edwardian England, there was a variety of daily newspapers, weekly papers and the more serious journals, which appeared weekly, monthly, or even quarterly. Of course, there can be no proof that the press could shape the attitudes of its readers. Dibblee, writing in 1913, expressed his own doubts on this topic, arguing that, so far as the popular papers were concerned, 'in all matters of opinion what they say is a matter of indifference. Their function is to supply to those who already agree with them a brief and effective setting for obvious facts and

sometimes just so much misrepresentation as to make more unpalatable facts a little more tolerable'. Dibblee, then, was observing that people with a political persuasion read a newspaper with similar views. Some journals, Dibblee continued, were read for their stories rather than their political affiliations, and would have but little impact in formulating the attitude of its readers. He noted that 'in London, it is conspicuous how insignificant their political efforts may be. In the last three elections the the most populous parts of London have on the whole voted in the sense contrary to the two or three sensational journals which have the largest circulations in those localities'.⁽¹⁾ Thus, Dibblee was insisting that most people chose a paper which concurred with their own political stand point, but the more trivial papers were taken for their entertainment value rather than editorial content, so that they probably did not reflect the ideas of many of their readers. However, most other papers did, and if Dibblee was correct, then an investigation of the politics of the non-sensational newspapers, coupled with an analysis of their circulations, would provide an approximate range of national opinions on any particular issue.

② In Edwardian England, there was a wide variety of newspapers, catering for a whole host of tastes, but their circulations are not easy to obtain. A.P. Wadsworth, who was the editor of the Manchester Guardian after the Second World

(1) G.B. Dibblee, The Newspaper (1913) p. 109.

War, believes that 'we can only guess at the circulation of most of them during the period of secrecy between the 1850's and the 1930's. (2)

Even when a newspaper did issue its sales' figures, it was necessary to distinguish between audited net circulation figures and publishers' assertions, which could easily have been the result of wishful thinking, or a reversion to the number of sales when the paper was in its prime. One source is useful in this respect. T.B. Browne's Advertisers' ABC of Official Scales and Charges was an annual directory which explained the position and status of every part of the press, so that intending advertisers would be able to decide where their needs could best be satisfied. According to this book, the guaranteed average daily sales of the leading papers in 1910 were:-

Daily Express	over 400,000
Daily Mail	over 900,000
Daily Mirror	450,000
Daily News	over 200,000
Labour Leader	17,000
Umpire	454,765
Weekly Dispatch	over 400,000

The following year, the Morning Leader was claiming 250,000, and by 1914 the Daily Citizen gave an uncertified circulation of 200,000. Wadsworth has made estimates which embrace

(2) A.P. Wadsworth, 'Newspaper Circulations 1800-1954',
Manchester Statistical Society (1955) p. 1.

several other papers:-

	1911	1914
Daily Telegraph	250,000	200,000
Observer	50,000	140,000
Sunday Times	25,000	27,500 ⁽³⁾

A.K. Russell has issued circulation figures for some journals for the year 1906, but he has provided no source, nor has he stated whether or not they are the official figures:-

Daily Chronicle	200,000
Daily Express	300,000
Daily Graphic	100,000
Daily Mail	750,000
Daily Mirror	350,000
Daily News	200,000
Daily Telegraph	285,000
Morning Leader	150,000
Morning Post	60,000
Standard	80,000
Times	30,000 ⁽⁴⁾

Even if all of these figures were accurate, they do not indicate how many readers there were to each copy, and whether or not the number varied between different papers, so that the total readership is virtually impossible to ascertain. Moreover, there would be no way of discovering how many people

(3) Ibid p. 35.

(4) A.K. Russell, Liberal Landslide (Newton Abbot, 1973) p. 138

actually read the political comment. Thus, the true political import of a newspaper cannot be discovered with absolute accuracy but at least it has been possible to arrive at the political persuasion of each major paper, and to examine the content, emphasis and status in the community of every journal. Some of the most informed sources on these questions are the annual trade guides dealing with the newspaper industry. T.B. Browne's Advertisers' ABC has already been mentioned in connection with circulation figures. Other useful manuals include the National Press Directory (N.P.D.), Willing's Press Guide, and Sell's Dictionary of the World's Press. Useful as these are, it must be borne in mind that they are trade papers, and as such tend to be uncritical of the periodicals that they discuss. This does not detract greatly from their general comments on the status of each paper, as long as it is remembered that the glowing terms might have to be played down a little. A few books written at the time, or published later by contemporaries, supplement our knowledge of the characteristics of each paper.

- ② The majority of the press supported the Conservative Party, and in particular, the high prestige section was almost solidly behind the Unionists. Perhaps the most famous British newspaper was the Times, which had been founded in 1785. The N.P.D. claimed that 'no journal has enjoyed such world wide fame'.⁽⁵⁾ The paper itself was well aware of its position, and announced that it was 'the only newspaper published in Great Britain which reaches ALL the wealthy and leisured classes of the

(5) N.P.D. (1912) p. 62

community'.⁽⁶⁾ This was probably true, and moreover; it was beginning to reach more and more people. In 1908, when the price was 3d, it had a circulation of 38,000. A reduction to 2d on 5 May 1913, and then to 1d on 16 March 1914 ensured a rise to 150,000. The fall in price coincided with a change in owner. Lord Northcliffe, who was already the proprietor of several papers, including the Daily Mail, took over the Times in 1908. The editors also altered at this time.

4. C.F. Buckle, who had been in charge since 1884, retired in August 1912, to be succeeded by G. Dawson, at that time called Robinson (he assumed the name of Dawson in 1917). His social background reflected that of the paper, ^{since he} ~~having~~ been educated at Eton and Magdalen College, Oxford, and then working in the Colonial Office before taking up journalism. Thus, the Times, with its exclusive readership, had an editor whose class position reflected its tone.

Another paper supporting the Conservatives, and almost matching the Times in prestige, was the Standard. The editor of the Daily Express at the time, R.D. Blumenfeld, described it as 'one of the most influential papers of its kind',⁽⁷⁾ and the N.P.D. pointed out that, 'while maintaining conservative principles, the Standard reserves the right to apply those principles to the question of the day, without regard to party politics or special devotion to the views of party leaders'.⁽⁸⁾

(6) T.B. Browne (1910) p. 354

(7) R.D. Blumenfeld, The Press in my Time (1933) p. 72

(8) N.P.D. (1912) p. 62

No doubt this was accurate, for the paper was extremely orthodox in its politics, and would be critical of anyone who deviated from the lines of traditional Tory policy. The readership was from the same class as the Times, and it saw itself in the same light: 'where goods of a high class and artistic nature are to be disposed of, or where buyers more than usually wealthy are to be appealed to, the Advertising Columns of the Standard is always requisitioned - with gratifying results'.⁽⁹⁾

A third highly respectable Conservative paper was the Morning Post. The N.P.D. observed that, 'as a medium for announcements which is desired to bring before the notice of the high and wealthy classes, the Morning Post cannot be surpassed'.⁽¹⁰⁾ It was particularly celebrated for its Social and Court pages, and it was regarded as 'the best advertising medium for domestic staff, housemaids, ladies' maids, valets, butlers, and those like appendages of the wealthy home'.⁽¹¹⁾ Thus, under the editorship of H.A. Gwynne, who had controlled

(9) T.B. Browne (1910) p. 354

(10) N.P.D. (1912) p. 62

(11) W. MacQueen-Pope, Twenty Shillings in the Pound (1948)

Sir Charles Petrie has told the story of the employer who asked her butler if he would like to see a paper, handing him the Morning Post and received the reply, "No thank you my lady: I am perfectly happy with my present post".

C. Petrie, Scenes from Edwardian Life (1965)
p. 54

the Standard for the seven years up to 1911, it maintained a high class audience, and was in the words of Blumenfeld, a 'comparative exclusive class organ'.⁽¹²⁾

The other great Tory news sheet was the Daily Telegraph, which possessed a larger circulation than the other three quality papers of similar persuasion, and it was 'very widely read among business men'.⁽¹³⁾ It was owned by an active proprietor, Henry Lawson, and edited by John Le Sage, who had been on the staff since 1863, and was celebrated for his autocratic views. Together, they ensured that the Daily Telegraph retained its Unionist allegiance.

All of these papers cost 1d by 1914, but support for the Conservatives was not confined to these relatively expensive journals. ^{with} The foundation of the Daily Mail in 1896 had begun the era of mass journalism, with copies selling at $\frac{1}{2}$ d. R.A. Scott-James noted that, in 1913, there were 'many circles in which the "half-penny Press" is still alluded to as something wholly vulgar and contemptible, whilst the "Penny Press" is still supposed to stand for the respectable, decent, orderly, responsible, and dignified'.⁽¹⁴⁾ Nevertheless, the cheaper papers had achieved an extremely wide circulation. The most popular was the original, the Daily Mail, which was selling one million copies a day by 1914. Its owner claimed that bad journalism occurred when the 'leading articles are like gramophone records',⁽¹⁵⁾ and, to

(12) R.D. Blumenfeld op. cit. p. 55

(13) N.P.D. (1912) p. 61

(14) R.A. Scott-James, The Influence of the Press (1913) p. 110

(15) R. Pound and G. Harmsworth, Northcliffe (1959) p. 404

prevent this, the aim of the editor, T. Marlowe, was to avoid monotony. Despite its immense sales, estimates of its ability to manipulate opinion varied. The N.P.D. believed that 'its influence on matters of public interest is considerable',⁽¹⁶⁾ and MacQueen-Pope, looking back, maintained that it was 'the daily paper wielding the widest influence'.⁽¹⁷⁾ However, Raymond Postgate has disagreed completely, asserting that 'its influence in no way corresponded to its circulation, and it was despised by its own party, whose leaders had described it as written by office boys for office boys'.⁽¹⁸⁾ Nevertheless, the Daily Mail did have a massive readership, which could not enjoy as wide a coverage of the news as in the quality papers, but who could learn about events both interesting and serious - and always from a Conservative stand point.

The Daily Mail's most serious rival was the Daily Express, whose 'editorial policy is that of an honest Cabinet Minister - inspired by a sincere desire to do and say what may best serve our country, a resolute determination to combat influences making for the national detriment',⁽¹⁹⁾ Again, its concept of the national interest coincided with that of the Conservative Party. Its editor, Blumenfeld was the son of a Canadian newspaper owner. His political affiliations are revealed in his private papers. In 1907, he invited Hugh Oakeley-Forster to join an association, almost certainly the Anti-Socialist Union.⁽²⁰⁾

(16) N.P.D. (1912) p. 61

(17) W. MacQueen-Pope op.cit. p. 350

(18) R. Postgate, The Life of George Lansbury (1951) p. 135

(19) N.P.D. (1911) p. 61

(20) Blumenfeld Papers ARN1. Letter from Arnold-Forster to

Blumenfeld, 4 December 1907.

In fact, Blumenfeld helped to found this society, and used the columns of his paper to advance its cause. With such a man at its head, the tone of the Daily Express was predictable.

The Daily Graphic was another 3d paper, but one which attempted to appear more sophisticated than the others. It claimed to be read by 'the intelligent and well-to-do classes'.⁽²¹⁾ Certainly, it devoted a great deal of space to activities in the social world, possibly in the hope of attracting those middle class readers who were interested in such affairs.

Thus, the Conservatives were well served by the quality and popular national morning press. The Liberal Party also had journals upon which it could rely for support. The most prestigious of these was an evening paper, the Westminster Gazette. The N.P.D. commented on its 'reputation for fairness and impartiality which has given it a position of its own among London newspapers, and a remarkable influence over thinking men of all political persuasions'.⁽²²⁾ If it failed to alter the views of those who supported the Conservatives, it was, nevertheless, 'probably the only paper in the capital on the Liberal side in politics which is habitually read by an influential section of its opponents'.⁽²³⁾ The Westminster Gazette itself believed that it appealed to 'a large and well-to-do public',⁽²⁴⁾ and it would certainly be read by anyone who wanted to know how the Liberals felt on any particular issue. Lord Curzon insisted that it was 'in the lead of

(21) T.B. Browne (1910) p. 970

(22) N.P.D. (1911) p. 62

(23) G.B. Dibblee op.cit. p. 185

(24) T.B. Browne (1910) p. 361

thoughtful Liberal opinion',⁽²⁵⁾ and Scott-James went so far as to state that 'it is scarcely an exaggeration to call its editor a member of the Liberal Cabinet'.⁽²⁶⁾ The man in question was J.A. Spender, an Oxford graduate who had worked at Toynbee Hall before entering journalism, thus combining social position with an understanding of the plight of the poor.

This was not the only London based Liberal paper that could match the quality Unionist ones on appearance and seriousness of content. The Daily Chronicle, edited from 1902 by Robert Donald, became popular after its price had been reduced to $\frac{1}{2}$ d in 1905. The N.P.D. was probably correct to assert that it was 'one of the leading organs of the daily press',⁽²⁷⁾ for, as the paper itself claimed, its contents would 'appeal to the multitude or to the select'.⁽²⁸⁾ On occasions, it was extremely radical, but it was not as close to the Liberal hierarchy as the Westminster Gazette. This is well illustrated in a letter that its editor wrote to Murray, the Master of Elibank, in 1912. Murray was the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury, and Donald wanted some guidance. He and his paper had been critical of the Government's handling of the coal strike, and Donald did not want this to recur, so he urged closer coordination to avoid Liberal newspapers attacking the Liberal Party in Parliament: 'I think it is a

(25) Spender Papers: B.M. Add. Ms. 46391 f.7. Letter from Curson to Spender, 28 December 1905.

(26) R.A. Scott-James op.cit. p. 211

(27) N.P.D. (1912) P. 61

(28) T.B. Browne (1910) p. 344

very great pity that the Cabinet Committee do not give the newspapers, more especially the Liberal newspapers, hints privately to guide them on the lines to follow'. (29)

A similar paper was the Morning Leader, whose quality was higher than the popular $\frac{1}{2}$ d press, but not as prestigious as the more expensive organs. It had 'a large and unique circulation by reason of the reliability of its news and its ably written editorials'. In 1912, the Morning Leader was incorporated into the Daily News as the Daily News and Leader, whose joint circulation reached 450,000 by 1914. It was owned by the Cadbury family, and contained neither racing news nor liquor advertisements after the Quaker confectionary manufacturers bought it in 1901, and helped to create 'one of the leading organs of the Liberal daily press. It devotes special consideration to religious matters and the welfare of the working classes' (30) and to 'social reform'. (31) Dibblee regarded it as a radical journal, representing 'with much ability the views of the left-wing of the Liberal Party, not at all Socialist and quite distinct from the Labour Press'. (32)

One ^{other} major national paper existed, the Daily Mirror, and this managed to ^{withhold} ~~retain~~ its political allegiance. It had been founded as a women's paper, but this idea had been abandoned, and under the editorship of Alexander Kenealy, had reached a circulation of over one million by 1914. It was in no way

(29) Elibank Papers NLS Ms. 8803 f25. Letter from Donald to Elibank, 12 March 1912.

(30) N.P.D. (1912) p. 61

(31) Ibid (1913) p. 61

(32) G.B. Dibblee op.cit. p. 178

serious, and provided light reading for those who wanted it.

The matters of the moment were discussed, but seldom in depth.

The Labour Party had its own press. The Labour Leader, a weekly, had been in existence since 1891. It was serious, without being too weighty, and represented the views of the Independent Labour Party. A more militant journal was the Daily Herald, which had begun life as a strike sheet for printing workers in 1911, and appeared in 1912 as a regular daily. It did not have a set political stance, but it did support all strikes, and it tended to look on Parliament as a waste of time - it devoted a section to 'The House of Pretence', in which scorn was poured on this institution - but it supported anyone who tried to help the working class in the Commons. Its more moderate rival was the Daily Citizen, which commenced printing in 1912, shortly after the Herald. It was the official paper of the Labour Party, and consequently supported the Parliamentary process, while expressing concern about the Daily Herald's advocacy of extreme policies.

Thus, there was a wide variety of newspapers, though those with allegiance to the Unionists were in the majority. In addition, there was a strong weekly press. One group was similar - they were serious, good quality, and sided with the Tories. These included the Sunday Times, Spectator, Observer, and Economist. There were two other periodicals with the same characteristics, but different politics. The Nation aimed to represent the thinking radical section of the Liberal Party, and the New Statesman had been founded in 1913 to present the case for the same group and other intelligent people who were

on the fringes of the Labour Party - the Fabians in particular. Less serious weeklies existed - the equivalent of the $\frac{1}{2}$ daily press. The News of the World, People, Umpire, Referee, and Weekly Dispatch came into this category as supporters of the Tories. Another paper, which regarded itself as 'the best medium for reaching the millions of industrial workers', (33) was Reynold's Newspaper, which tended towards radicalism. This was hardly surprising, as it was owned by a Liberal M.P., Sir Henry Dalziel, who was well-known for his 'advanced views on all political and social questions', (34) and whose paper contained 'much strong writing, and is outspoken in its articles on political and social questions affecting the welfare of the people'. (35)

Thus, the Conservatives tended to dominate the popular weekly press. There was another series of periodical publications. This was the era of the reviews, which appeared monthly or quarterly, giving lengthy, intelligent, and serious analyses of events, in the light of their political persuasions. They included a large number of articles from experts who were not on their staffs, and, because of their intellectual presentation, had a small circulation, made up of those sufficiently interested in the subjects involved, with enough leisure time to digest the details, and an adequate education to comprehend the arguments. The readership was small, confined to the more affluent classes, and in particular, those who felt particularly needful of the maximum amount of knowledge -

(33) Willing's Press Guide (1911) p. 437

(34) Dod's Parliamentary Companion (1911) p. 260

(35) N.P.D. (1912) p. 74

they could well have been the opinion leaders within their social groupings.

Both these periodicals and the political weeklies enjoyed low circulations, and some might have been subsidised by wealthy patrons, who supported their political ideas, and wished to permit the papers to continue to supply information and concepts to the most thoughtful and discriminating sections of the community in the hope that these people might be able to propagate the notions which they read.

Of course, not everyone read national newspapers. There was a very strong local press. Probably the most famous paper was the Manchester Guardian, which was read by the 'wealthy and important class',⁽³⁶⁾ not just in Manchester, but throughout the country. Dibblee confirmed that it was 'not only the leading paper in its district, but also a newspaper of universal range and importance'.⁽³⁷⁾ This paper had a great tradition of Liberalism, and was especially prominent in this period, under its powerful editor and owner, C.P. Scott, but most of the other notable local papers inclined towards the Unionists.

Hence, there was an extensive press, most of which was Conservative in political belief, and each had its own ideas of orthodox Conservatism, so that the whole spectrum of Tory politics was covered. Similarly, the Liberal Party's newspapers were not united in their opinions, ranging from radicalism to orthodoxy. Given such a wide-ranging spread of views, a reader could easily select the paper which best represented

(36) T.B. Browne (1910) p. 982

his interests, if he so wished. There is no evidence to show that this was done, but it is reasonable to assume that only a limited number of people would regularly read a journal whose attitudes they detested. Although it would be dangerous to rely on the press as an indicator of public opinion, it would be a fair presumption that a large section of the community concurred with the ideas printed in the newspapers it read.

Political Parties

The attitudes of certain members of the public can be discovered by studying the remaining material of the various political parties, which can reveal the attitudes of not only the prominent figures, but also of the constituency activists. Of course, such people can hardly be taken as representative of the nation as a whole, but, because they were directly concerned with public affairs, their opinions can be regarded as typical of the most active elements in the society. Their very involvement meant that they must have discussed the issues of the day with friends and business colleagues, and, thus, their ideas would have found a wider audience than their co-workers within the parties they supported.

The reports of the annual conferences of the various political parties have almost all survived. Unfortunately, these have not always been published fully, so that not every word spoken has been recorded. In addition, the conferences often attempted to deal with a very wide variety of topics, leaving little time for debate on the subjects of

social conditions and industrial unrest. Consequently, this has not proved to be as valuable a source as had seemed possible, but there have been several useful insights into the views of some of the most politically involved groups in the country.

Speeches

Some of those speaking at the annual conferences were members of the House of Commons or the House of Lords. The Parliamentary Debates are reported in full, and contain a wealth of information about the reaction of the various groups in Parliament to the unrest. Moreover, such people were likely to be better informed than the rest of the community, so that their opinions could be regarded as especially valuable. Needless to say, the speeches that were made would be reported in the press, though the amount of coverage depended on the seriousness of the paper. Politicians did not confine their words to Parliament, and the press often reported speeches made around the country by major figures. These, too, help to provide an up-to-date account of the way in which politicians and political parties were thinking on certain events.

It would be impossible to state that the supporter of a party would automatically concur with the views of leading politicians within that party, so that a definite correlation between speeches and public opinion cannot be made. However, there are always some people who support their political party, no matter what, and other who believe that a certain public figure can say no wrong, and they, at least, are likely to be influenced by such speeches.

Unpublished Papers

Of course, it is necessary to look even closer at these politicians, because the public utterances do not always coincide with their private beliefs. It could be argued that the role of a politician is to reflect public opinion, and act in the way in which the community has already indicated that policy should follow. However, at least part of the objective of a statesman is to mould the nation's views, so that it will concur with the aims which the politician thinks ought to be pursued. In order to discover whether or not there was any dichotomy between public statements and secret feelings, it is necessary to investigate their private, unpublished papers, together with those of the relevant Government departments, and the Cabinet documents.

The Home Office collection shows how the relevant minister responded to events, and the files show letters from other senior politicians, and from business men and ordinary citizens who were concerned by events. It is difficult to know whether or not these letters and telegrams can be relied upon as wholly accurate. However, very few people would take the trouble to communicate with the Home Secretary unless the issue was especially dear to them, and their very tone carries a ring of sincerity which indicates their authenticity. The records of the Board of Trade and the War Office failed to reveal much information, but the Cabinet Papers and the Letters from the Prime Minister to the King contain the opinions of those members of the Government who felt strongly on any particular issue, even when they disagreed with the concensus view of the Cabinet. The attitude of the Monarch himself is

sometimes recorded. There can be little reason to doubt the genuineness of these papers.

Further relevant unpublished collections take the form of private papers of individuals, most of which have been deposited in libraries. The Royal Commission on Historical Documents can provide the locations of these manuscripts, and some work has been done to provide summaries of the main holdings, but this has been inadequate for a specialised piece of work, such as one on labour unrest within a narrow time period. Consequently, some collections, and in particular those which have not been catalogued, have had to be subjected to detailed scrutiny without necessarily producing much useful material.

Regarding Liberals of prominence, the most complete sets of papers, as far as this piece of research is concerned, were those of David Lloyd George and John Burns. At this time, Lloyd George was the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He came from a poor Welsh background, and became a solicitor, before entering Parliament in 1890. He made a national reputation by opposing the Boer War. His papers contain a large quantity of valuable information, and help to show his very great sympathy for the working classes. Another member of the Cabinet from a needy family was John Burns, an engineer who joined the Socialist Democratic Federation, and helped to organise the Great Dock Strike of 1889. He formed the Battersea Labour League, and sat on the London County Council from 1889 to 1907, entering Parliament in 1892. He refused to join the Independent Labour Party, and drifted into the Liberals. From 1906, he was the President of the Local Government Board. His collection is especially important

because he kept a diary, which contains his reactions to various labour disputes. His sympathies with the working class appear to have greatly diminished, judging from the tenor of many of his remarks.

Most of the other leading Liberal politicians came from very different backgrounds. Public school and Oxford or Cambridge University was a far more common breeding ground for a Liberal or Conservative politician, and most conformed to this pattern. The Prime Minister, H.H. Asquith, fits into this category admirably, and provides a good example of the traditional statesman. He gained a double first at Balliol, and became a barrister, before entering Parliament in 1886. He married well, and was a typical member of the upper middle class. His papers, as might be expected in a man of his position, are extensive, and contain a large quantity of documents relevant to this period. The Home Secretary from 1911 to 1915 was another barrister, Reginald McKenna, who had been educated at Cambridge. His papers are disappointing, revealing little on industrial unrest during his period of office. Sidney Buxton enjoyed a similar upbringing, attending public school and Trinity College, Cambridge, but he then began to interest himself in working class life. He sat on the London School Board, became an M.P. in 1883, and acted on the Conciliation Committee to end the 1889 Dock Strike. He sat on the Royal Commission on Education from 1886 to 1889. His concern for the deprived sections of the community was genuine, and is to some extent reflected in his papers, which are comprehensive on the major issues. Viscount Haldane's early life had been similarly

elitist. He went to Göttingen and Edinburgh Universities before going to the bar, where he made a reputation as a theorist. His political and legal careers continued side-by-side. He became an M.P. in 1885 and a Q.C. in 1890, and after a Cabinet post as Secretary for War from 1906 to 1912, was appointed Lord Chancellor. His papers are wide ranging and are made even more valuable by his daily letter to his mother, which was, in effect, a diary of the major political events, and his opinions on them so that the major industrial disputes all receive his comments. Another consistent family chronicler was Herbert Samuel. He had gained a first at Balliol, was elected to the Commons in 1902, and then was appointed Postmaster General in 1910. He wrote to his wife, keeping her informed about the day's events, and, again, this is effectively, a diary. The contents of these letters, and others that he wrote elsewhere, reveal that he possessed a genuine sympathy for the conditions of the working classes.

One of the other major figures at this time was Winston Churchill, a former soldier and journalist, before entering Parliament as a Tory in 1900. After joining the Liberals, he quickly rose to Home Secretary in the years 1910-11, before transferring to the Admiralty. His early reputation was as a radical, but, even though his archives are closed, there is sufficient evidence to indicate that his views were tempering, and becoming increasingly orthodox.

The records of other politicians are available, but they are not always particularly helpful. Sir Edward Grey was the Foreign Secretary. He had attended Winchester and Balliol, but was sent down from the latter for incorrigible idleness.

His chief passion was country life, as his books on nature demonstrate, but a sense of duty drove him to the public life. He entered Parliament in 1885, and achieved Cabinet rank in 1906. His papers are mainly Foreign Office documents, but what little there is of relevance suggests that he had some sympathy with the poorer elements of the society. Another prominent Liberal was Murray of Elibank, a former Lieutenant in the Lothian and Berwickshire Yeomanry Cavalry, before his election to the Commons in 1900. By 1910, he was the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury. His papers are incomplete, but do contain several useful letters. Another disappointing collection is that of the Marquess of Crewe, who became the Leader of the House of Lords in 1908, and Secretary of State for India in 1910. His papers give no insight into his own feelings, but there are several letters to him relating to the industrial unrest.

Even more disappointing are the collections which, after careful examination, have provided nothing of interest to the topic. Lewis Harcourt worked as private secretary to his father before election to Parliament in 1904. From 1910, he was Secretary to the Colonies. His documents - uncatalogued, and unsorted - appear to be devoid of relevant material. Sir Ellis Jones Ellis-Griffith might have been expected to provide a view, as he was Under-Secretary at the Home Office from 1912, but his collection is equally disappointing. So is Lord Rosebery's. He had been Prime Minister in the years 1894-95, but had severed himself from the Liberals in 1905, and denounced the 1909 Budget. He might have been expected to comment on, and receive letters about, the strikes, but if

this was the case, then the letters have not been preserved. Similarly, Viscount Bryce, a Liberal M.P. from 1880 to 1906, and a Minister in the 1890's, seems to have ignored such events. Mrs. Masterman would not allow access to her husband's letters. C.F.G. Masterman gained a double first at Cambridge and worked among the poor of London before entering Parliament in 1906. He became Under-Secretary at the Home Office in 1909, and Financial Secretary to the Treasury in 1912. He was closely involved with the National Insurance Act, so his papers could have been informative. However, Mrs. Masterman did give an interview in which she recalled the period, the events and some famous figures. Several of her comments have been quoted.

Thus, the main Liberal politicians have been studied in depth, and all worthwhile comments to and from them have been recorded, so as to arrive at a picture of the Liberal hierarchy. This has been revealed as many-sided, for there was no single attitude, even within the powerful ruling group. Other politicians of lesser importance have been investigated, but this has produced little worthwhile material.

The Conservatives have been analysed in the same way. The most complete records are those of Austen Chamberlain, who had been Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1903 until 1905. His diaries and letters to his father, which have been published, contain a wealth of material, especially on the 1912 coal strike. His family letters are far longer than those of Haldane and Samuel, and, therefore, go into far greater detail. The leader of the Tories at the beginning of the period was A.J. Balfour, the Prime Minister of the last

Conservative Government. He was an academic, deeply interested in philosophy. His papers record nothing about industrial unrest, perhaps because of his involvement with other matters, including the Bill to reform the House of Lords, and the question of the leadership of the Party. Balfour was, in fact, ousted in October 1911, and replaced by Andrew Bonar-Law, who had been born in Canada, and educated in Glasgow from the age of ten. He was an industrialist - Chairman of the Glasgow Iron Trade Association - and became an M.P. in 1900. His papers are valuable, and, in particular, reveal much about the 1912 coal strike. Other collections have offered but little of value. A young Tory of the time, Lord Robert Cecil, an M.P. from 1906, received several interesting letters on the attitude of Unionists to events. Lord Curzon, who had been in the Commons from 1886 to 1898, and had held office as Under Secretary for India, Under Secretary at the Foreign Office, Viceroy and Governor-General of India, has a large collection of documents, but few of them refer to industrial unrest in Britain. A back-bench M.P., Colonel Sir Robert Sanders, a barrister, kept a diary, which produced several useful and stimulating entries on the subject.

Access to the collections of some of the other leading politicians was refused. Lord Birkenhead would not give permission to inspect the papers of his father, F.E. Smith, the successful barrister, and, as an M.P., a member of the influential Unionist Social Reform Committee. The manuscripts of L.S. Amery, the scholar, barrister, and writer of Times' editorials, and of Lord Lansdowne, a former Foreign Secretary,

were being catalogued, and were unavailable.

The records of minor Tory politicians have been studied, so that as complete an account as possible of the Conservative reactions to the labour unrest will be provided. Just like the Liberals, there was no single Tory attitude, but Conservatives tended to be less understanding.

Biographies and Autobiographies

Another way of discovering the opinions of individuals is through biographies and autobiographies, but there are serious drawbacks in placing too much emphasis upon such sources. Biographers can select evidence to support whatever case they care to espouse, and writers of memoirs can ignore events, or look back in such a way as to present their activities in the best possible light. This does not mean that these works should be ignored - on the contrary, they can often be employed as extremely valuable supporting material, as long as they are treated with caution. It is especially unfortunate that so many chroniclers have ignored the industrial and social disturbances of the period 1911-14, but this could be significant in itself. Perhaps, on reflection, events did not appear to be as serious as had appeared at the time. Even when nothing was mentioned, there is often a sound insight into the atmosphere of class relationships prevalent at that time, which is almost as important.

Contemporary Publications

More accurate accounts of feelings at the time can be obtained from contemporary publications, as they tend to express the author's true opinions of events as soon as they

have occurred. They might change later, but the article, pamphlet, or book remains, and for someone to write at length immediately suggests a genuine depth of feeling which ought not to be ignored. Such works could well influence, or even consolidate the readers' views, and could provide a focus for conversation. Of course, many more written from a quite deliberate political viewpoint, and a large number, particularly pamphlets, came directly from the political parties, but this does not deter from their value: they reflected the opinions of at least some people.

Novels

One special type of contemporary publication was the novel, which did not deal with particular issues, but is extremely important in indicating class structure and class feeling. A section will be devoted to literature in the chapter dealing with social stratification.

Public Opinion

Thus, the sources for this work are very diverse, and concentrate as far as possible on opinions expressed at the time that the events occurred. Clearly, no single attitude can emerge: in any community so socially diverse as Edwardian England, there will be many. It is quite possible that differences of opinion could centre around the various

political parties, so that supporters of one group would almost inevitably feel differently to those who advocated a different line; however, it is equally possible that the split could be on class lines. It is conceivable that the shades of opinion were created on class and political lines. This study attempts to analyse these groupings.

Chapter II

Social Stratification in Edwardian England

(i) Class: a general analysis

According to popular belief, there are three classes in a society, the upper, middle, and working. It is not always easy to allocate an individual to a particular class, as the boundaries are not fixed, and from time to time, the social position of a group of people can change, as the ideas of the society progress. Thus, popular usage does not provide an adequate definition of social class. However, many tighter analyses have been produced. Most of these differ, so that there is not generally agreed criterion of class. Thus, any discussion on social stratification ought to be preceded by an examination of several versions that have been used in the past.

The Marxists evolved their own definition which was based upon their analysis of the dynamics of capitalism. When this stage in social evolution had been reached two classes faced each other - the capitalists, who owned the means of production, and the propertyless proletariat, who were obliged to offer their labour for sale to the former. This model was an oversimplification of the complexities of class structure in Edwardian Britain, and, in particular it omitted to take into account the increasing numbers who fitted into neither class, but occupied the area between them. Such people included white collar workers and small proprietors. In addition, it ignored the divorce of ownership from control and the proportion of capitalist enterprises. Perhaps it was this unexpected

development which prevented the class confrontation and violent revolution that the Marxists had anticipated, but for the purposes of this study, the Marxist scheme offers a useful starting point, but it is not equipped to meet the actual problems encountered.

There have been various attempts to use occupational status as the basis for class stratification. In the Census Report of 1911, the Registrar General had devised a system in which there were five occupational divisions, which were supposed to correspond to social class:-

- I High status professional, business management and administrative
- II Some professions, including teaching and farming
- III Skilled manual, including clerical
- IV Semi-skilled manual
- V Unskilled manual

This was often regarded as too narrow a definition, with barriers between the divisions that were too vague. Thus, other structures were created, but the problem of fringe groups prevented the establishment of any definitive framework based on occupation. For example, on the boundaries of the upper working class and the lower middle class are such occupations as typist, nurse, shop assistant, and the lower supervisory grades in industry. There can be little doubt that these jobs are popularly accorded higher prestige than those which are unquestionably working class. They are probably rated higher than the skilled manual trades, though, of course, skill and social class are not perfectly correlated. Moreover, such a classification is not permanent. Changes in

the society will create movements in the order. For instance, the reliance on mechanisation during the First World War elevated the position of engineers. Thus, while the type of work undertaken by an individual is important, this can only be considered in conjunction with other factors in determining social class.

Income is often equated with social class: the upper class is supposed to be rich, and the working class poor, with the middle class coming somewhere in-between. However, if money is to be used as the basis for classification, there is the difficulty that the lower section of the middle class and the upper group of working class would have roughly similar incomes. In addition, wealth could have been acquired by means which were not considered acceptable, so that a rich man could be rejected by his contemporaries because he had been involved in an unsuitable way of life.

This implies that people place themselves and others into a particular social class. This has not always proved to be an accurate method of arriving at class positions. There is often a distinct lack of uniformity. People at the same level in the same job might describe themselves differently, while a man whose income and occupation are working class, and who is accepted as working class by his colleagues, may prefer to think of himself as middle class, and would describe himself as such if asked, perhaps through a belief that middle class life and values are superior. Middle class life implies a less physical, more comfortable, more luxurious level of existence, to which many of the working class might aspire. By the same token, a professional man with a large income may

wish to refer to himself as working class, but most would like to safeguard their position, and fear attempts at equalisation, believing that this would worsen their economic and social place in society.

Thus, none of these basic definitions of class really tackle the question fully. In addition, there are various symbols of class, such as accent, dress, and abode, which help to identify people into approximate social groupings, but, once again, they are not entirely accurate. A working man might wear overalls, because his job is a dirty, manual one. Perhaps the middle class man has a more extensive wardrobe, a reflection of his larger income, but this does not mean that a member of a social class can be identified at a glance. Accent is often the result of education, and education a reflection of wealth. However, education and accent can provide no more than an indication of class. A working man can study after work, so as to receive what might be regarded as a middle class education. Regional tones are generally thought of as working class, but this is not necessarily the case. There are two types of middle class. One is national, metropolitan in interest, and mobile, while the other is local, rooted in the district, and unlikely to leave. Such people, especially in the past, were likely to have accents as regional as those of the working class. Abode is another symbol of class. The working class tend to inhabit certain parts of a town, in small, often terraced houses, or in flats, while the middle class live in different areas, in more expensive accommodation - often owning their own detached or semi-detached houses, with gardens, and the upper class live in

large detached residences in their own grounds. This does not necessarily follow, and anyway, the housing you have is usually a reflection of your income, and so does not make any real contribution to a definition of social class.

Thus, it is extremely difficult to place a person within a social class. Although it is commonly accepted that there are three classes, there are no agreed borders, so that the dividing lines are vague. A popular story in Edwardian England concerned the Duke of Devonshire's amazement when he learnt the use of napkin holders. He was accustomed to a fresh serviette for every meal; the working class never used one, so the use of a napkin could be the criterion for entry into the middle class, but that presumes the existence of three neat compartments into which everyone can be placed. This is not the case. There are innumerable divisions. The Austrian, Charles Morawitz, writing in 1911, observed that 'the social division of class is more intricate in England than anywhere else'. He described the various sub-sections as a 'Gesellschaftspyramide'.⁽¹⁾ Given this, any definition of class would be vague. The middle class are not manual workers, but they lack independent wealth; they are not poor, but neither are they rich. Perhaps they could be described as white-collar workers, but this creates its own problem of meaning. For the purposes of this study, occupation and income will be the main determining factors in social class, but the various factors involved will each be considered, using as much contemporary material as possible.

(1) C. Moravitz, 'Sidelights on the National Economy and People of Britain' Nineteenth Century and After, June 1911, p. 1011

(ii) Class in Edwardian England

Before the First World War, incomes varied very widely, according to the skills and qualifications of the individual, and the differences were not ameliorated by high taxation, for income tax was only 1s 3d in the pound for those earning more £160 a year. Of course, it was not always possible to equate occupation to income, and both to class, but there was generally a connection, and no-one doubted that classes did exist. A Punch cartoon of 1911 illustrates this. The caption read, 'In order to avoid "social bias", judges in future will be selected from all classes'. Sitting at the bench was a judge in wig and robes, with the blackened hands and face of a collier, pipe in mouth, and a foaming mug of ale in front of him. (2) Clearly, working class advancement to the bench was not expected in Edwardian England.

Occupation

Occupation is one of the easiest factors employed in determining class. In the 1911 Census, the Registrar General decided to divide the nation into occupational groups, and thus provided a starting point for an investigation of class structure at that time:-

	% of the working population	Number
I Professional		
a) Higher	1.00	184,000
b) Lower	3.05	560,000

(2) Punch, 21 June 1911, p. 471

II Employers, administrators, Managers		
a) Employers	6.71	1,232,000
b) Managers and administrators	3.43	629,000
III Clerical workers	4.84	887,000
IV Foremen, supervisors, inspectors	1.29	236,000
V Skilled manual	30.56	5,608,000
VI Semi-skilled manual	39.48	7,244,000
VII Unskilled manual	9.63	1,767,000

Income

Income is very often related to the prestige of the job, but this is not always the case. However, the two factors are crucial in any analysis of class. Several writers examined the distribution of money at the beginning of the twentieth century. One of the most famous studies was made by Chiozza Money, a Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society, who became a Liberal Member of Parliament in 1906. His book Riches and Poverty, published in 1905, was widely referred to by radicals. Money investigated the financial year 1903-4, and discovered that the national income was £1,710m. Of this sum, £830m was taken by five million people, with family incomes of more than £160 a year, while the rest of the nation, thirty eight million persons, lived on a total of £880m. Money then analysed in detail the distribution of these incomes:-

Those with less than £160 a year and their families		38,000,000
Those of incomes of between		
£160 and £400	3,035,000	
£400 and £500	265,000	
£500 and £600	145,000	
£600 and £700	65,000	
Unplaced	<u>240,000</u>	
		3,750,000
Persons with incomes of £700 and over		<u>1,250,000</u>
		<u>43,000,000</u>

In other words, 250,000 men, supporting a further million people, made over £700 a year. Money regarded them as rich. In addition to these, 750,000 earners of income, supporting another three million people, took between £160 and £700. They were described as comfortably off, while the rest of the population, according to Money, lived in poverty.⁽³⁾ Other investigations went even further. Supertax was paid on incomes in excess of £5,000 a year, and in 1911-12, it was paid by 11,554 persons,⁽⁴⁾ yet at that time the average wage in Britain, for men over the age of twenty in 'ordinary industry' was £1 9s.⁽⁵⁾

Thus, Britain was a country with a large number of manual workers, and a country with very wide disparities in wealth.

(3) L.G.C. Money, Riches and Poverty (1905) pp. 39, 35, 42

(4) J.C. Stamp, British Incomes and Prosperity (1916) p. 331

(5) A.L. Bowley, The Division of the Product of Industry (Oxford, 1919) p. 28

Many people earned very little, but it does not necessarily follow that manual workers were the worst paid members of the community. However, in this period, there were several surveys which related occupation to income and to social status, so the question can be resolved. The most extensive investigation was by Charles Booth, a Liverpool business man, President of the Royal Statistical Society 1892-94, and a social investigator. He studied London in the 1880's. The fact that this was over a decade before the Edwardian era does not seriously detract from its value, for, if anything, monetary distinctions widened rather than narrowed in the intervening years. Booth divided the population into socio-economic groups:-

'A - The lowest class - occasional labourers, loafers, and semi-criminals.

'B - The very poor - casual labourers, hand to mouth existence, chronic want.

'C and D - The poor - including alike those whose earnings are small because of irregularity of employment, and those whose work, though regular, is ill-paid.

'E and F - The regularly employed and fairly paid working class of all grades.

'G and H - Lower and upper middle class and all above this level.'

Booth then revealed the number of Londoners in each category:-

Class	Number	% of the population	
A (lowest)	37,610	0.9	
B (very poor)	316,834	7.5	30.7% in
C and D (poor)	938,293	22.3	poverty
E and F (working class comfortable)	2,166,503	51.5	69.3% in
G and H (middle class and above)	749,930	17.8	comfort

Booth explained exactly what he meant by poverty: 'By the word "poor" I mean to describe those who have a sufficiently bare income, such as 18s to 21s per week for a moderate family'.⁽⁶⁾ Low wages had been equated with unskilled labour.

A sociological analysis by F.G. D'Aeth in 1910 linked income and occupation more carefully:-

- A. The loafer, earning 18s a week as an irregular labourer.
- B. The low-skilled labourer, who earned £1 5s a week.
- C. The artisan, bringing home £2 5s a week by skilled labour, or by acting as a foreman, clerk, or minor official.
- D. The small shopkeeper and clerk, on £3 a week.
- E. The small business man, expecting £300 a year.
- F. The professional and administrative class, earning £600 a year.
- G. The rich, with £2,000 and above a year.⁽⁷⁾

Thus it is clear that the degree of skill possessed

(6) C. Booth, Life and Labour of the People of London Streets and Population of East London (1902 ed.) pp. 20-21; East and Central London, p. 20

(7) F.G. D'Aeth 'Present Tendencies of Class Differentiation' Sociological Review, October 1910, pp. 270-1

by a worker would make a considerable difference to his earnings, though for manual workers, this gap was narrowing. G.D.H. Cole has estimated that in about 1864, a labourer anticipated 15s to 16s a week, and a skilled man £1 10s; by 1914, the figures were £1 4s to £1 5s and £1 17s.⁽⁸⁾

Raymond Postgate, in his study of building workers, revealed a similar trend. Between 1853 and 1861, a bricklayer averaged 5s a day, and his labourer 3s, or 60% of the craftsman's rate. By 1872, the bricklayer made 7s 1d a day, and the labourer took 62% of this - 4s 4d. In 1914, the respective figures were 8s 7d and 6s, so that the labourer was earning 70% of the skilled man's rate.

Sidney Pollard's extensive study of wages in Sheffield establishes that large differences in pay for the various grades of work existed in the city's cutlery and engineering trades. Some forgers and smiths working with silver could earn £3 15s a week in 1910⁽⁹⁾ - considerably more than those in the lower ranks of non-manual labour could expect.

Frederick Rogers, the contemporary vellum binder, trade unionist, and journalist, confirmed that 'the workman who has a good trade and is in constant work...is as well off as... many among the lower ranks of professional men'.⁽¹⁰⁾ Such an opinion has received statistical confirmation by Lockwood's analysis of the wages of clerks. He investigated the average

(8) G.D.H. Cole, Studies in Class Structure (1955) pp. 57-58

(9) R. Postgate, The Builders' History (1923) p. 455

(10) S. Pollard, A History of Labour in Sheffield (Liverpool, 1959) pp. 209 et. seq.

annual earnings of clerks over the age of twenty-five in the year 1905-6, with the following results:-

Bank clerks	£170
Civil Servant assistant clerk	£100
Local Government officer	£90
Railway clerk	£80

This information was supported by an examination of the earnings of all clerks in 1909:-

% of all male clerks earning more than £160 a year by industrial groups		Average earnings of others
Insurance	46	£85
Banking	44	£90
Civil Service	37	£95
Local Government	28	£91
Industry and Commerce	23	£80
Railways	10	£80 (11)

Such workers might have the occupational status of middle class, even though some skilled manual workers, who, in terms of employment would be regarded as working class, had larger earnings. Nevertheless, they would describe themselves as middle class, and quite distinct from even the more affluent manual worker. Shan Bullock has written what he calls a biography of Robert Thorne, although the book is probably an autobiographical novel. Thorne was a London clerk, earning about £100 a year. He was convinced of his middle class position, asking, "Had I not still to uphold the dignity of my class by conforming to its traditions in the manner of

appearance?" (12)

Living Standards

Thus, there were a relatively small number of extremely wealthy people, a fairly large group of medium income families, and another section of the community with relatively low wages. Rowntree looked at the relationship between wages and standards of living, and discovered that 7,230 people in York - a tenth of the population - were 'families whose total earnings are insufficient to obtain the necessaries for the maintenance of merely physical efficiency. Poverty falling under this head may be described as "primary" poverty'. For a family of two adults and three children, Rowntree calculated that the minimum to maintain life, but allowing no money for fares, papers, letters, sick clubs, trade unions, beer and tobacco, no toys for the children, and providing that there was no absence from work, either through illness, or through the employer requiring less than a full week's work, the wages should be £1 1s 8d a week. As well as those people whose average earnings were below this level, Rowntree discovered that there were 13,072 persons, or 18.51% of the citizens, living in "secondary" poverty. Although they earned more than £1 1s 8d, a part of their wages was absorbed in other expenditure, useful or otherwise, such as drinking, gambling, or poor housekeeping, so as to reduce the amount available to support the family to less than that sum. (13).

(12) D. Lockwood, The Blackcoated Worker (1958) pp. 217, 42

(13) B.S. Rowntree, Poverty. A Study in Town Life (1910 ed.)

Booth's study had revealed that almost one third of Londoners lived in poverty. Further surveys were conducted by the statisticians Bowley and Burnett-Hurst. Their work was not as comprehensive as that of Booth or Rowntree, but confirmed their conclusions. Bowley and Burnett-Hurst examined the towns of Northampton, Warrington, Stanley, and Reading, and discovered that a large section of the men were earning less than a pound a week: 13% in Northampton; 3.5% in Warrington; 4.0% in Stanley; and 15.0% in Reading. Moreover, the figures for those with between £1 and £1 5s were 14%; 28.5%; 5.0%; and 35.5% respectively. (14)

Hubert Llewellyn Smith, the Permanent Secretary at the Board of Trade, prepared a paper for Lloyd George, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, giving the total numbers of adult workers on less than £1 a week. The analysis was based on work done during the preparation of the National Insurance Bill in 1911, for which Smith had planned the section on unemployment insurance. 1,320,000 men and 1,635,000 women over the age of twenty were in this category, excluding seamen, fishermen, domestic servants, agricultural labourers who boarded with their employers, shop assistants, clerks, and those serving in the army and navy. Smith warned that by 1914, when he provided this information, 'it is probable that the number has been somewhat reduced, especially as in view of the rise in the cost of living there has been a tendency for employers to look into the question of men earning low rates,

(14) A.L. Bowley and A.R. Burnett-Hurst, Livelihood and Poverty (1915) p. 33

e.g. the railway companies'. (15)

Thus, a substantial part of the nation was living in what Booth and Rowntree regarded as poverty, and if urban wages had been revealed as inadequate, contemporary studies revealed that conditions were worse in the countryside. The Government's Report on agricultural wages showed that in 1907 the average weekly earnings of ordinary labourers (including those in charge of animals, who were usually paid more than the others) in England was 17s 7d. (16) F.E. Green, who had worked in the city before rejecting regimentation, commercialism, and suburbanism for country life, and who had made a reputation as a critic of successive governments for their agricultural policies, insisted that this figure was exaggerated. (17)

Rowntree and Kendall looked at rural costs, and declared that, for a family of two adults and three children, providing that they ate no butcher's meat, no butter, no eggs and drank very little tea, a weekly income of £1 0s 6d was required. (18) Thus the majority of farm workers must have been living in poverty. M.F. Davies investigated the village of Corsely in Wiltshire, and discovered that twenty-eight households were in primary poverty, and thirty-seven in secondary, out of a total of two

(15) Lloyd George Papers C/3/10/6 Letter from Smith to Hamilton, 4 March 1914

(16) Report of an Inquiry into the Earnings and Hours of Labour of Workpeople of the United Kingdom in 1907.
V. Agriculture Cd.5460 (1910) p. xiv

(17) F.E. Green, The Tyranny of the Countryside (1913) pp.223-233

(18) B.S. Rowntree and M. Kendall, How the Labourer Lives (1913)

hundred and twenty. (19)

Clearly, a considerable section of the community had to live with insufficient money. Mrs. Peel, an accomplished journalist has indicated just how difficult life must have been for the poor. She tabulated the income per head needed just to purchase enough food and cleaning materials:-

8s 6d for 'plain but sufficient living'

15s 0d for 'good living'

17 6d-£1 for 'very good living' (20)

Rowntree had shown that wages were very often lower than these figures, and he discovered that whenever the family earnings fell below £1 5s, the diet of the household was inadequate. He compared the food of the inmates of prisons and workhouses, and the poor of York. The average worker's family proved to be the worst fed:-

Dietaries	Protein per man per day (grams)	Energy value per man per day (calories)
Workhouse (York)	136	3,702
Prisons: (English)		
Class B	134	3,038
Convict (hard labour)	177	4,159
York, average of 14 families,		
wages under £1 6s	89	2,901
Standard required for moderate		
work (Atwater)	125	3,500

(19) M.F. Davies, Life in an English Village (1909) pp. 142,

(20) C.S. Peel, How to Keep House (1902) p. 14

This type of undernourishment was further reflected by army recruitment figures. In the years 1897-1901 at York, Leeds and Sheffield, 26.5% were rejected immediately, while 21.0% were accepted on trial, and subsequently rejected, because they had failed to meet the physical requirements of the infantry - a minimum height of five feet three inches, a thirty three inch chest, and a weight of eight stones three pounds.⁽²¹⁾ The Government's Report on Physical Deterioration showed an even worse state of affairs. In 1899, twelve thousand men were examined for military service. Eight thousand were turned down at once, and after initial service, only one thousand two hundred were fit in all respects.⁽²²⁾

The implication was that the working man tended to be physically deficient. This point was made by several visitors to England. Samuel Gompers, the American labour leader, noticed that the Lancashire mill hands were short, thin and weak looking. He was surprised that they could perform a full day's work.⁽²³⁾ Jack London, another American, a former sailor, gold miner and tramp, and at this time an established writer, went even closer to the British working class. He moved into the East End of London, with a small amount of money, and experienced the conditions of the poor at first hand. Like Gompers, London was struck by the smallness of the

(21) B.S. Rowntree op.cit. pp. 234, 258, 216-8

(22) Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Physical Deterioration. Minutes of Evidence Cd.2210 (1904)
p. 173

(23) S. Gompers, Labor in Europe and America (New York, 1910)
p. 20

people. At a Salvation Army breakfast centre, he looked around, and observed 'one thing particularly conspicuous in this crowd was the shortness of stature. I, who am but of medium height, looked over the heads of nine out of ten'.⁽²⁴⁾

The most probable explanation lay in an inadequate diet, which was not confined to York. The Fabian, Mrs. Pember Reeves, inspected conditions in London in 1913, and pointed out the scarcity of cooking utensils, which usually consisted of two burned pots, a frying pan, and a kettle. Moreover, Mrs. Reeves did not believe that the standard of cuisine was very high: 'To boil a neck with pot herbs on Sunday, and make a stew of "pieces" on Wednesday, often finishes all that has to be done with meat. The intermediate dinners will ring the changes on cold neck, suet pudding, perhaps fried fish or cheap sausage and rice or potatoes. Breakfast and tea, with the exception of the husband's relishes, consist of tea and bread spread with butter, jam or margarine'.⁽²⁵⁾

Edward Cadbury and George Shann, the one a member of the wealthy confectionary family, and the other a self-educated manual worker who became a university lecturer, examined the wages of workers in the "sweated" trades, and discovered that they were often as low as 10s a week in 1907. This resulted in diets even worse than those outlined by Mrs. Reeves. The typical daily fare of such people was bread and lard for breakfast, either meat and bread for dinner - in which case, the meat would have cost about 2d - or bread and jam, cheese,

(24) J. London, The People of the Abyss (1903) p. 153

(25) Mrs. P. Reeves, Round About a Pound a Week (1913) p. 111

lard, or milk; bread and butter for tea, and, if supper was eaten, bread and lard. (26)

Such limited menus worried medical experts. Dr. Robert Hutchinson told the Committee on Physical Deterioration, "If I were asked to state the chief fault in the diet of the working classes of this country, I should say it is the excessive use of tea and bread". (27) The results were hardly surprising: many school leavers had difficulty in finding employment because of deficiencies in health and physique. (28)

Of course, some of the working class did earn enough for a better way of life. Gompers had remarked on the unhealthy appearance of Lancashire cotton workers, but they were relatively prosperous, and would have 'a breakfast of coffee or tea, bread, bacon and eggs - when eggs were cheap; a dinner of potatoes and beef; an evening meal of tea, bread and butter, cheap vegetables or fish, and a slight supper at moderate price; a few newspapers, cheap clothes, sometimes a day or two at the seaside'. (29) Another group which enjoyed above average pay were the steel workers. Lady Florence Bell, wife of the ironmaster Sir Hugh Bell, looked at Middlesbrough, the centre of her husband's business. Wages varied from 19s 6d to £4 a week, according to the skill of the worker. The whole area

(26) E. Cadbury and G. Shann, Sweating (1907) pp. 46-50

(27) Physical Deterioration, op.cit. Report and Appendix
Cd.2175, p. 40

(28) LAB 2/210/LE 701

(29) A Clarke, The Effects of the Factory System (1913 ed.)
pp. 109-110

was commonly regarded as affluent, but Lady Bell discovered that 'most of the people at the iron works are living under conditions in which the slightest lapse from thrift and forethought is necessarily conspicuous, and brings its immediate consequences'.⁽³⁰⁾ If employment was regular, then the wages would keep the family in food, but unemployment or illness would reduce the amount of money available. Virtually all the working families had certain fixed costs - notably rent, possibly clothing, boot, and burrials clubs - and the expense of coal, gas, wood, and cleaning materials. The rent had to be paid, or eviction would result; if the family did belong to any clubs, non-payment caused the policy to lapse, so these items would be the first to be deducted from wages. Any cooking would require heat, which had to be paid for, so that if the income of the family varied, the amount of food purchased would alter, to coincide with the money available.

The life style of the middle class was very different. Not only were incomes, in general, larger, but they could be relied upon: there was no chance of being laid off from work for a few days without pay. Hence, there was a very different spending pattern. The food eaten was more plentiful and of better quality than that of the working class. This is illustrated by Mrs. Beeton, whose Book of Household Management, first published in 1861, but regularly revised and enlarged, and still widely used, provided a series of what she described as 'very economical' meals. One day's food - Wednesday - was as follows:-

(30) F. Bell, At the Works (1911 ed.) p. 87

Breakfast - tea, milk, bread, buttered toast, liver and
bacon.

Lunch - potato pie made from cold meat, plain cake,
cheese, bread, ale.

Dinner - boiled beef, potatoes, carrots, suet dumplings
and baked rice pudding.

Tea might also have been eaten. Mrs. Beeton's 'little
tea' involved tea, bread, butter and potted meat, or sardines,
or cake, or watercress. (31)

The aristocracy fed even better. Edward VII's food for
one day demonstrates this. Breakfast had five courses, while
lunch and dinner were of between ten and fifteen. Tea was an
elaborate affair, with a wide choice of scones and crumpets,
tarts, rolls and cakes. However, this did not constitute the
whole of the day's eating. It was necessary to ward off hunger
pangs between main meals, so that there would have been a
morning snack of lobster salad and cold chicken, or something
similar, and, after dinner, the King was likely to take
sandwiches, a quail, or a cutlet. (32)

Such lavishness was not confined to the monarch. It was
common for members of the upper class to dine expansively and
expensively. An example of this was provided by the 1900 Club,
a Unionist organisation. In 1907, it gave a dinner at the
Albert Hall for colonial premiers - and it proved to be one
of the largest dinners held in London up to that time. There

(31) Mrs. Beeton, The Book of Household Management (1892 ed.)
pp. 1324, 1330, 1358, 1445.

(32) V. Cowles, Edward VII and his Circle (1956) p. 281

were 1,600 diners, so the club hired five hundred cooks and waiters, and ensured the success of the evening by an appropriately extravagant table, at a total cost of £4,000:-

Beef for the soup (lbs.)	4,500
Whole salmon	200
Quail	2,500
Asparagus sticks	25,000
Fresh stawberries (lbs.)	600

Bottles of:-

Champagne	1,400
Hock	1,500
Liqueur brandy	300
Chartreuse	300
Creme de menthe	500
Whisky	300

(33)

Arthur Ponsonby, formerly at Eton, then Balliol, and afterwards in the Diplomatic Service, had become a Liberal Member of Parliament in 1908. Such a background suggests that he would not support a radical cause, but, in fact, he was later to join the Labour Party. A book published by him in 1909 contrasted affluence such as the 1900 Club dinner with the poor, giving examples of the different life styles of the jobless in Britain. He quoted one unemployed man, with a family of four, who had fourteen servants, and in one week spent £60 12s 7d on food - excluding the three hundred eggs, the fruit, vegetables, and poultry that had been sent from

(33) C. Petrie, Scenes of Edwardian Life (1965) p. 42; The Carlton Club (1955) p. 157

the country. It was not an exceptional week: there had been one or two guests at luncheon, but the family dined out on one night. Ponsonby compared with this with impecunious jobless, who were unable to find work, despite their efforts. (34)

Fall in the Standard of Living

From the middle of the nineteenth century, the standard of living of the working man had improved constantly, but by about 1900, wages remained static, while prices rose. Many economists and statisticians have produced tables on this point, and all draw similar conclusions. For instance, Beveridge's figures take 1900 as the base year:

Year	Wages	Wholesale prices
1900	100.0	100.0
1910	100.8	108.8
1911	101.1	109.4
1912	103.7	114.9
1913	106.8	116.5
1914	107.8	117.2

(35)

Burnett's calculations indicate that the purchasing power of the pound in 1896 had fallen to 16s 3d in 1912, (36) and Pollard has obtained similar results from a study on Sheffield,

(34) F. Ponsonby, The Camel and the Needle's Eye (1909)

p. 153 et. seq.

(35) W.H. Beveridge, Unemployment. A Problem of Industry

(1930) p. 433

(36) J. Burnett, Plenty and Want (1966) p. 93

remarking on 'a stagnation, if not decline, in Sheffield real wages in the fifteen years preceding the First World War'.⁽³⁷⁾ Contemporary sources verify such figures. Frederick Rogers was 'pretty certain that, although the workmen's wages are larger than when I was young, their spending power is less',⁽³⁸⁾ while Philip Snowden published the housekeeping book of the Superintendent of the St. Mark's Boys' Home, Birmingham. For the same quantities of identical articles, bought in June and July 1903, and in September 1911, the price had risen from 12s 10½d to 17s 11½d.⁽³⁹⁾

The Government confirmed this change in the cost of living. A Report by the Board of Trade revealed that between 1905 and 1912, rents rose by 1.8% and the retail prices of food and coal increased by 13.7%,⁽⁴⁰⁾ while another Report showed wage fluctuations from 1899:-

(37) S. Pollard, 'Real Earnings in Sheffield 1851-1914'

Yorkshire Bulletin of Economic and Social Research
1957, p. 61

(38) F. Rogers op.cit. p. 300

(39) P. Snowden, The Living Wage (1912) p. 65

(40) Report of an Inquiry into Working Class Rents and Retail Prices together with the Rates of Wages in Certain Occupations in Industrial Towns of the United Kingdom in 1912 Cd. 6955 (1913) p. vii

Year	Increase or decrease in total weekly wages in £s
1900	+208,590
1901	- 86,587
1902	- 72,595
1903	- 38,327
1904	- 39,230
1905	- 2,169
1906	+ 57,897
1907	+200,912
1908	- 59,171
1909	- 68,922
1910	+ 14,534
1911	+ 34,578

(41)

Bowley has demonstrated that even when there were rises, they were not general to all workpeople, but were gained by only a small number of occupational groups. He took 1880 as his base year:-

Year	All occupations	Agriculture	Coal Mining	Building
1900	130	109	163	115
1910	130	110	146	115
1911	131	112	144	115
1912	135	114	152	116
1913	137	118	162	119
1914	138	122	160	123

(42)

(41) Report on Changes in Rates of Wages and Hour of Labour in the United Kingdom in 1911 Cd. 6471 (1912) p. 8

(42) A.L. Bowley, Wages and Income in the United Kingdom since 1860 (Cambridge 1937) pp. 6, 8

Thus it is clear that in the early twentieth century, the improvement in the standard of living of the working class, which had been a feature of the previous half century, ceased, and, indeed, for many there was an actual worsening in the way of life. A large section of the community had come to expect that their position would continually improve, for in the life time of the majority of the population, it had consistently done so. Hence, the deterioration was greatly resented.

Domestic Service

Perhaps the working class would not have objected so strongly if the rest of the society was suffering similar privations, but this did not appear to be the case. One of the great ambitions of the poorer sections of the aspiring middle class was to earn enough to employ a servant. Indeed, this had almost become the dividing line between the "respectable" and "disreputable" sections of the society, and there was no diminution in demand for servants, even in the period of falling working class wages. Banks has observed that 'a lady could not be expected to do household chores, and a middle class housewife who was, if only temporarily, "without" was an object of general sympathy.'⁽⁴³⁾ Thorne, when he was earning £95 a year, had not reached this point, and, with his prospects, he and his wife 'were not likely, for many a year, to rise to the slavey line in the social

(43) J.A. Banks, The English Middle-Class Concept of the Standard of Living and its Relation to Marriage and Family 1850-1900 (M.A., London, 1952) p. 208

stage'. (44)

Mrs. Beeton was extremely instructive on the subject of income and social status. She believed that servants were absolutely essential, and compiled a table showing the number and type that could be expected with a variety of household incomes:-

£1,000 p.a. cook, 2 housemaids, man servant

£750 p.a. cook, 1 housemaid, man servant

£500 p.a. cook, 1 housemaid, footboy

£300 p.a. cook, 1 housemaid

£150 p.a. general servant or girl for the rough (45)
work

There were a very large number of servants in Britain - about 1.3 million in 1911, out of a total population of 43 million. Not only were they numerous, they were also extremely cheap, which is why such a large section of the population expected to be in the servant keeping class. A letter from "A Middle Class Man" which appeared in the Times in 1909 illustrates this point. He lamented that his tax bill had risen by £12 a year, with the result that he had 'decided that our only course is to dispense with one maid servant'. (46)

Given that domestic staff were so inexpensive, and that the society was accustomed to keeping servants, it is hardly

(44) S.F. Bullock op.cit. p. 176

(45) Mrs. Beeton op.cit. p. 7

(46) Times, 24 August 1909, p. 10. On the same day, the same paper (p. 16) contained several advertisements for maids at £12 to £16 a year, and even experienced nurses at £22 a year.

surprising that the more affluent manual workers should have aspirations in this direction. When Jack London visited someone in the East End of London, he was convinced that he was in a working class area. The row of houses was unimpressive, each house having 'but one entrance, the front door; and each house is about eighteen feet wide, with a bit of a brick wall behind...But it must be understood that this is East End opulence we are now considering. Some of the people in this street are even so well to do as to keep a "slavey"'. (47)

Thus, at the fringe of the working class and the middle class, there was an overlap. Some manual workers earned enough to adopt the habits of the non-manual class, and kept a servant, while the poorer white-collar workers, who claimed middle class status could not afford a servant, which would have established them fully in that grouping.

Earl Winterton, a Conservative Member of Parliament in this period, has recalled in his autobiography the difference in the life style of the aristocracy, who were so much wealthier: 'My father was a poor man by the standards of a peer and country landowner of his day, yet we had when I was young a butler, two footmen, a hall-boy, an odd man, a cook, a kitchen maid, scullery maid, a dairy maid who made the butter and cooked the bread, a laundry maid who did the washing, two housemaids, a lady's maid for my mother and a nurse maid for me. When we went abroad, we were accompanied by my mother's maid, a footman, and my nurse', and, of course, a courier. There was also 'the modest total of nine on the

(47) J. London op.cit. pp. 28-29

outdoor staff. (48)

Clearly, the possession of money and the number of servants that a household employed were related, and were important in Edwardian England. Mrs. Masterman, recalling the period, insisted that 'you placed people' according to the size of their domestic staff. (49) Occupation, income, and servants would all contribute to placing people into certain social groups.

Health and Housing

Money bought an easy way of life, while the lack of an adequate income would ensure a permanent state of unhealthiness, due to a shortage of food, and this meant succumbing easily to disease. In the same way, low wages meant living in an area of cheap housing. R.A. Bray, writing at the time, insisted that with town life, 'children's faces lost the colour of health, girls became anaemic, women became shrunken, narrow-chested and ill-developed'. (50) However, it seemed to be only the poorer elements in the working class who suffered in this way. A great deal of medical opinion at the time condemned the housing of those in poverty as being unhealthy. Birmingham City Council investigated housing conditions in 1913, and discovered that, out of 175,000 dwellings, 50,000 were unfit for habitation; 58,000 had no separate water closet; and 42,000

(48) Earl Winterton, Fifty Tumultuous Years (1955) pp. 102, 103.

(49) Interview given by Mrs. Masterman to this writer, 10 May 1974.

(50) R.A. Bray, The Town Child (1907) p. 13

had no separate water supply, no sinks, and no drains.⁽⁵¹⁾ Rowntree revealed an equally depressing scene in York. He studied 11,560 houses, and of these, 3,130 had no separate water closet; 228 shared 33 closets; and 2,229 houses lacked any water supply. Moreover, 442 houses shared 30 water taps.⁽⁵²⁾ In Shoreditch, 'the sanitary arrangements of many of the houses were literally nil, and the death rate of the area was actually four times that of the rest of London'.⁽⁵³⁾ In Manchester and Salford, the Citizen's Association documented cases just as horrific, and announced that in one place, forty dwellings shared one water tap, while elsewhere, there was one water closet for eight houses.⁽⁵⁴⁾ Robert Roberts, in his semi-autobiographical study of Salford just before the First World War, recalled his mother having a bath installed. The neighbours came to inspect it, for, 'till then, some had never seen a bath, much less used one'.⁽⁵⁵⁾ These conditions were made even worse by overcrowding. The Census of 1911 showed just how serious this problem was:-

(51) M. Abrams, The Condition of the British People 1911-1945 (1945) p. 44

(52) B.S. Rowntree op.cit. pp. 184-187

(53) A.O. Jay, A Story of Shoreditch (1896) p. 12

(54) T.A. Marr, Housing Conditions in Manchester and Salford (Manchester 1904) pp. 44, 46

(55) R. Roberts, The Classic Slum (Manchester 1971) p. 19

Average number of occupants per room	England and Wales	London	Rural Districts	Urban Districts
$\frac{1}{2}$ or less	9.7	5.7	11.4	9.2
$\frac{1}{2}$ -1	22.0	14.9	23.5	21.6
1	15.0	14.5	14.5	15.1
1- $1\frac{1}{2}$	23.2	20.8	22.2	23.5
$1\frac{1}{2}$ -2	15.9	20.1	13.8	16.5
2- $2\frac{1}{2}$	4.8	7.5	3.9	5.1
$2\frac{1}{2}$ -3	2.8	6.2	1.9	3.0
3-4	0.8	1.7	0.5	0.8
4 and more	0.7	2.3	0.3	0.9
in tenements of over 9 rooms	5.1	6.3	8.0	4.3
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(56)

Almost one tenth of the population were living in conditions of more than two to a room. Medical men at the time were convinced that this caused ill-health and premature death. The Medical Officer of Health for Birmingham noted that the year 1911, 'by reason of having a long, dry, and very hot summer, a year of high infant mortality. Particularly was the mortality in the poorer parts of the city inflated in this way. In the affluent district of Edgebaston and Harbourne, the death rate was 12.3 per 1,000. In the poor, working class area of St. Mary's, the figure was 25.4. Infant mortality rates in that city in the same year showed a similar tendency for death to be concentrated in the

least prosperous regions:-

St. Mary's	299	per	1,000	live	births
St. Bartholemew's	207	"	"	"	"
St. Thomas's	171	"	"	"	"
St. Martin's	178	"	"	"	"
Edgbaston and Harbourne	105	"	"	"	" (57)

In sheffield, the figures for 1913 revealed that there was a far higher rate of infant mortality in the poor areas than in the rich. The contrast between the most depressed districts and the wealthiest was large:-

Brightside East	198
Sheffield North	188
Eccleshall Sputh	65 (58)

Again, in Blackburn, the statistics illustrate this point. In the wealthier suburbs, infant mortality was 96 per 1,000, but in the least affluent parts of the town, it was 315 per 1,000. (59)

Sir George Newman, the Chief Medical Officer at the Board of Education, and a Lecturer in Public Health at St. Bartholemew's Hospital, concluded that there were two features 'which appear to be common to the high infant mortality districts, namely a high density of population,

(57) City of Birmingham Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1911 (Birmingham 1912) pp. 12, 16.

(58) S. Pollard op.cit. p. 194

(59) M. Laski 'Domestic Life' in S. Nowell-Smith (ed.) Edwardian Life 1901-1914 (1964) p. 205

and a considerable degree of manufacturing industry'.⁽⁶⁰⁾

The problem was that the poorly paid could not afford better housing, so that they had to remain in their badly sanitated and overcrowded homes, and suffer as a result. The 1911 Census shows the class bias in this suffering:-

Mortality rates of legitimate infants under one year of age in England and Wales according to the occupation of the father

1.	Upper and middle class	76.4
2.	Intermediate between wage earners and middle class	106.4
3.-8.	All wage earners	132.5
3.	Skilled	112.7
4.	Intermediate, mixed skilled and unskilled	121.5
5.	Unskilled	152.5
6.	Textile workers	148.1
7.	Miners	160.1
8.	Agricultural labourers	96.9

The classes could also be separated by the number of servants that they employed, if any, and in another way, by the education received. The aim of the middle-class parent was to send his children to public school, for this was regarded as the best type of education. The Headmaster of Shrewsbury, the Reverend G.A. Arlington, summed up this attitude by insisting that 'an English public school is the

(60) G. Newman, Infant Mortality (1907) pp. 26-27

(61) Census of England and Wales. Vol. Marriages, Births and Deaths Cd. 6578 (1912-13) p. 88

best instrument yet devised for making a decent citizen out of the average English boy'.⁽⁶²⁾ This meant someone who would uphold the ethos of the existing society, with its emphasis on capitalism and the perpetuation of class differentiation. If a child did not attend a public school, he would merit a lower social standing than those who did, unless the teaching had been done by a private tutor, rather than at a school.

F.G. D'Aeth's analysis of social classes included education as well as wages and occupation. However, he did not even begin to consider this point until he reached Class D, the small shop keeper and clerk. These, he thought, would have received an elementary education. The smaller business men, group E, would have been to a grammar school, and the professional and administrative class, earning £600 a year, might have been to a public school, and would generally have attended a university. The rich were expected to have gone to a public school.⁽⁶³⁾

To ignore the educational standards of groups A, B, and C does not mean that they did not receive an education. Elementary schooling was both free and compulsory. All the children of the neighbourhood were instructed together.

Thus, working class boys and girls were born in an area, brought up and schooled in it, and probably settled down in the same locality to work, marry, and raise their own children. This could well have intensified the feeling of

Doubtful, high moving-rates often due to inability to pay the rent etc. S. Headlam, The slave of impending class

(62) C.A. Arlington, A Schoolmaster's Apology (1914) p. 14

(63) F.G. D'Aeth op.cit. pp. 270-1

solidarity common to traditional working class districts.

However, it does not follow that the education provided matched that of the more prosperous children. Some of the off-spring of the lowly paid parents were unable to profit fully from the instruction that was offered. At the time, Dr. A. Arkle maintained that in Liverpool, the most poverty-stricken children were simply unable to benefit from the teaching available because hunger made it impossible for them to learn.⁽⁶⁴⁾ Nevertheless, literacy was reaching most children in the Edwardian era. There are figures to support this assertion. The Local Government Board investigated social conditions, which included basic literacy:-

In 1865, for every 1,000 men married in England and Wales, 225 could not sign the register, while in 1907 the number was only 14; the respective rates for women were 312 and 17.⁽⁶⁵⁾

While this does not provide an indication of the absolute level of literacy, it was an indication that education was reaching the masses - certainly, everyone was supposed to go to school. The improved standard of learning could, in itself, have an effect on social stratification and relationships, for a literate population could have higher material aspirations than an illiterate one.

(64) A.S. Arkle 'Child Life in Liverpool' Liverpool Medico-Chirurgical Journal, July 1907, pp. 25-28

(65) Public Health and Social Conditions Cd. 4671 (1909)

Causes of Poverty

However, standards of living were falling, and several associations existed which were designed to alleviate poverty. Perhaps the most famous of these was the Charity Organisation Society. One of its founders was Helen Bosanquet, a former student at Newnham College, Cambridge, and later a University Extension Lecturer, before becoming the Secretary of the Society. Her views on the poor reflected those of the Organisation. She was convinced that many were in dire financial straits though their own inadequacies, due to 'excess or self indulgence'. She did not believe that such people should receive any help. In the same way, Mrs. Bosanquet thought that the inmates of workhouses were usually there unnecessarily, having entered because they were 'suffering from sheer laziness'. (66)

traditional
liberal
thinking

10

Other bodies were prepared to blame the working classes' inefficiency for contributing to poverty inefficiency. Miss Loane, the superintendent of a voluntary group which sent nurses to working class homes to tend the sick, felt that the very people she wanted to help lacked 'thrift, foresight, order, and cleanliness', and insisted that 'if the true cause of death could be marked on every certificate, laziness of husband, of wife, even of mother, would be a frequent entry'. (67) Certainly, such views were in keeping with those of Mrs. Bosanquet and the Charity Organisation Society. Another charitable group was the St. Pancras School for

2

(66) H. Bosanquet, The Poor Law Report of 1909 (1911) pp. 4-5

(67) M. Loane, Neighbours and Friends (1910) pp. 10, 249

Mothers, which aimed to advise the working class women of the area on housekeeping. One of its supporters, Mrs. Humphrey Ward, the grand-daughter of Dr. Arnold of Rugby, argued that 'even the labourer on 18s or 21s a week could live plentifully, so far as food is concerned, if he or his wife knew all there is to be known by ordinary, intelligent people about food and its preparation'.⁽⁶⁸⁾ The article shows not only Mrs. Ward's feeling of superiority over the working class, but also her inability to realise the true economic position of the poorly paid. She observed that she knew a crippled child who received meat, vegetables, pudding, and bread for 1½d to 2d a meal, and used this as proof that a provident family could manage with a small income. Normal children, being active, would eat more than a cripple, and adults would eat more than children. Given a family of two adults and three children, one meal on that basis would cost at least 1s, and the family would require at least two meals a day for seven days a week. In other words, more than 14s a week would be spent on food alone. Clearly, then Mrs. Ward's calculations could not have been accurate. A household could not live plentifully on 18s a week.

Such errors angered those who were more sympathetic to the poor. Rowntree, in particular, objected to ill-informed or hostile comments. He conducted a running argument with Mrs. Bosanquet, and in a second study of York concentrating on 7-9 June, 1910, examined unemployment and its causes. Every household in the city was investigated, at a time when

(68) H. Ward 'Letter' in Miss Bibby et al. The Pudding Club

trade was slightly depressed. 129 unemployed youths were discovered. Of these, four-fifths had a deficient physique or came from inadequate homes, so that they were not amenable to the discipline of work. Of the adult males who normally worked in regular occupation, 23.3% were unemployed because of their age - forty seemed to be the age at which employers began to discriminate against unskilled men. Of the others, physical handicaps kept 7.2% from work; bad character accounted for 15.5%, and a combination of physical handicaps and bad character kept 3.1% jobless. This left slightly over half of the unemployed who normally worked in regular jobs, and had satisfactory character, health, and age, but could find no appointment because of the state of trade.

Of the casual workers who were unemployed, Rowntree and Lasker discovered that well over half were in this position through no fault of their own. In the building trades, three quarters of the skilled men had good character and health, while half of the unskilled men were similarly placed. Of course, the survey did uncover a small proportion of people who had no desire to find a job. About one tenth of the workless men of York fitted into this category. The investigators blamed their upbringing and environment, rather than the idlers themselves, saying that this brought about the state of mind which made them unwilling to seek a job.⁽⁶⁹⁾ Thus, their attitude was far more sympathetic than that of the Charity Organisation Society, which tended to regard a large proportion of the unemployed as work shy.

(69) B.S. Rowntree and B. Lasker, Unemployment (1911) pp.

The Society saw another cause of poverty. Margaret Tree represented this opinion in maintaining that 'intemperance is a contributing factor to the position of the lowest classes'.⁽⁷⁰⁾ This might have been true. General Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, discovered that in 1890, there were 190,000 public houses in the United Kingdom, and concluded that 'there were half a million men who are more or less always besotted'.⁽⁷¹⁾ Miss Loane's books often refer to the heavy drinking of the working classes. Certainly, the number of people charged with drunkenness was increasing. In 1857, 3.94 per 1,000 of the population appeared in court as a result of this offence, while by 1907, the figure had risen to 7.01.⁽⁷²⁾ Of course, this could merely indicate increased police vigilance. In fact, proportionately less money was being spent on drink. In 1876, 15% of consumer expenditure went on drink; between 1880 and 1900 this had fallen to about 12.5%, and from 1900 to 1914, there was a constant decline - in 1911, 8.5% was devoted to alcohol.⁽⁷³⁾

A paper read to some Unionist M.P.'s in 1911 insisted that 'the underpaid class of working people seems to be too poor to drink. We did not expect to find this, but it is

(70) M.C. Tree 'Worcester' in H. Bosanquet (ed.) Social Conditions in Industrial Towns (1912) p. 21

(71) W. Booth, In Darkest England and the Way Out (1890) p.49

(72) Report on Public Health and Social Conditions *op.cit.* p.109

(73) A.E. Dingle 'Drink and the Working Class Living Standards in Britain 1870-1914' Economic History Review (1972) p. 611

so'.⁽⁷⁴⁾ Most of the middle and upper classes presumed that the working classes did drink heavily. Harold Levy has observed that a public house is 'where people go for the social life and entertainments, often in agreeable surroundings, which they lack at home. The drinking habit comes with this attempt to meet the home's deficiencies'.⁽⁷⁵⁾

This view was confirmed by the Reverend Dolling, a Catholic priest who had been involved in social work before accepting a living in the slums of Portsmouth, towards the end of the nineteenth century. He observed that 'men were drunk because their stomachs were empty and the public house was the only cheerful place of entertainment'.⁽⁷⁶⁾ Given the crowded and insanitary homes of a large section of the community, the public house must have appeared palatial, and of course, drink soon brought oblivion from the harsh realities of life. As the Daily Mirror put it, 'who can keep from drink with the rent to pay and children to bring up and wives to support, Take a man away from all that, give him a reasonable wage, and he will improve his ways'.⁽⁷⁷⁾ Many doctors at the time noted a connection between poor environment and a steady

(74) Unionist Party Papers on Unrest among the Working Classes

(1911) p. 65. The introduction was signed by

L.S. Amery, W. Astor, J.L. Baird, H.C. Bentinck,

F. Cassel, G.S. Goldman, W. Joynson-Hicks, G.L.

Lampson, A.D. Steel-Maitland, and M. Woods.

(75) H. Levy, Drink. An Economic and Social Study (1951) p.25

(76) R.R. Dolling, Ten Years in a Portsmouth Slum (1896) p.17

(77) Daily Mirror, 24 March 1911, p. 7

consumption of alcohol. Dr. R.J. Collie, once on the medical staff of the London School Board, felt that 'the close connection between a craving for drink and bad housing, bad feeding, a polluted and depressing atmosphere, long hours of work in overheated and often ill-ventilated rooms, only relieved by the excitements of town life, is too self-evident to need demonstration'. (78)

No doubt drinking did contribute to poverty, as the Charity Organisation Society maintained, but the relative amount spent on alcohol was decreasing, so perhaps it was possible to over-emphasize this as a factor which worsened the position of the poor. Certainly, the paper read to the Unionist M.F.'s was unable to link the two, although it had firmly expected to do so.

Class Relationships

The question of the relationship between drink and poverty was just one part of the whole problem of the attitudes of the classes towards each other. Some of the middle class believed that poverty was the result of idleness, while others denied this. Perhaps one of the causes for the former view was the enormous disparities in wealth. Lady Jeune, at the end of the nineteenth century, could observe that young ladies often received between £250 and £300 for clothes, but 'even at that figure girls find it

(78) Report on Physical Deterioration op.cit. Cd. 2175 p.

impossible to make both ends meet'.⁽⁷⁹⁾ A few years later, the magazine Woman, which had a largely middle class readership, asked if a wife or daughter could 'be well-dressed on an allowance of from £30 to £50 a year'. The writer answered the question: 'I think she can if only she will be prudent and sensible. No woman who makes a figure in society can dress on twice these sums; but there are thousands of girls who do not spend their days in a whirl of balls and bazaars and house party diversions'.⁽⁸⁰⁾ There were also hundreds of thousands of homes which received £50 as the total annual income to maintain a family. Thus, it could be that the rich, moderately off, and the poor were so separated that the problems of the worst paid were simply not appreciated.

The upper class had succeeded in retaining its aristocratic framework, despite the arrival of people enriched by the changes in industry. This was a new phenomena. Until 1885, only seven new peers had been associated with commerce and industry. Of these, three came from commercial families which had made outstanding contributions to public service, and all three had died childless. There had been three bankers, two with strong aristocratic family connections, and the other exercised a behind the scenes influence on government. The last of the seven, Edward Strutt, was the only true product of industry. His grandfather had started the family fortune in partnership with Richard Arkwright.

(79) Lady Jeune, Lesser Questions (1894) p. 135.

(80) Woman, 10 October 1900, p.13

Strutt himself was involved in politics rather than business, but he was associated with industry in the public mind. In 1886, three industrialists were elevated, inaugurating a period when an increasing number of such men were honoured. From 1885 to 1914, 31.1% of all new peers were connected with commerce and industry, and 21.6% lacked any noble or gentle background.⁽⁸¹⁾ Nevertheless, the upper class did not generally work for a living, and tended to look down on those who did, and in particular, on anyone who was involved in shops of any sort. Marganita Laski has noted that 'were a person actually engaged in the retail trade to obtain a presentation, his presentation would be cancelled as soon as the Lord Chamberlain was made aware of the nature of his occupation'.⁽⁸²⁾ Yet even this disdain for those who did earn their income was disappearing in the years immediately preceding the First World War. Two exceedingly rich "trades people" to be honoured were Thomas Lipton, the chain store magnate, who was knighted in 1898, and the grocer Hudson Kearley, who progressed from Baronet in 1908 to Privy Councillor the following year, and emerged as Lord Devonport in 1910.

However, if the upper class was beginning to mix with the wealthier elements of the middle class, it remained

(81) R.E. Pulphrey 'The Introduction of Industrialists into The British Peerage: a study of the adaptation of a social institution' American Historical Review (1960) pp. 1-16

(82) M. Laski op.cit. p. 185

largely ignorant of the ways of the rest of the country. This was well illustrated by Robert Blatchford, the soldier, clerk, and Socialist journalist, who escorted Edward Hulton, heir to his father's newspaper business, round some of the inadequate houses of Manchester, his own city: 'I took him into a slum hovel where the husband had just died of consumption and was laid out dead on the table. There was no fire and no beds. Three young children crowded together on the floor with a couple of sacks over them, and the widow sat on an empty box crying herself blind. Young Hulton looked round, emptied all the money out of his pockets, and walked out without a word. When I spoke to him he could only shake his head. He was unable to control his voice. And he would not go into another house. He had seen all he needed to bring him to the naked, ugly truth'. (83)

However, most of the upper class were not enlightened in this way, and remained ignorant about such evil social conditions, and, indeed, seldom gave a thought to the way of life of the inferior classes. As long as the servants performed their work properly, and the country continued to run, the lower classes were considered to be maintaining their roles; it was believed that these people were intended for the more menial tasks of the society, and should remain in their places. An article in the Manchester Guardian illustrates not only this hierarchical view of society held by many of the upper class, but also the way in which an enlightened newspaper was trying to overcome such attitudes.

It appeared beneath the headline 'People's 'Station in Life''. Lord Cross, after sitting as a Member of Parliament for twenty-three years, had been elevated to the peerage, serving as Home Secretary from 1874 to 1880 and 1885-86, Secretary for India from 1886 to 1892, and then Lord Privy Seal from 1895 to 1900. In his capacity as a minister, he had earned £60,000, and on his retirement from major office, he had made a declaration, as required by the Political Pensions Act, that he did not possess an income 'adequate to maintain his station in life', and so he was given a pension of £2,000 a year. He lived for twenty years after that, and in his will, he left £60,000. The Manchester Guardian commented: 'To Lord Cross it would probably have seemed extremely improper...that a labourer who had worked on a farm in all weathers for sixty years, without a half-holiday, should then be given a public pension of 5s a week on the grounds that his own savings - possibly producing as much as 4s a week - were "inadequate to maintain his station in life", Lord Cross would probably have felt that so lax a bestowal would undermine character in the working classes and destroy the virtues of thrift and individual initiative. He would no doubt have felt it quite sincerely. And we are sure he felt quite sincerely that his own station in life being different, it was perfectly proper that his countrymen, including this ancient rural labourer, should be taxed in order to give him the means of leaving £60,000 by his will'.⁽⁸⁴⁾ In the same way, another Tory politician,

(84) Manchester Guardian, 22 April 1914, p. 8

Gerald Balfour, brother of A.J., the former Prime Minister, had been Chief Secretary in Ireland, President of the Board of Trade, and President of the Local Government Board, and as such had received a political pension of £1,200 a year from 1905, yet he had been one of the most bitter critics of the 1908 Old Age Pensions' Scheme. Clearly, such people did regard themselves as different from the rest of the community, and quite entitled, though superior upbringing and attitude, to use such money properly, whereas the working class would not. Thus, the upper class, while remaining politically active, understood nothing of working class life, and resisted any movement towards equality, wishing, instead, to maintain their privileged position.

However, they were prepared to help allies from other classes when the need arose. A.J. Balfour, a former Conservative Prime Minister, and in April 1911, Leader of the Conservative Party, received a letter from T.E. Kebbel, aged eighty-four. He was a political writer, whose flow of books and articles had consistently supported the Tories. He had written to Balfour asking for £100, and he, in turn, communicated with Lord Cranbourne, heir to the Salisbury title and estates, and at this time in his final year at Eton. Balfour pointed out that Kebbel had an income of £500 a year, which was 'much more than most clergy have and more than the younger children of the ordinary squire inherit. But he had evidently got himself into a mess with money lenders'. He was prepared to pay a part of the debt, and looked to his colleagues for the remainder. By October, the sum required had risen to £400, and Balfour and Cranbourne

were going to pay it between them. Balfour felt it 'a nuisance, I think, however, the money will be well spent'.⁽⁸⁵⁾

This would be a way of paying off an old political debt, but it does show that the upper class would help those who were in a position to give service. However, little was done to alleviate the condition of the working classes. Of course, when their conditions became evident, as they did to Edward Hulton, individual cases would receive charity, but general ignorance and apathy prevented a more general assault upon the problem of poverty.

The solid middle classes were also apart from the other classes. As G.K. Chesterton, the author and novelist, recalled, the middle class was 'separated both from the class above and the class below it. It knew far too little of the working classes'.⁽⁸⁶⁾ This was not deliberate. They did live in suburbs, among others with similar social backgrounds, so that they were apart from poor, and so failed to see or understand the problems of low wages. Class barriers were not erected by birth alone. L.E. Jones, later a barrister of note, recalling his youth spent at Eton and Oxford, asserted that in the Edwardian period, '"class", with us, was a matter of affinity and had nothing to do with what our fathers were, or how much money they had',⁽⁸⁷⁾ but such

(85) Balfour Papers Add. Ms 49758. Letters from Balfour to Cranbourne ff. 264-5, 9 April 1911; ff. 286-7, 18 October 1911

(86) G.K. Chesterton, Autobiography (1936) p. 13

(87) L.E. Jones, An Edwardian Youth (1956) p. 42

a class identity was the result of upbringing, and children whose socio-economic status were similar tended to be brought up together, thus confirming group solidarity. A high proportion of the middle class were essentially ignorant of working class life. Of those who were not, many subscribed to the views of the Charity Organisation Society. Of course, some took a very diverse line. L. Woolf, after working in the Ceylon Civil Service from 1904 to 1911, spent some time with the C.O.S., but resigned because he felt that it did not do enough: 'In Hoxton, one was confronted by some vast dangerous fault in the social structure, some destructive disease in the social organis, which could not be touched by paternalism, or charity, or good works. Nothing but a social revolution, a major operation, could deal with it'.⁽⁸⁸⁾ Such feelings led him towards the adoption of Socialism.

Other members of the middle class were vocal in their condemnation of social conditions. Cadbury, Matheson and Shann complained that 'millions of people are doomed from their birth to hard and monotonous work in order to provide the comfort, culture, luxury and refinement in which they themselves never share'.⁽⁸⁹⁾ Watney and Little thought that they could discern the beginnings of a 'feeling that labour is not receiving its due proportion of reward in general'.⁽⁹⁰⁾

(88) L. Woolf, Beginning Again (1964) p. 100

(89) E. Cadbury, C. Matheson and G. Shann, Women's Work and Wages (1908) p. 306

(90) C. Watney and J.A. Little, Industrial Warfare (1912)

Another writer with considerable experience of working class life was Alexander Paterson. After gaining a degree at Oxford, he taught in an elementary school, and lived with the poor in Bermondsey. In 1908, he took on the job of supervising boys released from borstal, and in 1911 became the Assistant Director of the Central Association of Discharged Prisoners. He argued that inadequate wages and living conditions brought about a waste of strength, brains, and character, and urged the rest of society to help with sympathy and a sharing of knowledge, so that there could be a mixing of the classes and mutual understanding. (91)

Thus, these, and others made up a small but vocal group which deplored working class life, and offered alternatives. Fabians saw the solution in political terms, while others - the instigators of surveys, the social writers and social workers - offered different answers, but all were united in demonstrating that a part of the middle class was concerned, and was prepared to be critical of a society which would permit such injustices to exist.

Of course, the whole of the working class was not destitute. It was not a single entity, but encompassed a wide variety of wages, and an equally wide series of social positions. Miss Loane has shown one aspect of this: 'The line which separates those who "dress for dinner" from those who do not is an almost invisible crack compared with the

(91) A. Paterson, Across the Bridges (1911), especially pp.

yawning gulf that divides those who "dress themselves of a Sunday" from those who have none but their workaday clothes'.⁽⁹²⁾ There was still a skilled and prosperous section of the working class which felt itself distinct from, and superior to, their unskilled brethren.

Yet however well paid an artisan might have been, he would not have been able to enjoy the new range of consumer goods which the richer parts of the middle class were able to afford - the motor car, telephone, gramophone, and refrigerator, for example. Mrs. Masterman recalled that she heard reports of cars breaking down in working class areas, and the local population were hostile to the driver and his passengers, through jealousy.⁽⁹³⁾ Certainly, such examples of conspicuous consumption must have annoyed many working men, who were already aware of a variety of differences between themselves and the salaried employees. For instance, most labourers and tradesmen could be dismissed with only one hour's notice, and were extremely unlikely to be included in pension schemes, holidays with pay, or to be afforded job security, or even promotion on merit, all of which were associated with middle class occupations.

Thus, there were a series of classes, the edges of one spilling over into the next, but they remained largely ignorant of the conditions of the lowest section. It was usual for the middle classes to aspire to a higher position, and, indeed, many of the working class would have liked to

(92) M. Loane, The Next Street But One (1907) p. 20

(93) Interview op.cit.

reach the middle class, and adopted as many middle class customs as was possible, but, within the working class, there was also a strong group which objected strenuously to the privileges of the upper and middle classes.

Literature and Social Stratification

One way of seeing the classes interacting together is through the literature of the period, for authors tend to confine themselves to topics within their own experiences, or display their prejudices when they tackle others. Thus, the novels and plays of the period help to illustrate the class structure of the country. However, most of the authors were middle class, so that their interpretations are usually seen through middle class eyes. Nevertheless, this does provide an insight into the way in which one part of the community thought of the rest.

There are some interesting exceptions. Perhaps the most celebrated writer dealing with working class life was D.H. Lawrence, the son of a miner. His descriptions of life in a coal village were the result of his own knowledge. He did not take up writing seriously until after the death of Edward VII, and his popularity came later, so he had little impact on the Edwardians. Robert Noonan, whose pen name was Robert Tressell, was less famous. He was possibly of middle class parents, but worked as a house painter, and used the experience thus gained in his book The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists, which is a bitter attack on the capitalist system. It did not appear in its entirety until after the Second World War, and the version published in 1913 was not

widely read, so that its influence was on a later generation.

Another writer determined to alter the structure of society along egalitarian lines was H.G. Wells. He came from a lower middle class background, and wrote largely about that group, yet he was able to comprehend the whole social structure: 'The shop young lady in England has just the same horror of doing anything that savours of the servant girl as the lady journalist, let us say, has to anything savouring of the shop girl, or the really quite nice young lady has of anything savouring of any sort of girl who has gone down into the economic battlefield to earn herself a living'. (94)

This indicates a clear social order, in which everyone knew her place. Wells emphasized this point in describing a rural society in which 'above you were your betters, below you your inferiors, and there were even an unstable questionable few cases so disputable that you might, for the rough purposes of everyday at least, regard them as your equals'. (95) Hence, Wells was convinced that a hierarchy existed, but his work is unusual because of its political content.

Other writers, some long since forgotten, portray the range of social attitudes without any attempt to suggest that a radical change should take place. Typical of these is Mrs. Oliphant's The Railwayman and his Children (1891) which showed the upper class attempting to maintain its

(94) H.G. Wells, Kipps (1925 ed.) p. 57

(95) H.G. Wells, Tono-Bungay (1909) p. 14

standards by refusing to allow anyone unsuitable into its ranks. A lady contemplated marriage to a wealthy engineer who travelled the world designing and superintending railway construction. Consequently, he was branded as a railwayman, and, as such, a social inferior. This type of stratification is also shown in Harker's The Ffolliots of Redmarley (1913). In this, a young man, the son of a successful shopowner, uses his wealth and intelligence to become the local Liberal Member of Parliament, but the aristocracy of the area continue to regard him as a tradesman, who doesn't know his place in society. The same theme is evident in Hope's Second String (1910). One of the main characters began as a butcher, prospered, and retained control of his shop, although he himself was involved only in the breeding of animals, especially horses. Nevertheless, his commercial connections meant that he was not socially acceptable. He was permitted to visit the local gentry only when there were no other guests, or when it was known that no-one present would object to him.

Hugh Walpole illustrated the class positions. One of his characters, an aristocrat, analysed the way in which he looked on women: 'from four points of view, and he had, as it were, a sliding scale of manners on which he might mark delicately his perception of their position. There was firstly the Countess of Titled Nobility. His manner was slightly deferential, and at the same time a little familiar - proof of his own good breeding.

Secondly, there was the Trojan, or lady of Assured Position. Here he was familiar, and at the same time just a

little patronising - proof of his sense of Trojan superiority.

Thirdly, there was the Governess, or Poor Gentility Position. To members of this class he was affably kind, conveying his sense of the merits and sympathy with their struggle against poverty, but nevertheless making quite plainly the gulf fixed between him and them.

Fourthly, there were the Impossible or the Rest - ranging from the wives of successful Brewers to that class known as unfortunates. Here there was no alternative in his manner; he was stern and short, and stiff with all of them, and the reason of their existence was one of the unsolved problems that had always puzzled him'. (96)

H.G. Wells went even further, and described the thinking of one section of the aristocracy as 'the pure reactionary whose prominent idea was that the village schools should confine themselves to teaching the catechism, hat touching, and courtseying, and be given a holiday whenever beaters were in request'. (97) This was an exaggeration, of course, but others portrayed stern nobility. Locke created an ex-colonial governor who believed that 'to take folks out of the station to which it had pleased God to call them was an act of impiety'. (98)

It was not only the upper class which looked down on the workers. Galsworthy's upper middle class Forsyte family felt the same way, and tried to avoid them whenever possible:

(96) H. Walpole, The Wooden Horse (1934 ed.) p. 217

(97) H.G. Wells, The New Machiavelli (1911) p. 370

(98) W.J. Locke, Stella Maris (1913) p. 83

'"Let's go to the Zoo" they had said to each other, "it'll be great fun! It was a shilling day and there would not be all those horrid common people'." (99)

Novels with a great deal of social significance were rare: most were romances of various types, but whenever social stratification did enter into a book, it conformed to the hierarchy of socio-economic position prevalent in Edwardian England, though the differences were generally becoming less acute than the literature implied. The conspicuous consumption of the period is well depicted, so that the general feel of the times is given.

The Causes of the Unrest

a A working class political party did exist in this period, but many men retained their traditional support for the Conservative or Liberal Party. Nevertheless, the Labour Party did succeed in gaining some Parliamentary Representation:

Date	No. of M.P.'s	No. of candidates	No. elected unopposed	% of total vote	^a av. vote per opposed candidate
1900	2	15	-	1.8	26.6
1906	30	51	-	5.9	39.9
1910 (Jan)	40	78	-	7.6	38.4
1910 (Dec)	42	56	3	7.1	42.8

This increasing number of Labour Members of Parliament coincided with a Liberal Government, and several measures of social legislation, such as the establishment of Labour

Exchanges and the National Insurance Bill, so that it might appear that the representatives of the working class were exerting an influence on Government. Indeed, by 1911 the Liberals relied on the support of Labour to maintain their majority, but nothing was done to prevent the falling standard of living of the working class. If the Labour Party had demanded action, and the Liberals had refused, the defeat of the Government was likely, and this could have ruined the Labour Party financially. Thus, the Labour M.P.'s appeared impotent and captive. G.D.H. Cole, writing in 1913, argued that the leaders were not even interested in struggling to achieve anything for their constituents, as they had entered the governing class, and Labour was left, perplexed and unmanned, to find new leaders in its own ranks'. (100)

EX Cole was not the only person frustrated by the activities of the Parliamentary Labour Party. By-elections after the General Election of December 1910 reveal that four seats were lost, though this does not suggest as much grass root discontent as the bald figures imply. An officially credited Labour candidate stood in only one constituency, Hanley. In 1906, the seat had been won by Enoch Edwards, the moderate President of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, on a Lib-Lab ticket, after he had contested the seat in 1900 as a Liberal. His death in 1912 occasioned the by-election, which was won easily by the Liberal:

(100) G.D.H. Cole, The World of Labour (1913) p. 207

Hanley	December 1910	13 July 1912
Liberal	-	6,647
Conservative	4,658	5,993
Labour	8,343	1,694

Another Labour loss was in Tower Hamlets, where George Lansbury resigned over the issue of female enfranchisement, and stood as a Socialist, without receiving official Labour Party support:

Tower Hamlets (Bow and Bromley)	December 1910	26 November 1912
Conservative	3,452	4,042
Labour	4,315	Socialist 3,291

It could be argued that here, the electors were voicing their disapproval of the concept of votes for women, rather than anger at the Labour Party, so that it is not especially valuable as a case study in the position of the Labour Party.

At Chesterfield, Barnet Kenyon, the candidate, would not ally himself solely to the Labour Party, and stood as a Lib-Lab. He was well known locally, being the Assistant Secretary of the Derbyshire Miners, and had been endorsed by the Miners' Federation of Great Britain before it had been realised that he would not take the Labour whip if elected. Moreover, he was contesting a seat previously held by another moderate local miner, James Haslam. There was no official Labour candidate, but a Socialist stood. His defeat by Kenyon was not surprising:

Chesterfield	December 1910	20 August 1913
Labour	7,283	Lib-Lab 7,725
Conservative	5,055	5,539
Socialist	-	583

Finally, at Derbyshire North East, the death of the extremely moderate Harvey caused a by-election. The equally moderate Martin, in reality a Liberal, was the Labour candidate, and was opposed by an official Liberal, which allowed the vote to be split, and the seat was won by the Tory:

Derbyshire North East	December 1910	20 May 1914
Conservative	6,088	6,496
Liberal	-	6,155
Labour	7,838	3,669

L Thus, the Labour Party did not fare as badly in the by-elections as a superficial inspection would suggest. An analysis of all by-elections contested from 1911 to 1914 reveals, that, compared to the Labour votes in 1906 and January and December 1910, in some constituencies the proportional vote rose, and in others it fell, but, on the whole, b Labour's share remained fairly constant. On the other hand, the period after 1910 was one of wide spread industrial unrest, in which the working class seemed to ignore its political leaders, and it could be argued that one of the causes of this direct action was frustration at the failure of the Parliamentary Labour Party to alleviate the worsening lot of the working class.

The new leaders were much more militant, and persuaded the men that direct action was the solution to the economic ills, rather than political methods, which had failed up to then. The doctrine spread by many of these orators was Syndicalism, a movement that had originated in France, spread to America, and recrossed the ^{Atlantic} ~~Channel~~, reaching Britain in

about 1910. Its aims were to organise the workers of a country into several mass unions, which would then strike, destroy capitalism, and allow the unions to take over the various ^{industries} unions, and, consequently, the government of the country. Two of the most famous names associated with the movement were Tom Mann and Ben Tillett, both of whom had helped to organise the Great Dock Strike of 1889.

It is difficult to assess the degree of Syndicalist feelings in the country in the years 1910-14. E. Burdick's two volumed doctoral thesis Syndicalism and Industrial Unionism in England until 1918 (Oxford, D. Phil., 1950) maintains that from the summer of 1911 until the end of 1913, the movement was strong within the trade unions, and powerful in international Syndicalism. Certainly, many of the strikes in the years 1911-14 were blamed upon the Syndicalists, and the condemnation of this doctrine is a regular feature of the period, but it is not easy to estimate the depth of Syndicalist reasoning within the ordinary working man, nor the level to which he was influenced by such teaching. Hyndman, the leader of the British Socialist Party maintained, in 1912, that the ideology would never be influential in this country. (101) Yet, even if he was correct, many did fear that Syndicalism and Socialism would destroy the existing social order. The London Municipal Society, founded in 1894 to organise Conservative candidates in local elections within the Metropolis, attacked the 'callow, ill-informed theorists who seek to subvert and annihilate the social system of

(101) H.M. Hyndman, Further Reminiscences (1912) p. 457

centuries'.⁽¹⁰²⁾ The same sort of line was taken by the more vigorous anti-Socialist Union of Great Britain, whose President was the Duke of Devonshire, and Vice-President Walter Long, M.P. The Union issued a steady stream of books, such as Socialism Exposed (1914), and a very large number of pamphlets which pointed out the evils of Socialism. A typical comment was the claim that the fruits of Socialism were 'mismanagement, extravagance, favouritism, indolence, discontent, heathenism', compared to 'the sterling qualities called forth by legitimate pride in industrial ownership', which were 'industry, economy, thrift, independence, self-respect and satisfaction'.⁽¹⁰³⁾

In the same way, trade unions were criticised. Sir Arthur Clay, the artist and social writer, insisted that they 'exist for the sole benefit of one particular class, their action is wholly self-centred, and they pursue what they believe to be the interests of their class without regard to the effects of their actions upon society at large, or upon the prosperity of the community'.⁽¹⁰⁴⁾

Thus, there was a considerable weight of opinion backing the idea that the unrest was fostered by extremists, intent upon the destruction of capitalism. Even the Labour M.P.'s were regarded as dangerous by some. The King's Secretary, Sir Frederick Ponsonby, claimed that they 'were known as

(102) London Municipal Society, The Case Against Socialism (1908) p. 529

(103) S. Graham, Socialism: An Actual Experiment (1910) pp. 42-43

(104) A. Clay, Syndicalism and Labour (1911) p. 111

extremists'.⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ Of course, others looked further for the causes of the strikes, and decided that the fall in the standard of living was a major factor. Violet Markham, sister of the coal owner and Liberal M.P., maintained that this was the reason. Writing later, she argued that 'the cost of living had risen but the wages of unskilled labour had not followed suit. No proportionate increase of the new wealth, therefore, had found its way into the pockets of the workers. Hence, a growth of discontent which flared up into the violence of the 1911 strikes'.⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ W.T. Layton, Lecturer in Economics at London University, made the same point. His explanation was formulated and printed within a couple of years of the events, and so could present a more definitive account. He asserted that, 'as the downward pressure of real wages had become more acute, the number of trade disputes has shown a tendency to increase'.⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ Similarly, a paper read to certain Unionists M.P.'s in October 1911 put the blame at the same door: 'Up to 1900 there had been a great impetus in the standard of comfort. Since that date there has been an arrestment, if not a decline...I suggest, therefore, that here we have the main cause of the labour unrest of today',⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ while the Unionist Party Conference in the same year felt that both agitators

(105) F. Ponsonby, Recollections of Three Reigns (1951) p. 285

(106) V.R. Markham, Return Passage (1953) p. 136

(107) W.T. Layton, An Introduction to the Study of Prices (1920 ed.) p. 97

(108) Unionist Party op.cit. p. 13

and falling living standards were to blame, and it took the opportunity to attack the Government: 'As far as the unrest has been confined to demands for higher wages to meet the increased cost of living, and not to that part of it which has been deliberately fanned and fostered by agitators of the syndicalist school, it can, unquestionably, be ascribed to the Government's neglect to take steps to increase employment all round and to protect industries which at present suffer from foreign competition'.⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ Of course, it has always been difficult to decide when the party in Opposition felt deeply about an issue, and when it was merely making political capital out of events, but it does appear that at least some Conservatives were thinking deeply about the problems behind the militancy.

Other explanations for the unrest centred around the displays of conspicuous consumption by the middle and upper classes, which could have angered the poor, and driven them to militancy. S.A. Barnett, Canon of Bristol from 1894 to 1906 and Sub-Dean of Westminster 1906-13, had first hand experience of the poor, having been the original Warden of Toynbee Hall from 1884 to 1896. In a letter to his sister-in-law dated June 1912, he wondered 'whether the great spectacle of pleasure and wealth at the Coronation has not had something to do with all the strikes - people could not help comparing and contrasting different conditions'.⁽¹¹⁰⁾

(109) Annual Conference of the Conservative and Unionist

Party. Report of Council, 16 November 1911 (1911) p.18

(110) H.O. Barnett, Canon Barnett (1921 ed.) p. 728

A Manchester J.P., T. Gregory offered a comprehensive analysis of the causes. He rejected the notion of agitators as they had 'little power where workers are satisfied with their conditions'. Instead, he looked at the reasons behind the discontent, and found a combination of static wages and rising prices, an improvement in education, the growing size of firms, which divorced the owner from his men, the increasing display of wealth, easier communications, and a cheaper press. This was coupled with the spread of mass unionism, and the appearance of more machinery, which led to industrial boredom. Finally, the trade boom had created a labour shortage. All these factors together, Gregory asserted, had produced the strike wave. (111)

This was a sophisticated view, and one that tended to occur to people later, when even more complicated accounts were presented. Perhaps the classical version was presented by Dangerfield, who argued in The Strange Death of Liberal England (1935) that the labour troubles were part of an organised attack on the existing society, the other prongs being unrest in Ireland and the female emancipationists. Dangerfield never explained how the onslaught was organised, and neither is there any evidence of co-ordination, so that his theory can be discounted.

Phelps Brown maintained that the working class had observed the rise in prices, when 'they had been used to

(111) T. Gregory 'Labour Copartnership and Labour Unrest'

Journal of the Manchester Statistical Society (1913)

pp. 3, 8, 9

getting a little better off year by year, and now it seemed they had only impoverishment to look forward to. They resented this the more keenly because meanwhile their subjective standard of living, the livelihood to which they felt themselves entitled, had been raised by the continued extension of education among them. The recent worsening of their condition seemed to bear out the prophecies of Marx, whose work was becoming increasingly known'. (112)

Henry Pelling has taken the line that in periods of good trade, when unemployment is low, industrial unrest is always prevalent, and the strikes of 1911-14 were merely a manifestation of the prosperity of the period. (113) It was certainly true that unemployment was low:

Unemployment, 1900-14: percentages of
all trade unions making returns

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1900	2.3	2.4	2.0	2.0	1.9	2.1	2.2	2.5	3.0	2.8	2.7	3.5
1901	3.5	3.4	3.1	3.4	3.0	3.0	2.9	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.3	4.2
1902	4.0	3.9	3.2	3.4	3.5	3.7	3.5	4.0	4.5	4.5	4.4	5.0
1903	4.9	4.3	3.9	4.6	3.5	3.9	4.4	5.0	5.2	5.6	5.5	6.3
1904	6.1	5.6	5.5	5.5	5.8	5.5	5.6	5.9	6.3	6.3	6.5	7.1
1905	6.3	5.7	5.2	5.2	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.9	4.8	4.6	4.3	4.5
1906	4.3	4.1	3.4	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.3	3.3	3.9	4.0	4.4
1907	3.9	3.5	3.2	2.8	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.6	4.1	4.2	4.5	5.6

(112) E.H.P. Brown, The Growth of British Industrial Relations (1965) pp. 14-15

(113) H. Pelling, Popular Politics and Society in Late Victorian Britain (1968)

1908	5.8	6.0	6.4	7.1	7.4	7.9	7.9	8.5	9.3	9.5	8.7	9.1
1909	8.7	8.4	8.2	8.2	7.9	7.9	7.9	7.7	7.4	7.1	6.5	6.6
1910	6.8	5.7	5.2	4.4	4.2	3.7	3.8	4.0	4.3	4.4	4.6	5.0
1911	3.9	3.3	3.0	2.8	2.5	3.0	2.9	3.3	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.1
1912	2.7	2.8	11.3*	3.6	2.7	2.5	2.6	2.2	2.1	2.0	1.8	2.3
1913	2.2	2.0	1.9	1.7	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.0	2.3	2.2	2.0	2.6
1914	2.5	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.4	2.8	7.1	5.9	4.4	2.9	2.5

(114)

(*distorted by the coal strike)

However, Pelling does not accord sufficient attention to the falling standard of living. Even if more people were working in the period 1911-14 than in previous years, nevertheless, real wages were smaller than they had been, and this point should not be underrated. Moreover, there were enough people looking for jobs to supply firms faced with the prospects of a strike: blacklegs could still be bought.

The difficulties involved in deciding the causes of the unrest do not alter two basic facts. Trade union membership was increasing rapidly in the years immediately prior to the First World War:

Year	Total Number of Members
1893	1,559,000
1900	2,022,000
1910	2,565,000
1912	3,416,000
1913	4,135,000

(114) Seventeenth Abstract of Statistics Cd. 7733 (1914-16)

At the same time, the number of strikes grew:

Year	Number of Working Days Lost	Number of Stoppages	Number of Workers Involved
1900	3,088,000	623	185,000
1910	9,867,000	521	514,000
1911	10,155,000	872	952,000
1912	40,890,000	834	1,462,000
1913	9,804,000	1,459	664,000
1914	9,878,000	972	447,000

It is possible that there was a correlation between the increase in trade union membership and the rising number of industrial disputes. However, this was in no way apparent at the time, and it is certain that the public was not prepared for the onslaught which came in the last few years of peace. Before then, the workers had seemed reasonably content with their lot, and riots had not occurred for a number of years. This relative calm was to be shattered by the violence and bitterness of the years 1911-14.

Chapter III

Attitudes to Legislation in 1911

Only an aged man could have recalled industrial unrest which might have rivalled that of the years from 1911 to the outbreak of war. The disputes had begun in earnest in 1910, when three times as many working days had been lost than in 1900, although there had been fewer strikes. 1911 inherited one of the most fierce examples of the new militancy, that of the Cambrian coal miners, in South Wales, but the continuing stoppage did not attract much national comment. There were other manifestations of discontent in the first half of the year, but nothing to warn the nation of the onslaught to come. The press and politicians were more anxious to comment on other social issues, such as the National Insurance Act. Nevertheless, a section of the community tended to be suspicious of attempts by the working class to improve its conditions, and launched an attack on those institutions which seemed willing to do so. The condemnations tended to be arbitrary, and often confused trade unions with socialism, or at least regarded the two as synonymous, which was by no means the case. This association was a common, if erroneous, feature of the period.

However, in the months of relative industrial calm, some were able to take a benign view of the English working man. A good example of this appeared in the Spectator, which described him as 'a self respecting fellow with a great deal of common sense'.⁽¹⁾ A similar opinion was expressed by Sir

(1) Spectator, 18 February 1911, p. 238

Alfred Mond, the industrialist and Liberal Member of Parliament. In his Presidential Address at the Unemployment Section of the National Conference on the Prevention of Destitution in May 1911, he maintained that 'you can trust the working man of England to treat you honestly', though he did warn that this did not apply to everyone, because there were a 'large number of those who are morally or physically deficient workers'.⁽²⁾ The Home Secretary, Winston Churchill had made a reputation as a radical, and if he had retained this attitude, it would not be surprising to hear him describing miners as 'well educated, peaceable, intelligent, and law-abiding',⁽³⁾ even after the disturbances at Tonypandy during the Cambrian strike. However, there were signs that his views were changing, and later events indicated that he was bitterly opposed to strikes. Yet, like so many of the middle class, he found little to fault in the working man who accepted what they believed to be his position in the Society.

The Labour Bills

In February, the Parliamentary Labour Party introduced the Right to Work Bill. It had little chance of success, and was used to bring to the attention of the rest of the country the difficulties caused by unemployment, in a perfectly legitimate, legal and constitutional way, but it was not well received. In the House of Commons the Tory industrialist Ernest Jardine advised the Labour Party to

(2) Sir A. Mond 'The Problem of Unemployment', English Review
August 1911, pp. 161, 163

(3) House of Commons Debates, Vol. 21, col. 239, 7 February 1911

'drop socialistic wild schemes which will drive capital away, which will drive employment out of our country'.⁽⁴⁾ The Conservative press tended to be just as anxious to reject the measure. The Daily Express condemned the Bill under the headline 'The Right to Sponge', and advocated its rejection because it was 'not only violently Socialistic', but also 'utterly opposed to any imaginable interests of the working classes...The workhouse system is, by comparison, a lesser evil'.⁽⁵⁾ The Spectator considered the matter in greater depth, before concluding that the idea was unacceptable, because of its Socialist base, which failed to provide an adequate incentive to persuade anybody to work hard.⁽⁶⁾

Similar reaction greeted the Minimum Wages Bill which William Crooke introduced in April. This laid down a national minimum wage of £1 10s a week. The attitude of the Daily Mail was, perhaps, typical of its critics. It did not discuss the merits and demerits of the Bill, but insisted that its application was impossible, and asked, sarcastically, why the Labour leaders had not chosen 'a more generous and satisfactory figure', if it was so easy to fix wages by a simple piece of legislation.⁽⁷⁾ The Weekly Dispatch did not consider that the figure was excessive, considering the cost of living, but pointed out that the laws of economics insisted irrefutably that wage levels could be ascertained only by the

(4) House of Commons Debates, Vol. 21, col. 606 10 February

1911

(5) Daily Express, 11 February 1911, p. 4

(6) Spectator, 18 February 1911, p. 238

(7) Daily Mail, 27 April 1911, p. 6

supply of, and the demand for, labour, so that the Bill could not hope to succeed. (8)

Thus the Conservatives were adamant in their opposition to these constitutional efforts of the working class to better its position, while the Liberals were silent. The great fear of Socialism had become apparent in the Unionist ranks, even when the Parliamentary Labour Party was attempting to aid those it represented: industrial unrest would increase apprehensions.

The National Insurance Act

The most important piece of social legislation in this period was the National Insurance Act. It was introduced to the House of Commons by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lloyd George, on 4 May 1911. Its aim was to encompass all manual workers, who would be obliged to contribute 4d a week into the scheme. The employer would have to add 3d, and the State would bring the weekly contribution up to 9d. This would be used to provide a small income for contributors who were sick ~~or unemployed~~, and would allow them to receive medical attention. *Unemployment insurance was introduced in a different section.* The Labour Party had attempted to ensure that the working classes did not suffer from unemployment by the Right to Work Bill, and it had tried to alleviate poverty caused by low wages in the Minimum Wage Bill, but both measures had been rejected, with special vehemence by the Conservatives. Bearing this in mind, it seemed possible that the National Insurance Bill would receive a hostile reception in the House of Commons, and denunciation from

(8) Weekly Dispatch, 30 April 1911, p. 8

that section of the press which opposed the Government.

In fact, this did not prove to be the case. The Morning Post greeted the Bill warmly, explaining that, ever since industrialisation, 'a spell of sickness, a time of unemployment, cutting off of wages, might at any moment break up a decent home and set the family sliding down the steep slope to pauperism and degradation. That is the danger overshadowing every wage earner, and if by the help of the State it can be aver ted, a great good has been accomplished that will affect not the material prosperity alone but the moral character of the workers', by providing them with security.⁽⁹⁾ Thus, a Conservative paper had lent its support to a Liberal attempt to improve social conditions. The Financial Times, which was equally right wing in its outlook, considered that 'with its main idea of the desirability of insuring workmen against sickness and invalidity everyone practically is in agreement'.⁽¹⁰⁾ The main doubts were summed up by the Daily Dispatch: 'There is the question of malingering, and the question of the effect on employers and of the burden to the taxpayer', but, the paper conceded, if those to be insured accepted the spirit of the Act, it was 'a fine and memorable achievement, marking an epoch in the story of our civilisation'.⁽¹¹⁾ These criticisms were repeated in other journals. Walter Sichel, writing in Nineteenth Century and After, asked whether 'skill

(9) Morning Post, 4 May 1911, p. 6

(10) Financial Times, 6 May 1911, p. 4

(11) Daily Dispatch, 5 May 1911, p. 4

and thrift' would 'be called on to support the casual and the loafer?'⁽¹²⁾ Similarly, the Spectator felt that 'we shall be lucky if the scheme does not stimulate the development of this class, and on a huge scale'.⁽¹³⁾ Thus, a section of the middle class was expressing doubts about the reliability and integrity of the working class, suggesting that any attempt to alleviate the difficulties that can arise from illness and unemployment could - and, according to the most pessimistic observers, would - result in a part of the population taking advantage of the law, and ceasing work. W.H. Dawson pointed out that a similar scheme operated in Germany, where 'the insured German workman often seeks medical advice on the slightest provocation, as his betters sometimes do'.⁽¹⁴⁾ Thus, the singular lack of faith in the British worker, displayed in some of the press, was given additional support by a foreign example. Nevertheless, the Act was accepted, albeit with reservations, because, in the words of Austen Chamberlain, 'the sickness scheme IS a good one'.⁽¹⁵⁾

The main opposition came from two diverse sources. Employers of domestic servants disliked having to pay

(12) W. Sichel, 'A Downing Street Idyll', Nineteenth Century and After, February 1911, p. 264

(13) Spectator, 6 May 1911, p. 676

(14) W.H. Dawson, 'Insurance Legislation: the Larger View' Fortnightly Review, 1 March 1911, p. 538 f.n.

(15) C. Petrie, The Life and Letters of the Rt. Hon. Sir Austen Chamberlain, 1939, p. 277

insurance stamps for their employees. A letter in the Westminster Gazette, signed "Resistance", summed up this attitude, asking why a nursery governess, 'who is perhaps a LADY (think of it!)...be dragged through the weekly ordeal of plastering nasty stamps on a grimy card?'⁽¹⁶⁾ This provides a good example of the social stratification of the time, as the National Insurance Act would put on the same level an ordinary servant and a governess, when the two were far apart in the accepted social order of Edwardian England.

Ironically, the other groups which stood against the Act were the Independent Labour Party and the Fabian Society, both of which decided by small majorities at their annual conferences that the workers should not be obliged to contribute towards this type of social security. Hilaire Belloc went even further, arguing that such measures weakened the resolve of the workers to strike for better conditions, and thus had to be opposed.⁽¹⁷⁾

In the past the ratepayer had been responsible for the maintenance of the poor, and this Act passed the burden onto the taxpayer, and, thus represented a change in the social policy of the Liberal Government. The workers themselves contributed, when they were employed, and would draw from the fund on any occasion that lack of work transformed them into the "idle", whereas the truly "idle" could not accumulate insurance rights. Now, the worker himself paid a substantial

(16) Westminster Gazette, 22 November 1911, p.9

(17) H. Belloc, The Servile State (1912); letter to Daily Herald, 8 May 1912, p. 3

share towards supporting his own unemployment. The change in policy was partly financed by the working man, yet it did represent a major extension of Government policy. It is true that the Liberals had introduced a system of old age pensions in 1908 - 5s a week for those over the age of seventy - but National Insurance was different. The State accepted responsibility for illness and unemployment among that section of the population which had previously been regarded as capable of fending for themselves; the workhouse had been the solution to poverty, but now the family could remain together, supported by cash payments, while the wage earner recovered his health, or searched for another job. The reasoning behind this change of thought could be seen as the "New Liberalism", which was gaining strength in the early twentieth century. This relied on greater Governmental intervention into the economic and social life of the country, and completely rejected the laissez-Faire doctrine which had been eroded in the nineteenth century, as successive Governments found it necessary or advantageous to interfere with the free working of the economy. Those who believe that a capitalist ruling class would never do anything to help the workers unless it was absolutely imperative would argue that the Act was passed to appease the industrial masses, and prevent them from exercising their enormous power. The less politically committed would regard the Liberals as humanists, who did care about social conditions. However, the Conservatives, in the main, lent their support to the Act, and they were traditionally regarded as opponents of working class advancement. Yet this is not entirely fair. It was a

Conservative, Disraeli, who had expounded the theory of the Tory working man. At the time of his premiership, many leaders of the working class had urged their men to vote Unionist, because that party was more inclined to social legislation than the Liberals. Thus, support for the National Insurance Act can be seen as an extension of the traditional Conservative policy.

Summary of Opinion

An inspection of the attitudes towards the legislation and the attempted legislation in the first half of 1911 does not produce very startling results. The Liberal press was far more sympathetic to the aims of the Liberal Party than the Conservatives, who adopted a variety of opposing stances. It would have been unusual if this had not proved to be the case, though on the question of National Insurance, there was broad agreement. However, the diverse views are useful in illustrating the difficulties of analysing opinion, which did not exist on a simple class basis. For example, the middle class did not have one single attitude on a topic, but rather a host of views, which depended on political affiliation as much as social position. Although the Liberals tended to be more sympathetic towards the working class than the Tories, it will become apparent that there was no such thing as a Liberal opinion, for within that Party there were various diverse views on any topic. In the same way, the Unionists were not united. There was a moderate Tory approach, which considered the position of the workers, and allowed them certain rights, and there were extreme Tories, who felt that

the working class should be subservient to the needs of the employers, while many fell somewhere between these two viewpoints. However, it would seem true to say, using the reaction to the legislation of 1911 as evidence, that the Conservatives did tend to regard the workers with more suspicion than the Liberals, and were more prepared to think ill of them. This difference in thought becomes more obvious as the unrest of the next four years unfolds.

Chapter IV

The Strikes of the Summer, 1911

The wave of industrial unrest which swept the country in the summer of 1911 was brought about by the actions of some of the worst paid sections of the community - the seamen, the dockers and transport workers associated with them, and the railwaymen. Seamen often earned less than £1 a week, while many dockers were casual workers, and as such did not have a guaranteed income. Their basic rate was generally 6d an hour, so that a full week's labour would produce around £1. Railwaymen, also, were poorly paid. In 1910, a porter with the Midland Railway Company could expect between 18s and £1 2s a week for seventy two hours, though he was not promised that amount of work.⁽¹⁾ Such conditions did not pass entirely unnoticed. The Daily Mirror maintained that 'railway hours and railway pay are among the scandals of the labour world'.⁽²⁾ J. Ellis Barker, who was devoting most of his time to pointing out the menace of German militarism, noted that the wages of dockers were so low that they 'lived under conditions which are scarcely human'.⁽³⁾

However, such observations came from a minority of the more affluent population; most of the middle and upper classes believed that all was well inside the country. The Daily

(1) Railway Conciliation Scheme. Statement Regarding Wages and Hours of Labour under the Scheme for Conciliation and Arbitration Cd. 5332 (1910) p. 46 f.n.

(2) Daily Mirror, 21 August 1911, p. 7

(3) J.E. Barker 'The Labour Revolt' Nineteenth Century and

Graphic went so far as to suggest that few people were even interested in the serious events of the time. It ran a cartoon centred around two newspaper vendors. One had failed to sell a single copy of his journal, which dealt with weighty constitutional matters, while the other had sold almost all of his tabloids, which were stuffed with sport and crime reports. (4) If the public was unconcerned with political and social events, the succession of strikes in 1911 must have caused a greater shock to the community than it would have done to a more socially aware society.

The strikes themselves did not follow each other. The seamen were the first out, and before that had been settled, dockers in many parts of the country had left their work. Most of these disputes had been concluded before the London dockers struck, together with a large number of transport workers in the city. These continued while a general strike took place in Liverpool. Out of the latter began the first national rail stoppage. Thus, for several days in August, the London transport workers, a large section of the inhabitants of Liverpool, and most of the nation's railwaymen, were on strike. To attempt to investigate the reaction to all of these movements as a single entity would be a task of inordinate complexity. Hence, they have been divided into four: the seamen; the dockers; Liverpool; and the railwaymen. It is important to remember that these disputes overlapped. At least a part of the upper and middle classes believed that

(4) Daily Graphic, 8 March 1911, p. 3

such a wave of unrest had common origins, common leaders, and common aims, and consequently, the reaction was more angry than it might have been.

The Seamen's Strike

Behind the unrest of the seamen was the National Sailor's and Firemen's Union, which had originated as the National Amalgamated Union of Sailors and Firemen. It had been founded in 1887 by J. Havelock Wilson, and grew swiftly, aided by its initial victories, and by 1890 had a membership of about 60,000. The owners refused to recognise the Union, and were incensed when it threatened to call a strike against the employment of officers who were not members of the Certified Officers' Union of Great Britain and Ireland, another association of which they disapproved. Thus, the owners joined together into the Shipping Federation in September 1890, and established registry offices in every port, offering the Federation Ticket, the possession of which would give preference in employment in return for an agreement to sail with non-unionists. The employers decided to enforce this the following year, and strikes failed, so that the Union was obliged to allow men to sign the Ticket. Membership fell, and by 1894, it was in liquidation. When the affairs had been wound up, a new Union was started. Membership was small, but had grown to about 12,000 by 1910, when there were signs of renewed vitality in the ports. However, the shipowners and other port employers had not been inactive, and had become involved in free labour associations to break strikes. Thus, the owners were strong, but they were faced by a growing Union, whose President, Havelock Wilson, was embittered by the earlier failure.

In early 1911, the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union had asked the Shipowners Federation to negotiate, which meant that the Union would receive recognition; the employers refused. This left the Union with two alternatives: it could accept the decision, which would mean another defeat, and its possible collapse, or it could take some form of industrial action. Thus, the decision to call a national strike was hardly surprising, but, before the order had been issued, sailors at Southampton walked off their ships, on 14 June. This unofficial action compelled the Union to advise an immediate national stoppage, with the dual aims of recognition and an increase in wages.

The press discussed both of these demands, but were unable to agree on the conditions aboard ship. H.M. Tomlinson, writing in the English Review, insisted that 'the life of a sailor is more monotonous, squalid, and repellent...than that of the most badly paid labourers ashore',⁽⁵⁾ and the Manchester Guardian told its readers that 'on average, seamen and firemen are worse paid, worse lodged, and probably, even today, worse fed than Englishmen doing comparable work shore'.⁽⁶⁾ The Times, however, was unconvinced, pointing out that 'higher wages are now paid in British vessels than in others'.⁽⁷⁾ If such an assertion was accurate, it reflects the poor wages received by foreign seamen, for the Union's demands were not

(5) H.M. Tomlinson, 'The British Merchant Seaman', English Review, August 1911, p. 116

(6) Manchester Guardian, 15 June 1911, p. 6

(7) Times, 17 June 1911, p. 11

over ambitious. Men on cargo boats wanted £5 a month, instead of £4 10s, those on Atlantic lines asked for £5 10s, instead of £5, and firemen required a rise from £5 10s to £6.⁽⁸⁾

However, discussions about conditions and pay did not interest the press in the first few days of the strike. The papers were convinced that there was no chance of success, and the impending collapse filled the pages. The Daily Graphic published a cartoon which depicted a ship, S.S. Shipping, steaming along, and towing the strike with ease. Havelock Wilson asked "Why don't you stop? Can't you see, you are anchored?".⁽⁹⁾ The Financial Times, using its position as a paper devoted to economic matters, was able to reveal to its readers that 'one of the biggest shipowners in London informed our representative that the majority of the men are merely humouring the agitators, and that they have not the slightest intention of leaving their places'.⁽¹⁰⁾ Moreover, it was not only the Tory press which anticipated the defeat of the men. Reynolds's Newspaper, recognising the weakness of the seamen's organisation, thought that the strike had been called to organise the Union's existence and to try to recruit more members into it, so as to prepare for a future conflict with the employers.⁽¹¹⁾

(8) H.R. Hikins 'The Liverpool General Transport Strike, 1911' Transactions of the Historical Society of Lancashire and Cheshire (1961), p. 172

(9) Daily Dispatch, 16 June 1911, p. 4

(10) Financial Times, 15 June 1911, p. 7

(11) Reynolds's Newspaper, 18 June 1911, p. 6

Surprisingly, the strike did not fail. Many non-union members joined it, and very quickly, some owners conceded the men's demands. This did not mean a resumption of work. The Union believed that a partial return would weaken its position, so everyone stayed out. Their bargaining power was somewhat strengthened by outside influences. Dockers in Hull, Goole, and Manchester left their jobs, to demonstrate sympathy for the seamen. At the same time, the various unions connected with dockside labour were formulating their own demands, so that the whole of the transport industry was threatened.

The success of the shipping strike caused consternation in Britain. Some newspapers were angry about the stoppage itself, and even more disturbed that it coincided with the Coronation of King George V. The Times and the Birmingham Daily Post observed that this would result in a loss of public sympathy,⁽¹²⁾ but the Daily Telegraph was more expressive: 'It struck the community as a particularly ungracious and impolitic act to threaten the suspension of shipping business on the very eve of the Coronation'.⁽¹³⁾ In fact, there was nothing sinister about the timing. The Economist pointed out that 'it is significant that on Coronation Day several bodies of strikers sent loyal congratulations to the King'.⁽¹⁴⁾ Clearly, these people did not wish to be disloyal to the monarch, but

(12) Times, 14 June 1911, p. 11, Birmingham Daily Post, 17 June 1911, p. 8

(13) Daily Telegraph, 16 June 1911, p. 10

(14) Economist, 29 July 1911, p. 227

wanted to gain higher wages, and thought that the time was appropriate. This end was also censured. The Daily Telegraph insisted that it was 'civil war in its most invidious form', and offered a solution - the employers should refuse to make any concessions, and wait. Eventually, want would drive the men back to work. Those owners who had settled were also condemned: 'The resources of the sailors and firemen are not great, and it might be thought that if they are met with an uncompromising negative they will shortly be compelled to re-engage on any terms. On the other hand, the men are encouraged by their partial success in dealing with particular owners'.⁽¹⁵⁾ Thus the Daily Telegraph revealed its opposition to the trade union demands.

Another paper critical of the men's actions was Liberal - the Manchester Guardian, which argued that transport workers were in a special position, because they could cause so much chaos. Thus, a strike by them became 'a weapon of social brigandage, and society will find it necessary to devise some means of self-protection!'⁽¹⁶⁾

Other Liberal papers were more friendly towards the strikers. The Morning Leader discussed the refusal of the Shipowners' Association to recognise the Union, and commented, 'there may be reason in this, but it eludes ordinary observation'.⁽¹⁷⁾ The Daily News was even more insistant on this issue. That the employers should decline 'carries the mind back to the

(15) Daily Telegraph, 28 June 1911, p. 10

(16) Manchester Guardian, 28 June 1911, p. 8

(17) Morning Leader, 29 June 1911, p. 4

atmosphere of two or three generations ago. It comes with singular lack of logic from one of the strongest employers' trade unions in the world'. The same paper demanded better conditions, and insisted that the men should have a greater say in determining them. Such improvements were 'very desirable in the public interest. It is of slight avail for Britannia to rule the waves if the waves are to be the stronghold of industrial serfdom'. (18)

Thus, the reaction of the newspapers to the shipping strike was varied. It is unfortunate that the press is the only source on this dispute, but it was an event which went unrecorded in diaries and letters, unlike some of the later, and perhaps graver, confrontations between capital and labour. Nevertheless, there is a clear indication of the differing views. The Unionist papers objected to the strike, and the Daily Telegraph emerged as a bitter opponent of direct industrial action. Not all of the Liberal papers were sympathetic, however. The Manchester Guardian was firmly opposed to the strike. Thus, the attitudes are not determined purely on political grounds. Lord Davenport's memoirs provide a useful insight into the thinking behind some of the men's opponents. He noted that Sir Thomas Devitt, 'and at least one other shipowner flatly refused to sit in the same room' as Havelock Wilson. (19) The reasons were partly personal, but this is a clear indication that some employers

(18) Daily News, 30 June 1911, p. 6, 16 June 1911, p. 4

(19) Viscount Davenport, The Travelled Road (Rochester 1935)

believed that they could do exactly as they wished, ignoring the wishes of the men, and the associations which had been formed to represent their interests. Some papers agreed, while others argued that times had changed, and the owners had to be more conciliatory. This conflict of ideas was to continue throughout the period.

The Dock Strikes

Opposition to the shipping strike paled into insignificance compared to criticisms of industrial militancy as the dockers intensified their activities. The National Transport Workers' Federation had been formed in 1910 at the suggestion of Ben Tillett, an organiser of the 1889 Dock Strike, and an active trade unionist. The President was Harry Gosling, the Secretary of the Lightermen, and an Alderman on London County Council; the Chairman was Anderson of the Stevedores. The N.T.W.F. was intended to be a body capable of uniting the various unions involved in shipping, so that they could take common action when necessary. It had been particularly successful in London. On 28 June 1911, the N.T.W.F. Conference informed the shipowners that, unless they had conceded the demands of the seamen by 1 July, the Federation would act. The following day, the Dockers' Union sent in its demands for higher pay. It had not intended to act so soon, although the campaign for higher wages had begun in April. It was the climate of unrest which persuaded the Union that the time was suitable.

The driving forces behind this opportunistic attack were Tillett, and another veteran of the 1889 Dock Strike, Tom Mann, an avowed Syndicalist. The Daily Telegraph felt that

their role had been important, and denounced the 'pernicious influence of one or two individuals who arrogate to themselves the title of labour leaders and guide their silly and infatuated followers into dangerous paths'.⁽²⁰⁾ The Illustrated London News described Tillett as 'The Dictator of Tower Hill'.⁽²¹⁾ This tendency to blame a few men for a major dispute recurs as strike follows strike, but in this case, Mann and Tillett were certainly active. Writing later, G.D.H. Cole concluded that Mann's 'influence counted for a great deal in the great wave of unrest which swept the country'.⁽²²⁾ John Lovell, who has made a detailed study of the London Docks, has maintained that 'with two such persuasive orators as Mann and Tillett at work on the water front in 1910 and 1911, it would have been surprising if port workers had remained unmoved by appeals to militant action'.⁽²³⁾

It is difficult to estimate the influence of these men, but they had a greater impact on their own men, the London Dockers, than those elsewhere. At the end of June, the London men were waiting for the employers to reply, while Hull, Liverpool, and Manchester were on strike. It should be remembered that the sailors had not returned to work, and this combination of strikes received strong expressions of

(20) Daily Telegraph, 16 June 1911, p. 10

(21) Illustrated London News, 19 August 1911, p. 300

(22) G.D.H. Cole, A Short History of the British Working Class Movement 1789-1927. Volume III (1927) p. 73

(23) J. Lovell, Stevedores and Dockers (1969) p. 156

disapproval. The Referee described it as 'a grim menace' and hoped for an immediate settlement, together with 'an assurance for the future prevention of a calamity whose possibilities do not fall short of an armed blockade'.⁽²⁴⁾ The Sunday Times was convinced that such activities meant the country was headed for 'the rule of the mob'.⁽²⁵⁾ The Times concurred, arguing that 'more and more do strikes seem in our complicated modern civilisation with the interdependence of all parts of society, a reversion to, or a survival of, barbarism'.⁽²⁶⁾ Unionist M.P. Harry Lawson, eldest son of Lord Burnham, the owner of the Daily Telegraph, used the word 'anarchy' to describe the state of affairs.⁽²⁷⁾

The Home Office papers reveal that some employers wrote to the Home Secretary demanding more effective police protection, especially in Manchester.⁽²⁸⁾ In that city, just as it seemed that the strike was about to end, violence erupted for a couple of days. Once again, the Manchester Guardian displayed its disapproval of direct action, condemning the weak-willed people who were prepared to resort to the use of force, and insisted that 'the restoration of normal conditions would be greatly assisted by a much more impressive demonstration of the authority of law than the Manchester police have yet

(24) Referee, 2 July 1911, p. 7

(25) Sunday Times, 2 July 1911, p. 10

(26) Times, 5 July 1911 p. 9

(27) House of Commons Debates, Vol. 29 Col. 1986, 16 August

(28) H.O.45/10648/21065/8,26,31,45,46

been able to offer'.⁽²⁹⁾ Another Manchester paper, the Conservative Daily Dispatch, made the same point, and urged that 'this behaviour must be put down, and all necessary force must be employed for that purpose'.⁽³⁰⁾ In fact, the Home Secretary and the Lord Mayor had communicated on this matter; and the Chief Constable and the Mayor had assured Churchill that 'we have every reason to think that the Manchester police with the aid of additional Constables from other towns which we have secured and are securing will be quite able to deal with the unrest now existing in Manchester'.⁽³¹⁾ Perhaps the local press had over-reacted, but clearly the situation had been sufficiently serious for the Government to pay particular attention to the events.

However, the attitude of these papers is a recurring one. They conceded that there was a cause for concern, but held that matters were critical because those responsible for law and order were not strict enough, so that the solution to strikes and riots was obvious - counter them with greater force. Of course, these disputes were more severe than the public was accustomed to, so they received wide coverage. The press was generally disapproving, but at this point, few papers were advocating punitive measures to prevent a repetition. As the unrest intensified, so did the anger of the press, and, consequently, the solutions became more violent. The Government kept a keen eye on events everywhere

(29) Manchester Guardian, 5 July 1911, p. 8

(30) Daily Dispatch, 5 July 1911, p. 4

(31) H.O.45/10648/21065/40 5 July 1911

and the day after receiving the communication from the Mayor of Manchester, Churchill promised the Commons that he had prepared for further trouble, and 'ample forces have been placed at the disposal of the authorities responsible for maintaining order'. (32)

As the Manchester strike came to an end, the possibilities of unrest in London increased as the month of July progressed. On 10 July, the N.T.W.F. met the employers. That, in itself, was significant, as the first fully representative meeting of shipowners and unions in London. The Federation wanted recognition of all transport unions, and a minimum port rate of 8d an hour, with 1s an hour for overtime. This meant an increase of at least 1d an hour on basic rates. The Short Sea Traders refused to participate after the first meeting, but the others continued, and eventually, on 27 July, reached a compromise, known as the Devonport Agreement, after the Chairman of the Port of London Authority, Lord Devonport, who claimed that Tillett said 'if all employers were like Lord Devonport there would be very few strikes', (33) a significant comment, bearing in mind the bitterness between the two in the following year.

The men's leaders had agreed on a compromise settlement, with the promise of arbitration for those who did not receive 8d and 1s. This was put to a mass meeting. Tillett and Gosling urged acceptance, but the dockers rejected the Devonport Agreement. On 29 July, the coal porters, who had

(32) House of Commons Debates, Vol. 27, Col. 1341, 6 July 1911

(33) Viscount Devonport op.cit. p. 168

been excluded from it, left their work, and two days later, over a thousand were out, and the number grew hourly. On 2 August, there was a mass meeting in West Ham, where Tillet supported the strike, and the N.T.W.F. called for a general stoppage in the Port of London. The same day, the Lightermen's Union called its members out, demanding a ten hour working day.

Reaction up to this point was varied. The more Conservative papers, such as the Standard and the Financial Times were anxious to blame agitators, ⁽³⁴⁾ while the Morning Post attacked the men for ignoring the advice of their union leaders. Such an attitude 'is the same as that which repudiates the binding force of law. It leads men not to liberty but, through anarchy, to despotism'. ⁽³⁵⁾ There was no real contradiction in these views, for these papers were quite consistent in their attitudes towards workers taking industrial action. If the leaders were encouraging the men towards militancy, the leaders were to be condemned. If, on the other hand, the men were acting against the advice of the union officials, then the men were attacked. The common principle was that all wage increases were to be deplored, and any exercise of power by the workers had to be opposed. Such was the traditional reaction to working class militancy.

A different view was to be found in the Liberal Daily Chronicle, which discussed Sir Charles Macara's scheme for

(34) Standard, 3 August 1911, p. 3; Financial Times, 3

August 1911, p. 7

(35) Morning Post, 3 August 1911, p. 6

compulsory arbitration in industrial disputes,⁽³⁶⁾ and wondered 'whether the time has not arrived when some industrial tribunal of a special character should be devised to meet the case on industrial deadlocks'.⁽³⁷⁾ Methods of preventing strikes were to appear regularly in the weeks and months that followed but it is interesting that a popular newspaper - and a Liberal one at that - was dealing with the question so early. Of course, the Daily Chronicle was not seeking a solution through increased police activity, but any attempt to limit working class activity could indicate a lack of sympathy. The Daily News was less moderate in its support. It was impressed that the dockside unions had co-operated, instead of fighting each other.⁽³⁸⁾ This was an important point. Although the various unions wanted to retain their sectional differences, they had come to realise that concerted action, through a body such as the N.T.W.F., provided the only chance against the strong and determined opposition of the shipowners.

John Burns was worried that this united front would crumble in the face of the allied employers. He advised Tillett to 'settle before what has been secured had been frittered away'. Burns believed that Devonport 'although firm was kindly to the men but reasonably disgruntled about leaders'.⁽³⁹⁾ This entry in his diary is ambiguous, as it could mean that Devonport had reason to be unhappy with the

(36) The scheme is described at length in the next chapter

(37) Daily Chronicle, 4 August 1911, p. 4

(38) Daily News, 7 August 1911, p. 4

(39) Burns Papers, B.M.Add.Ms.46333 f.146a. Diary 9 August 1911

leaders, or that his discontent was not massive. If the former were the case, it would tell us something about Burns' attitude, but in either case, it revealed that Devonport was unhappy about men such as Mann and Tillett.

The Devonport Agreement had promised arbitration. This was conducted by Sir Arthur Rollitt. He had won law prizes when studying at King's College, London, had subsequently been Mayor of Hull, and was both a business man, and a member of the Commercial and Intelligence Committee of the Board of Trade. Politically, he was known to be a progressive Tory. He announced his decision on 6 August, in favour of the men. The leaders of the N,T,W,F, advised a mass meeting to stay out until all of their claims had been met. The strike continued to grow. On the same day, the carmen decided to cease work, and two days later, the stevedores were called out officially,

At this juncture, the Board of Trade intervened, and persuaded the employers of the coal porters and the lightermen to meet their employees. The Government's chief troubleshooter was George Askwith, a barrister who had been appointed Controller-General of the Commercial, Labour, and Statistical Department of the Board of Trade in 1909, and Chief Industrial Commissioner in 1911. He also brought the owners together with the carmen and the sailing bargemen, and secured a settlement in each case, so that the Federation declared an end to the strike, and on 14 August, most men had returned to work. Unfortunately, that did not mean a resumption of normal operations, for the same day, Lord Devonport's Port of London Authority refused to reinstate about three

thousand men, so that the remainder of the P.L.A.'s employees walked out. The action was endorsed by the N.T.W.F. the next day, and the strike continued until 21 August, when all the men except those concerned with the short sea trades resumed. On 23 August, this group decided to arbitrate, and returned at the end of the month.

Devonport disapproved of the settlement, and claimed that it had been reached only because Churchill and Masterman, his Under-Secretary, had used the Agadir incident to persuade the shipowners to concede over the manner of employment. Now, men would be taken on outside the dock gates, which Devonport insisted would lead to intimidation of non-unionists.⁽⁴⁰⁾ This question became an important point in the London Dock Strike of 1912.

Two Tory papers, the Birmingham Daily Post and the Financial News had complained about the poor wages earned by dockers, as had the Westminster Gazette which had been impressed by the men's solidarity, that had 'reminded us of the power which organised labour possesses of striking at the vital interest of the community'.⁽⁴¹⁾ However, this should not infer that the strike received a great deal of support. It must be remembered that this was a dispute involving dockers and those employed around the docks. Thus, shipping was brought to a standstill; no boats were loaded or unloaded. London, even more than most other cities in the country,

(40) Viscount Devonport op.cit. pp. 170-172

(41) Birmingham Daily Post, 4 August 1911, p. 6; Financial News, 14 August 1911, p. 4; Westminster Gazette, 12 August 1911. n. 1

depended on the docks, not just for the import of raw materials from abroad and from other parts of the country, but also for food. Consequently, the strike caused shortages, which grew greater as the dispute progressed and existing supplies were consumed. So as to ensure that essential commodities did reach the community, the Strike Committee issued permits allowing the unloading and carriage of goods. Articles bound for hospitals, for example, would receive permits. However, the shortages, and the very existence of permits angered a large section of the community.

At the head of those who were outraged was William Collison. The son of a policeman, he had been a soldier, bricklayer's labourer, and casual waterfront worker, before becoming an omnibus driver. In 1889, he helped form the London and County and Omnibus Employer's Trade Union, and was a full-time official until he left after an argument, and in 1893 founded the National Free Labour Association, of which he became General Secretary. This was an organisation opposed to trade unionism, and from its establishment, the members had been used to break strikes. Collison insisted that, during this dispute, 'milk and ice intended for hospitals and other public institutions were refused passage'.⁽⁴²⁾ This was published in 1913, so that Collison's memory could have been faulty. Certainly, at the time, such an accusation was not made. The Times condemned the system of permits, pointing out that 'the Federation is good enough to permit the conveyance of ice for the use of hospitals, the removal

(42) W. Collison, Apostle of Free Labour (1913) p. 288

of decaying refuse, for the maintenance of the main drainage system, and the supply of fresh water to ships. Apart from these exceptions, for which the public are perhaps expected to be thankful, there is to be a total stoppage'.⁽⁴³⁾ Thus, it would appear that Collison overstated his case, in his anxiety to denounce militant trade unionism.

More influential attacks appeared in the press, a large section of which was furious about the food crisis. The Daily Mail was convinced that London was 'threatened with famine'.⁽⁴⁴⁾ The Times agreed, and pondered on the 'conspiracy to bring the life of a great capital to a standstill'.⁽⁴⁵⁾ In the House of Commons, Unionist Joynston-Hicks asked if the Government had made any arrangements 'with regard to the provisioning of London...There is really a crisis in that respect'. Churchill assured him that, if the need arose, 'all the forces at the disposal of the Government will be employed to preserve peace and secure the observance of the law and the free working of the food supply of the people'.⁽⁴⁶⁾ The whole question had worried Churchill, who had asked Buxton, the President of the Board of Trade, about the stocks of provisions in London, the minimum amount of foodstuffs and other items that would have to be delivered in London, and the smallest number of distribution centres

(43) Times, 8 August 1911, p. 9

(44) Daily Mail, 9 August 1911, p. 4

(45) Times, 11 August 1911, p. 7

(46) House of Commons Debates, Vol. 29, Col. 1523, Col. 1546

from which the food supply could be maintained.⁽⁴⁷⁾ Clearly, Churchill was extremely worried about possible developments. Other members of the Cabinet were closely involved. The Secretary for War, Haldane, wrote that he had '30,000 troops standing by ready to march (indistinguishable mark) if that (?) should be necessary to save London from starving'. By 12 August, he recorded that 'last night I had our Home Secretary, the Chief of Police and some soldiers here. I resisted bringing the troops before the early morning - and I think I was right. It meant fixed bayonets and ball cartridge. The only justification could have been the danger of London Starving'.⁽⁴⁸⁾ Thus it is evident that the military was ready to take over London. The Cabinet was kept up to date, for Asquith wrote to the King, informing him that the Ministers had 'agreed that the Government must assume responsibility in the last resort for the food supply of London'.⁽⁴⁹⁾ The matter had been discussed at length, all the forces necessary to maintain order had been organised, but it had been concluded that starvation was not imminent at that time.

Nevertheless, imported food was running low, and there was much criticism of the Government's inactivity. As might

(47) Buxton Papers. Letter from Churchill to Buxton 10
August 1911

(48) Haldane Papers, N.L.S. Ms. 5986 f.110. Letter from
Haldane to his mother, 11 August 1911 and 12
August 1911

(49) Letters to the King at Windsor CAB 41/33/25

have been expected, the strongly Tory Daily Telegraph was one of the first to launch such an attack. It asked 'what hope of settlement is there so long as the Government permit public outrage to paralyse the whole commercial life of the Metropolis?'⁽⁵⁰⁾ The Standard was similarly outraged that such events could take place, and insisted that 'capital has its rights, and so does the community at large. It is monstrous that the interests of both should be sacrificed as they have been', and condemned the Government for doing nothing, asserting that 'public opinion will not condone the dereliction of duty which made it easy for the dock strikers... to intimidate both the employers and the country by methods which an enemy would resort to at his peril'.⁽⁵¹⁾ This paper was equating strikes with foreign wars, and was thus insisting that an attack upon the national economy, which brought suffering to the community, from no matter what source, was an act of hostility. The Financial Times returned to the Government's culpability, insisting that 'there can be no doubt that the chief underlying cause of the serious and widespread unrest which exists in the ranks of labour lies in the fact that the men believe they have the sympathy of the Government', whose duty it was 'to see that order is resorted without delay'.⁽⁵²⁾ The Daily Graphic objected to 'the spirit of anarchy' and pointed out that 'the duty of the Home Secretary is obvious'.⁽⁵³⁾

(50) Daily Telegraph, 11 August 1911, p. 8

(51) Standard, 11 August 1911, p. 6, 12 August 1911, p. 6

(52) Financial Times, 10 August 1911, p. 6

(53) Daily Graphic, 10 August 1911, p. 3

In total, this amounted to a terrific onslaught upon the Government by a Conservative press which had never offered any real alternative except repression by force. Of course, it is possible that this was an attempt to make political capital from the gravity of the situation, and merely taking advantage of events to lambast the Liberals, without really believing what was said. However, it is interesting that the attack was not matched by a corresponding defence in the Liberal newspapers, which were extremely guarded in their views. Only two papers had much to say in support of the strikes. The Nation explained that 'profits and salaries have rapidly advanced and the expenditure of the luxurious classes is on a much greater scale than ever. This contrast is affecting the minds of the workmen',⁽⁵⁴⁾ while Reynolds's Newspaper applauded the successes of the men in London.⁽⁵⁵⁾ Several Liberal politicians were also pleased. Viscount Samuel wrote to his mother, telling her that 'there is no doubt that, in the main, the men were in the right. The advances in the wages have been long overdue, and I am glad they have won them',⁽⁵⁶⁾ and Burns Diary reveals that he was 'sincerely pleased that carmen, dockers, labourers and stevedores have done so well'.⁽⁵⁷⁾ However, such opinions were not made in public, so that the published sentiments of the Liberal politicians and the general tone of the press was one of opposition, especially from the papers which sided

(54) Nation, 12 August 1911, p. 698

(55) Reynolds's Newspaper, 13 August 1911, p. 6

(56) Samuel Papers, A/156/384. Letter from Samuel to his Mother 13 August 1911

(57) Burns Papers 8M Add MS
4633 E 148 (b) Diary
17 August 1911

with the Unionists.

Liverpool

On 14 June 1911, five hundred Liverpool firemen had refused to sign on, and a fortnight later, ten thousand dockers left their work, after the Liverpool Shipping Federation decided that its affiliated companies could concede at their discretion. Tom Mann had been appointed Chairman of the Strike committee, and succeeded in avoiding outbreaks of sectionalism. He persuaded the dockers to return on 3 July, but they were out again at the beginning of August. The Chief Constable expected serious trouble: on 9 August, he asked for troops to be stationed nearby, and the following day requested that cavalry should be held in readiness.⁽⁵⁸⁾ It seemed that he had not been especially pessimistic, for on 13 August, there was extensive rioting in Liverpool, and about two hundred people were injured. The following day, a general transport strike paralysed the city, and riots resumed on a larger scale. Two men were killed and three wounded by gun shots fired by the Army. The next day, a mob attacked a police van carrying prisoners to Walton Jail, and two deaths resulted.

The Chief Constable sent a telegram to the Home Secretary on 15 August, informing him that he 'need not attach any very great importance to the rioting of last night. It took place in an area where disorder is a chronic feature ready to break out when any abnormal excitement is in force',⁽⁵⁹⁾ but it was

(58) H.O.45/10658/21247031,2

(59) H.O.45/10654/212470326

hardly likely that such extensive disorder would be ignored, for there was a very serious danger to the safety of both people and property. Reactions were almost predictable. The Daily Telegraph was disturbed at the existence of 'mob law in the city',⁽⁶⁰⁾ and this description of events was echoed elsewhere. The Illustrated London News showed photographs of the streets after the disturbances, describing the scenes as being 'as after a civil war',⁽⁶¹⁾ while the Daily Express discovered a 'positive state of rebellion in all the big cities'.⁽⁶²⁾ The Referee believed that the strikes were 'approaching more nearly to red revolution on an intensive scale than anything that our oldest inhabitants can remember'.⁽⁶³⁾ The Morning Post expressed similar views, insisting that 'this country was nearer to open revolution than at any time within the memory of living man'.⁽⁶⁴⁾ Philip Gibbs, an experienced journalist, was in Liverpool at the time. He has recalled that events represented 'the nearest thing to civil war I have seen in any English city'.⁽⁶⁵⁾ Margaret Postgate, later to marry G.D.H. Cole, spent part of her summer holidays in Liverpool with her father, Professor John Percival Postgate, before going up to Girton College, Cambridge in the autumn of that year. She recollects that she 'could not altogether

(60) Daily Telegraph, 14 August 1911, p. 9

(61) Illustrated London News, 19 August 1911, p. 296

(62) Daily Express, 16 August 1911, p. 4

(63) Referee, 20 August 1911, p. 7

(64) Morning Post, 14 August 1911, p. 6

(65) P. Gibbs, Adventures in Journalism (1923) pp. 198-199

fail to notice the Liverpool Dock Strike...I remember the stench of unscavenged streets - the Corporation employees came out in sympathy - and of the truck loads of vegetables rotting at Edge Hill station. I remember bits of broken bottles, relics of battles down by the Docks, the rain-patter of feet walking the pavements when the trams ceased to run and clank, the grey "Antrim" lying on guard in the Mersey, the soldiers marching through the streets...I gathered from my father's thunderous noises that it was the beginning of the end of the world'. (66)

Thus there was a very real fear that the riots in Liverpool could intensify, and even result in revolution. It is immaterial whether or not such fears were realistic. The crucial point is that so many people considered the situation to be extremely grave. Moreover, it was not confined to the Conservatives. The former Tory Chancellor of the Exchequer, Austen Chamberlain, accused the Government of failing to give 'sufficient protection to those in the position of small shopkeepers and tradesmen to carry on their lawful business and to get the supplies on which that lawful business depends'. (67)

Yet Lord Haldane informed the House of Lords that there were 4,700 troops in Liverpool, and a cruiser, the "Antrim", moored in the Mersey. He pledged that 'if violence of that kind - utterly unreasonable, turbulent violence - is repeated, the policy of the Government is to put it down, and to use all

(66) M. Cole, Growing up into Revolution (1939) pp. 34-35

(67) House of Commons Debates, Vol. 29, Col. 1945, 16

the force necessary for the purpose'.⁽⁶⁸⁾ Clearly, Haldane was worried, and his words indicate the seriousness with which he viewed the situation, though he did feel it was under control. By 16 August 1911, the Cabinet did not believe that Liverpool was 'free from danger',⁽⁶⁹⁾ and John Burns felt that, even allowing for the exaggeration in the reports that had reached him, the news was 'ugly'.⁽⁷⁰⁾ Samuel described the position as 'serious' and maintained that Liverpool was 'verging on a state of revolution',⁽⁷¹⁾ while Sydenham-Clarke, the Governor of Bombay, received information which led him to a similar conclusion, that 'England was very near to revolution'.⁽⁷²⁾

There were those who were unconvinced that the faults lay exclusively with the men. Some reports indicated that the riots of Sunday 13 August had been induced by the police. The Manchester Guardian correspondent condemned the police for unnecessary violence, but the editorial softened the blow by insisting that 'it is to be remembered that once the conflict had begun, the position in face of so vast a crowd was a dangerous one, and it may well be that they lost their

(68) House of Lords Debates, Vol. 7, Col. 1145, 17 August 1911, Col. 1136, 16 August 1911

(69) Letters to the King at Windsor CAB.41/23/26 16 August 1911

(70) Burns Papers B.M.Add.Ma.46333 f.150(a) Diary 15 August 1911

(71) Samuel Papers A/157/553, 560 Letters from Samuel to his wife, 14 and 17 August 1911

(72) Sydenham Papers B.M.Add.Ms.50834 f.103. Letter from Sydenham-Clarke to Chirol, 24 August 1911

heads'.⁽⁷³⁾ Some were not so charitable. Captain Tupper, who had given a great deal of assistance to the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union, blamed the riot on the police imported from other forces. He commented on a film which he claimed had been made by the press: 'We saw it privately. The Government never allowed that film to be shown to the public. The inference is obvious'.⁽⁷⁴⁾ Tom Mann alleged that the police had secured cuts, and it had been impossible to recover the vital bits.⁽⁷⁵⁾ The ex-railwayman, Rowland Kenney, also raised the question of a film, which he believed had been destroyed by a frightened owner.⁽⁷⁶⁾ If such a film had existed, it could have solved the question of police behaviour. The Home Office files contain a variety of letters complaining about the excessive zeal of the police. Some are from individuals, who were present, and other are resolutions from local trade union branches, or, in one case, the results of an open air meeting of about a thousand citizens in Warrington.⁽⁷⁷⁾

The only national paper to express serious reservations on this question was the Daily News, which demanded 'an

(73) Manchester Guardian, 14 August 1911, p. 6

(74) E. Tupper, Seamen's Torch (1938) p. 61

(75) T. Mann, Memoirs (1967 ed.) p. 224

(76) R. Kenney, Men and Rails (1913) p. 179

(77) H.O.45/10654/212470/18,50,59,103. H.O.45/10655/212470/

investigation in which there must be no concealment of the facts'. The Daily News was generally the most sympathetic mass circulation paper. One editorial examined the cause of working class violence: 'So long as Liverpool continues to inflict on a large proportion of its workers not only dire poverty but the soul and body destroying system of casual labour, so long will you have a Liverpool mob whose flash point...is low; and the same is true of ports like Hull and Cardiff. So long, again, as the men in hastily developed colliery districts have to live under such unrelieved conditions of bestial housing, heavy toil, and sordid social life as prevail in the mining valleys of South Wales, you will get there also such mobs as those at Llanelly or Tredegar. Disorder in such cases is a disease not strike bred, even if sometimes strike occasioned. Nor can it be cured by mere surgical operations; its roots lie far deeper'. (78)

Naturally, a Socialist like George Lansbury took a similar view, and suggested that 'instead of sending soldiers and policemen to bludgeon them, let us bring in such legislation as will secure for the man who does a day's work a living wage'. Liberal M.P. Chiozza Money maintained that 'you cannot cure strikes by bullets'. (79)

Thus, there were a variety of opinions about the unrest in Liverpool. The Conservatives, perhaps without exception,

(78) Daily News, 24 August 1911, p. 4

(79) House of Commons Debates, Vol. 29, Vol. 1976, 1981,

condemned the strikers, while a section of the Liberals, including the Government, similarly argued that the stoppage of work and the riots could not be excused. The solution advocated by such people was matching the violence of the men with an even greater show of force. The remainder of the Liberals sought to uncover the causes of the disturbances from the social and economic conditions in which the poor lived. It was this part of the community which showed some sympathy for the men; their very existence was a clear indication that the numbers of those concerned about the way of life of the working class was increasing.

The Railway Strike

Event followed event in the summer of 1911, and the wave of strikes had not finished. Trouble had been brewing on the railways for some time, and the cause of the dissatisfaction dated back some years. In 1906, the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants had requested that the directors of the railway companies should meet a deputation of workers, to discuss the requests for improvements in wages and conditions that the Union had presented. The directors refused to meet the deputation on three occasions, and the men voted overwhelmingly for a national strike. At this point, Lloyd George, then President of the Board of Trade, had intervened. He persuaded the men to accept Conciliation Boards to settle rail disputes. In each company, there was a Board for every group of workers, composed of an equal number of men and representatives of the employers. This was to remain in operation until 1914, and no strike was to be undertaken or endorsed in

the period 1907-14. However, the various rail unions were still not recognised by the companies. The scheme proved to be slow in arriving at any decision, and was, therefore, unpopular amongst the men. For about a month before the Liverpool general transport strike began, railwaymen had been expressing their resentment. At the end of July, a strike had begun on the Great Central Railway, at New Holland, Lincolnshire and had spread through various grades and to other centres on that line. On 5 August, men employed on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company had ceased work in Liverpool, and their actions had been repeated along the lines of that Company, so that by 14 August, the stoppage had reached Sheffield, Birmingham, Cardiff, Warrington, and Rochdale. On 10th, goods workers and carmen at Paddington left their work, and were quickly joined by men at Bristol. Thus, the railways were in a state of ferment when the Executive Committee of the rail unions met on 15 August in Liverpool. This seemed to be a hastily convened conference, probably called to answer the clear rank and file demand for action. Already, a section of their members had ignored both their Union and the terms of the Conciliation Agreement, and gone on strike. The Unions had to do something to regain their former control over the men. If success could be achieved without union assistance, then the official leaders were redundant. Thus, the Executive Committees of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, the Amalgamated Society of Locomotive Engineers, the General Railway Workers' Union, and the United Pointsmen's and Signalmen's Society decided on militant action, and they gave the companies

twenty-four hours to decide whether they would prefer to negotiate or face a strike.

The Times knew how to answer such a threat. It published an article by 'The General Manager of a Leading Railway Company', who wrote: 'We have come to the conclusion that there are occasions when in our interests and in the interests of the public it is better to have a battle...provided only that we can get reasonable protection for our men'. The editor himself was staggered at the very threat of a rail strike: 'So monstrous a proposal that it is difficult to believe there is not some mistake...These trade unionists in their crazy fanaticism or diseased vanity are prepared to starve the whole population'.⁽⁸⁰⁾ The Daily Mail, on the same day, dealt with the promoters of strikes, and concluded that the origins of the dispute lay with the mob rousers, rather than the union officials, for 'responsible leaders have allowed themselves to be deposed. Their places have been usurped by agitators who acknowledge no responsibility beyond the promoting of strikes'.⁽⁸¹⁾

The Manchester Guardian was equally concerned, and declared that 'a general strike on the railways at twenty-four hours' notice would be a crime against society'.⁽⁸²⁾ Never before had a general rail stoppage been so imminent, and at a time when road transport was in its infancy, and most people and goods travelled by rail. Thus, a cessation of this type

(80) Times, 15 August 1911, p. 8; 16 August 1911, p. 7

(81) Daily Mail, 16 August 1911, p. 4

(82) Manchester Guardian, 16 August 1911, p. 6

of traffic would end the movement of raw materials, and a prolonged strike would bring industry to a halt.

Despite the seriousness of the situation, many of the Liberal papers attempted to understand the basis of the dispute, rather than merely attacking the men. The Morning Leader declared that 'it is pretty clear that we have evidence of a wide unrest that is not rooted in any accidental circumstance; and for which nothing but the application and acceptance of wise and comprehensive principles will provide a remedy',⁽⁸³⁾ while the Daily News felt that it was up to the companies to 'recognise firstly the great claim which the public has on them for the maintenance of services even at the cost of some concessions, and secondly the impossibility of ignoring a discontent so widespread among their employees'.⁽⁸⁴⁾

The complaint was that wages were low - on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, the Daily Dispatch discovered 441 men earning less than £1 a week, and half of these were performing 'hard, heavy manual, labouring work',⁽⁸⁵⁾ and hours were long. Moreover, despite increasing prices, the wages of railwaymen had risen by only 2.9% between 1900 and 1910.⁽⁸⁶⁾ W.T. Layton, the Cambridge economist, has maintained that wages

(83) Morning Leader, 16 August 1911, p. 4

(84) Daily News, 16 August 1911, p. 4

(85) Daily Dispatch, 21 November 1911, p. 4

(86) Bureau of Railway Economics, A Comparative Study of Railway Wages and the Cost of Living in the United States and Continental Europe. Bulletin No. 34 (Washington, D.C. 1912) p. 11

were the same as they had been in 1907, and in many cases, they had been unaltered since 1886. In comparison, he examined the fate of the blastfurnacemen in a large company in the North East. Between 1878 and 1909, their hours had been reduced by a third, while wages had risen by 25%.⁽⁸⁷⁾

Sir Arthur Markham, a Liberal M.P., argued that the pay of railwaymen was too low, and found it 'amazing that they have not revolted long since'.⁽⁸⁸⁾

Thus, the men had their sympathisers, and they themselves were in a militant mood. The threat of a strike was enough to force the Government to intervene, and on 16 August, Sydney Buxton, the President of the Board of Trade, asked the managers of the main railway companies to meet him in the morning, and he invited the union leaders to confer with him in the afternoon. The research of Bagwell, the railwaymen's historian, had led him to insist that 'the managers went to the interview already inclined to favour a showdown with the men'.⁽⁸⁹⁾ Certainly, no solution resulted from these meetings. J.H. Thomas, the Assistant Secretary of the A.S.R.S., had attempted to persuade the General Manager of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway to negotiate, using the Lord Mayor of Liverpool as an intermediary, but, 'he'd rather see the rails rust, he was heard to say, than parley with the hired advocates of the men'.⁽⁹⁰⁾

(88) Westminster Gazette, 29 August 1911, p. 2

(89) P.S. Bagwell, The Railwaymen (1963) pp. 291-2

(90) G. Blaxland, J.H. Thomas. A Life for Unity (1964) p. 68

(87) W.T. Layton 'The Wages Question in the Railway Service' Fortnightly Review November 1911 (though probably the December 1911 edition) pp1106-7

The following day, the men held a Joint Executive Committee Conference at Unity House, and in the afternoon met the Prime Minister and the President of the Board of Trade. Asquith held that 'there is no doubt that the men have real grievances', but believed that the threat of a strike at twenty-four hours' notice had lost them 'all claim to public sympathy'.⁽⁹¹⁾

According to the official Board of Trade Report on this meeting, he told the men that 'the Government had to regard exclusively the interests of the public, and, having regard to those interest, they could not allow a general paralysis of the railway system of the country and would have to take the necessary steps to prevent it'.⁽⁹²⁾ Consequently, he

offered the unions a Royal Commission to investigate the workings of their Conciliation Agreement, but this was regarded as inadequate, and the representatives of the men insisted that the strike would take place. According to Asquith, the Prime Minister replied 'then the blood be on your own head', and left the room.⁽⁹³⁾ Chamberlain's letter

to his father tells the story at greater length. Ramsay MacDonald from whom I have this, tells me Asquith infuriated them. He marched into the room where they were meeting at the Board of Trade and, without so much as saying "Good Morning" to them, sat down and read in his most aggressive tones the

(91) Letters to the King at Windsor CAB.41/33/26, 16 August

1911

(92) Buxton Papers, Board of Trade Report, 17 August 1911

(93) Lord Asquith, Industrial Problems and Disputes (1920)

published statement. Then he added a few words which they interpreted as a threat to shoot them and, without giving any time for a question to be asked and without a further word, marched out of the room' (94) Whatever actually transpired, Asquith must have been extremely disturbed at the possibility of a strike, and determined that it should not succeed. Nevertheless, the rail men left in a more convinced mood than they had entered. The Executive Committees of the unions sent a telegram to each of two thousand centres: 'Your liberty is at stake. All railwaymen must strike at once. The Loyalty of each means victory for all'. The first national rail strike was about to commence.

John Burns believed that there was 'needless alarm, undue excitement, too much parade of preparations. Took a cool, true and long view of the situation. Railway strike must fail. Not enough men, tired leaders of limited capacity, lack of moral courage', (95) while another Cabinet Minister, Herbert Samuel, didn't 'expect the main line traffic will be stopped', and anticipated 'the railwaymen will probably be beaten but it will be a disastrous struggle'. (96)

(94) A. Chamberlain, Politics from Inside (1936) p. 346.

Letter from Chamberlain to his father, 19 August

1911

(95) Burns Papers B.M.Add.Ms.46333 f.151(a) Diary, 17 August

1911

(96) Samuel Papers A/157/553 and 560. Letters from Samuel

to his wife, 16, 17 August 1911

Others did not even think there would be a stoppage. The Daily Express had 'confidence' in the 'sanity' and the 'sense of honour' of the men.⁽⁹⁷⁾ Some papers were less friendly to the workers. The Standard regarded the threat as an 'insolent decision'. Moreover, 'never was a great industrial war threatened on grounds so frivolous, or announced with such cynical levity'. The men had no case, but 'the position of the railway directors is quite reasonable and logical'.⁽⁹⁸⁾ This was not an isolated attitude. The Birmingham Daily Post talked of the 'most momentous industrial struggle of modern times - we are tempted to add, the most reckless, for whatever may be the legitimate grievances of the railwaymen they can have none sufficient to warrant this deliberate attempt to bring the trade of the country to a standstill, and cut off the food supplies of millions of people who are no parties to the quarrel. There can be little public sympathy for them'.⁽⁹⁹⁾ The Sunday Chronicle took a similar line, pointing out that 'where the public finds its sympathy for the underpaid stretched to the breaking point is where the underpaid show no more consideration for the public, which is not to blame, than they allege the railway directors show to their servants'.⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ The Daily Telegraph also attacked 'the utter disregard of the railwaymen's leaders

(97) Daily Express, 17 August 1911, p. 4

(98) Standard, 17 August 1911, p. 6

(99) Birmingham Daily Post, 17 August 1911, p. 4

(100) Sunday Chronicle, 20 August 1911 p. 4

and their friends for the convenience and welfare of the public'.⁽¹⁰¹⁾ It is interesting to note that the papers were claiming that the general public were opposed to the strike. As a matter of fact, there had been little attempt to check whether or not the whole of the nation condemned the action of the men. It is likely that business men, who would be unable to ensure that their raw materials and finished goods could move freely, would attack the stoppage. In the same way, those wishing to use the trains would not be pleased to discover that there weren't any - and such people were likely to be reasonably affluent. The strike was likely to affect the upper and middle classes, and here is a significant point. In the past, disputes had seldom touched the whole of the population, and especially not the prosperous section of the community, and now, everyone had to suffer, so it was the rich whose complaints were the most vocal. The reaction of the poor was less often recorded, but as most of the less well paid sections of the community became involved in the unrest, they were not very likely to criticise each other.

The effectiveness of the stoppage can be judged from figures showing the decline in total receipts from goods and passengers for the week in which the strike occurred - and it should be remembered that it lasted for only two days:-

Barry Railway	37%
Lancashire and Yorkshire	35.4%
London and North Western	29.6%

(101) Daily Telegraph, 19 August 1911, p. 8

Great Central	29.3%
Taff Vale	28.8%
Great Western	28.4%
North Eastern	21.7%
Midland	21.2%
Great Eastern	13.0%
London and South Western	2.7%
South East and Chatham	2.7% (102)

The differing success of the strikes reflects the fact that some companies were more effective in discouraging union membership than others. The completeness of the shut down on some lines worried the Government. Chamberlain noted that

'there are rumours of dissension in the Cabinet - Asquith and Winston for strong measures, Lloyd George against them'. (103)

In the House of Commons, the Home Secretary revealed the preparations that the Government had undertaken, which showed clearly the degree of their concern. Should the measures already taken prove to be inadequate, 'other measures, even of a large scope will have to be taken promptly, so that the transport of everything really necessary will be assured'. (104)

The Government was clearly planning for every contingency.

Sir Guy Granet, a qualified barrister who was the General Manager of the Midland Railway Company at this time, wrote an article for the Railway Gazette, in which he insisted that 'the

(102) Railway News, 26 August 1911, p. 473

(103) A. Chamberlain op.cit. p. 346. Letter to his father,
19 August 1911

(104) House of Commons Debates Vol. 29, Col. 2248, 18 August

Government at our Conference today have undertaken to put at the service of the railway companies every available soldier in the country...The companies are prepared even in the event of a general strike to give an effective, if a restricted, service'.⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ It is evident that the Government would have used the Army. General Macready, the Director of Personal Services at the War Office, was in charge of the organisation of the troops, and he has recalled that 'practically the whole of the troops of Great Britain were on duty scattered along the railway systems'.⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ Haldane, the Secretary of State for War, was 'busy all day detailing troops'.⁽¹⁰⁷⁾

Churchill made it easier to dispatch troops on 19 August, when he sent a telegram to the Chief Constable of every county and to the Mayors or Lord Mayors of every town or city with a separate police force situated within the disturbed areas. It announced that 'the Army Regulation which requires a requisition for troops from a civil authority is now suspended'.⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ Two days before, he had urged all Chief Constables and Mayors to swear in Special Constables if that was necessary, as, 'in the event of a general railway strike or other serious emergency, it will be the duty of each Police Force to give effective protection to life and property and also to all railwaymen within their jurisdiction who wish

(105) Railway Gazette, 18 August 1911, p. 142.

(106) N. Macready, Annals of an Active Life, Vol. 1 (1924) p.163

(107) Haldane Papers, N.L.S.Ms.5986 f.118. Letter from

Haldane to his mother, 16 August 1911

(108) H.O.45/10655/212470/152

to work'.⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ Churchill continued to keep a careful eye on the situation, and on 19th, sent a memo to Sir Edward Henry, the Commissioner of Metropolitan Police, and to the Receiver of Police, informing them that he wanted to send some of the troops stationed in London elsewhere, and asked them to engage up to three thousand 'trustworthy men' to do regular duty within the police.⁽¹¹⁰⁾

Thus, it is evident that the Government was very active in ensuring that soldiers were available to defend the railway lines in case of attack. Such preparations did not pass unnoticed. Kenney, writing two years later, recalled that one of the outstanding features of the strike was 'that the military forces were used freely',⁽¹¹¹⁾ while Alcock, whose book was published shortly after the First World War, believed that 'for a short time the signs looked ominous of civil war, because of the Government's deeds, and especially those of Churchill'.⁽¹¹²⁾ However, not everyone disapproved of such activities. The Tories applauded these attempts to safeguard the nation against possible insurrection. Colonel Sir Robert Sanders, M.P., entered in his diary: 'Churchill took a pretty firm attitude, sending troops wherever they were wanted. Granet of the Midland told me that he had been to see Churchill about the prospect of a railway strike and the latter told him that he was ready to use every soldier to

(109). H.O.45/10663/214312/1, 17 August 1911

(110) H.O.45/10710/243128/61

(111) R. Kenney op.cit. p. 187

(112) G.W. Alcock, Fifty Years of Railway Trade Unionism

protect his lines, and would call out the reserves if necessary'. (113) A bitter opponent of trade unionists, the anonymous author "One Who Resents It", felt that 'the firmness of the Government in coming to the defence of society had administered a check on the policy of Syndicalism and SABOTAGE'. (114)

Others were not so pleased, and accused the Government of failing to prevent the brow beating of those who wished to continue at the posts. Oliver Berry, the General Manager of the Great Northern Railway, complained to the Home Office that the position was worsened by 'the fact that the pickets either forcibly take our men from their work, or intimidate them to such an extent as to prevent them from working', (115) while Sir James Inglis, the famous engineer and Chief Manager of the Great Western Railway, claimed that 'the strike would not and could not have attained the dimensions it did but for widespread and gross abuse of the system called "peaceful persuasion" which furnished guise for intolerable acts of intimidation'. (116)

On 20 October, the Home Office wrote to each company, requesting information about damage and intimidation, and received replies from many companies, all of which described threats which persuaded their loyal employees to cease work.

(113) Sanders Diaries, Vol. 1 f.22 August 1911

(114) One Who Resents It, The Tyranny of Trade Unions (1912)
p. 125

(115) H.O.45/10655/212470/167, 19 August 1911

(116) H.O.45/10656/212470/267, 22 August 1911

In the same file was a letter from General Macready, pointing out that Army recruitment rose by 30% during the strike, compared with the same period in the previous year, and he concluded that 'evidently the action of the Government and the Army did not disgust the recruiting market'.⁽¹¹⁷⁾ It is possible that some sought to use the unrest to alleviate their aggressive instincts, or who did feel that the nation was in danger from inside, but, equally, the Agadir incident threatened the peace of Europe at this time, and the storm clouds had been building for several weeks prior to this date, so that the jump in recruitment could have been a response to the international crisis.

Certainly, public opinion was divided on the Government's action. Groups such as the Parliamentary Committee of the T.U.C. condemned the 'needless display of force by the police and the military', while many Conservatives believed that the action taken had been quite adequate and reasonable. In the same way, society was divided on the issues involved. The companies had refused to meet the representatives of the men, and this was the basic cause of the dispute. The Liberal papers were, in general, amazed at this. The Nation announced that 'the time had gone by when it was possible for employers to refuse so much as to meet the accredited representatives or organised labour'.⁽¹¹⁸⁾ The Daily News was even more insistent, asking 'what possible harm can come of two parties

(117) H.O.45/10658/212470/448,449. Letter from Macready to Sir Edward Ward, 23(?) August 1911

(118) Nation, 19 August 1911, p. 729

meeting in a room? The labour leaders are not lepers. There is surely no physical pollution in their presence, even for a railway director'. (119) The Westminster Gazette was inclined to blame much of the unrest onto such attitudes 'The young men protest that the old trade unionists have been bested and outwitted by the employers in recent negotiations; that their present policy has failed to get the working class what they were entitled to in recent years, that a new and fighting spirit must be infused into the unions. And so instead of the old hard bargaining we get strikes without notice or in defiance of the leaders, unrest, hostility suspicion between classes, a bad condition for industry as well as for that nation. It is mere shortsightedness for employers in these conditions to flatter themselves that they have done a good stroke for themselves or the public when they have succeeded in keeping the unions low or discrediting their leaders'. (120)

That such papers should oppose the companies was far less surprising than the similar line adopted by the Financial News, which asked 'Why should railway directors, many of whom, in their private and personal capacity as manufacturers and mill owners, "recognise" trade unions, become so stiff-necked when they enter a railway board room?' (121)

Most Tory papers had different ideas, however. The Daily Telegraph thought the companies were quite correct: 'The

(119) Daily News, 19 August 1911, p. 4

(120) Westminster Gazette, 17 August 1911, p. 1

(121) Financial News, 19 August 1911, p. 4

Amalgamated Society thrives on agitation - the fluctuating figures of its membership prove this beyond cavil - and that is why the managers want to have as little as possible to do with the officials of unions, to which only a quarter of the whole body of railway workers belong'.⁽¹²²⁾ The Economist agreed, and regarded the strike as 'conclusive proof that the people of this country must not be placed at the mercy of a small group of trade union officials'.⁽¹²³⁾ The Financial Times praised the employers for the stand that they had adopted, as 'the position taken up by the companies is wholly just and logical; they have no option but to fight if they are to retain a vestige of independence, and in courageously facing the music they have the country behind them'.⁽¹²⁴⁾

The Times was equally disapproving, and analysed the causes at length: 'Behind it is an outbreak of the spirit of "Syndicalism" which has lately been growing in this country and has manifested itself in other directions. It is one of the fruits of the Socialist teaching so assiduously disseminated in recent years; it regards society as an enemy and is absolutely reckless in its methods. This spirit has been distinctly fostered by the conspicuous incitements to class hatred uttered by the Chancellor in his electioneering campaigns and by the coqueting of the Home Secretary with disorder. If it is allowed to succeed now in its attack on the public, all the forces of disorder and anarchy will be

(122) Daily Telegraph, 19 August 1911, p. 8

(123) Economist, 19 August 1911, p. 371

(124) Financial Times, 18 August, 1911, p. 4

fatally encouraged. Happily, there are signs that the Government does not intend to yield to the attack'.⁽¹²⁵⁾ The accusation that a part of the Cabinet was extremely radical was a recurring one in this period.

Naturally, most of the press had a solution to the rail strike. That of the Economist was simple: 'it should be a condition of the railway service that no employee should be entitled to strike'.⁽¹²⁶⁾ The Standard concurred, suggesting that 'the Government may at least secure powers to place the railway services on a different footing from ordinary industrial enterprises and may subject the workers to special regulations which cannot be contravened with impunity'.⁽¹²⁷⁾ The Daily Graphic also urged legislation: 'If our criminal conspiracy law is not at present adequate to deal with such a wicked conspiracy against the very existence of the State, it ought to be amended without delay'.⁽¹²⁸⁾ The Daily Mail felt that the solution lay in preventing picketing, and urged that it be made illegal.⁽¹²⁹⁾ G.K. Chesterton, an avowed opponent of Socialism, dealt with all of these points. Writing in the Illustrated London News posed a crucial question about railwaymen and their rights: 'We must really make up our minds about this perfectly simple and primary point of what a railway porter is - whether he is a citizen, or a serf, or a criminal,

(125) Times, 19 August 1911, p. 7

(126) Economist, 19 August 1911, p. 371

(127) Standard, 19 August 1911, p. 6

(128) Daily Graphic, 17 August 1911, p. 3

(129) Daily Mail, 19 August 1911, p. 4

or an infant in arms'.⁽¹³⁰⁾ Such a point had been ignored by those most vigorously opposed to the action of the men, yet it was one that ought to have been considered.

The strike itself did not continue for long. An international incident caused Anglo-German relations to deteriorate - and they were already strained - so that the Government felt obliged to intervene once more, so as to obtain internal peace. On the morning of 19 August, Lloyd George and Buxton saw representatives of the companies, and in the afternoon the management and the unions met, in the presence of the Cabinet Ministers. Even this was more than Lloyd George had expected. He wrote to his wife, telling her 'that is at any rate, an achievement I never hoped for'.⁽¹³¹⁾ Moreover, the two sides agreed on various points, such as the reinstatement of strikers, a speedy convening of the Conciliation Boards, and the establishment of a special Commission of Inquiry, in return for a pledge to end the strike by the union leaders.

Many rank-and-file workers were extremely unhappy at this agreement. For example, in Manchester, three thousand railwaymen met, and only six voted for a return to work, while at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, a mass meeting resolved to remain on strike until an eight hour day and a rise of 2s a week was granted. However, in London, under the influence of J.E. Williams, the General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, twenty thousand men in Hyde Park

(130) Illustrated London News, 23 August 1911, p. 468

(131) Lloyd George papers N.L.W.Ms.20430C/1375. Letter from Lloyd George to his wife, 19 (?) August 1911.

voted unanimously for a resumption of work.

In consequence, by 21 August, rail services were as normal virtually everywhere, and on the same day, the London Dockers recommenced work, and the great industrial unrest of the summer of 1911 was at an end. The King's Private Secretary, Francis Knollys, who had previously served in this capacity with Edward, and was known as a staunch Liberal, expressed the feelings of many: 'What a relief that the railway strike should have come to an end. I fear that if it had gone on all sorts of regrettable incidents would have occurred which would have created a lasting feeling of unwill on both sides, independent of course of the mischief it was doing in a variety of ways'.⁽¹³²⁾ Lloyd George was officially thanked for his efforts. The King was 'very glad to hear that it was largely due to your energy and skill that a settlement with regard to this very serious strike as (sic) been brought about. I heartily congratulate you and feel the whole country will be most grateful to you for averting a most disastrous calamity'. Asquith was even more fulsome in his praise: 'I cannot sufficiently express to you how strongly I feel the debt of obligation which I myself and all our colleagues owe to you for the indomitable purpose, the untiring energy, and the matchless skill with which you have brought to a settlement one of the most formidable problems we have had, as a Government, to confront'.⁽¹³³⁾

(132) Asquith Papers Mss.3 f.4. Letter from Knollys to Nash
20 August 1911

(133) Lloyd George Papers, C/5/6/1. Telegram from the King
to Lloyd George, 20 August 1911; C/6/11/9 Letter from Asquith
20 August 1911

A Royal Commission was set up at once. Its members were David Harrel, Thomas Ratcliffe-Ellis, the Secretary to the Mining Association of Great Britain, G. Beale, Arthur Henderson, the trade unionist and labour leader, and John Burnett. The evidence of the management of the railway companies indicated how much they had learnt from the dispute. They continued to 'object strongly to the intervention of any person, not being an employee of the Company, at any stage of conciliation', and the Commission itself came out against recognition, deciding that 'with their great responsibilities the Companies cannot and should not be expected to permit any intervention between them and their men on the subjects of discipline and management'. (134)

The actual evidence shows how such a decision was reached. The management pointed out that it wanted its men to be happy: Sir Charles Owens, the General Manager of the London and South Western Railway, told the Commission that 'it is only by the agency of contented servants that we can possibly get the best results from the working of our railways; therefore our whole object is peace'. On the other hand, he could not say 'that the whole object of the societies is peace. Peace for the Societies means stagnation and reduction of membership, so that our position is entirely different from yours'. Lord Claud Hamilton, a director of the Great Eastern, and a Tory M.P., made the same point, arguing that 'the unions want war because...when things are quiet they languish, but when war is

(134) Report of the Royal Commission on the Railway

Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme 1907. Cd.5922

(1911) p. 10, para. 44, p. 11. para 52.

in the offing, they flourish'.

The management seemed to suggest that the men did not actually like trade unionism. Lord Claud Hamilton felt that 'the majority do not want to belong to the unions and dread the tyranny and intimidation which usually accompany the operation of those unions under the provision of the Trades Disputes Act'. Ammon Beasley, General Manager of the Taff Vale Railway, had 'never heard any demand for recognition except from a representative of a trade union'. He explained that recognition could not be granted anyway, because 'the safety of the public is in the railway company's hands, and the responsibility for that safety cannot be delegated to others; and it must therefore have unrestricted control over its operations'. Sir Guy Garnet, the General Manager of the Midland Railway, agreed with this, insisting that 'on railways more than in any other trade discipline has to be maintained and... therefore, the authority of the officers must not be interfered with'. All of the representatives of the employers expressed strong opposition to recognition, and Robert Glover, the Assistant to the General Manager of the Great Western, said he would rather face another strike than concede on this point. (135)

(135) Ibid Evidence Cd.6014 (1912-1913) p. 369 para. 9638

15 September 1911; p. 393 para. 10, 023 18

September 1911; p. 425 para. 10, 648, p. 426 para.

10, 652 19 September 1911; p. 537 para. 12, 912

26 September 1911; p. 480 para. 11, 707 21

September 1911.

A similar argument was repeated in the House of Commons. Lord Hugh Cecil, who had been described in Dod's Parliamentary Companion as being 'favourable to well-considered measures of Social Reform',⁽¹³⁶⁾ insisted that a national rail strike was 'in effect, a rebellion'. Lord Claud Hamilton felt that the unions were at an advantage, as they could call strikes, but the companies could not order a lock-out or alter prices. Evelyn Cecil opposed recognition as it was 'really the admittance of a third and biassed party as a permanent intermediary between employers and employed'. However, such views were not accepted by the whole of the House. William Rutherford, himself a Unionist, denounced the low wages in the industry, and insisted that 'the attitude of the railway companies in regard to recognition is absolutely illogical; I go a step further and say now, almost at the end of the year 1911, that such an attitude has become practically senseless'.⁽¹³⁷⁾ Beliefs such as that were very rare within the Conservative Party at that time, for Rutherford was expressing an opinion held by only a section even of the Liberals. His plea for recognition of trade unions by employers, in response to the altered circumstances of the time, was, however, ignored by management in many different trades.

General Views on the Strikes

By the end of August, the series of strikes was still a common topic of conversation, and the range of opinions was

(136) Dod's Parliamentary Companion (1911) p. 247

(137) House of Commons Debates, Vol. 31, Cols. 1248, 1254, 1306, 1291-2. 22 November 1911

very diverse. The political affiliations of individual citizens and the various newspapers had become increasingly evident as the seriousness of the disputes had become apparent. Of the views recorded, few actively approved, but there were several which had genuinely attempted to study the causes of the unrest, feeling that the employers were being unreasonable. Others changed from sympathy for the men's position to opposition, as the strikes intensified, and there was a large section of the community which consistently opposed any and every attempt of the working class to improve its conditions, especially by strike action, feeling that the employer had the right to dictate wages, hours, and conditions.

One end of the spectrum was represented by T. McKerrall, a Labour Party candidate in the by-election at Kilmarnock District, which went to the polls on 26 September 1911. He devoted about a third of his address to industrial unrest, explaining that the standard of living of the working men had fallen, and as 'Parliament will do nothing for him, he has no alternative but to strike'. The Liberals and the Tories had no 'remedy for this state of affairs but to send the soldiers out to help the employers when the workmen go on strike', and 'this remedy for poverty, if the same industrial conditions obtain during the next eleven years, will produce a CIVIL WAR'. (138)

An equally understanding view, though from a very different source, came from the Reverend Carlyle at the Interdenominational

Summer School at Swanwick in 1913. He insisted that it was impossible to 'dismiss the industrial troubles...as though they arose from the mere greed, the mere foolish greed, of the wage earning classes', who had begun to realise that their conditions were 'intolerable'. Of 1911, he pointed out that 'we did not at first think much of the troubles in the transport trade. If we were sympathetic we spoke kindly: if we were not, we spoke contemptuously', but they had shown the mutual dependence of the society. If the poor conditions were not improved voluntarily, then there would be widespread disruptions caused by strikes. (139)

Herbert Samuel noted that 'the middle classes have been much alarmed by what has taken place', but he, too, took an understanding line, declaring that 'the root of the whole trouble lies, of course, in the rise in the cost of living coinciding with an improvement in trade and a rise in profits'. (140) George Asquith, the Government's chief industrial negotiator, was equally prepared to see the men's case. In his autobiography, he explained the origins of the unrest: 'Trade has been improving, but employers thought too much of making up for some lean years in the past, and of making money, without sufficient regard to the importance of considering the position of their workpeople at a time of

(139) Rev. A.J. Carlyle 'The Industrial Unrest: its causes and characteristics' in Rev. W. Temple (ed.) The Industrial Unrest and the Living Wage (1913) pp. 56-61

(140) Asquith Papers Mss.93 f.48. Letter from Samuel to Asquith, 13 September 1911

improvement of trade'.⁽¹⁴¹⁾ In his report to the Cabinet in June 1911, he made a similar point. There had been a fall in real wages, and the rich were engaged in conspicuous consumption - for instance, the increasing number of motor cars. Askwith believed that the growth of the press and improvements in communications had all contributed to the unrest, which he thought was a genuine expression of resentment by working men angry with their conditions.⁽¹⁴²⁾

The News of the World concluded that the discontent behind the strikes 'will pass away, as they have done in previous years, but in the interests of the social and commercial prosperity of the nation the causes of this unrest and dissatisfaction should be investigated in a generous and kindly spirit'.⁽¹⁴³⁾

If that paper wanted to treat the men with benevolence, H.J. Wilson, the elderly radical M.P. and industrialist, did not feel quite so friendly towards them. He condemned employers and workers equally, describing the railway strike, in particular, as 'a case of selfishness on the part of both sides, perhaps not a pin to choose between them'.⁽¹⁴⁴⁾

Wilson was approaching the view of a large section of the population, who opposed the strikes, because, as the Daily Mirror put it, 'we only approve of strikes that do not worry

(141) Lord Askwith op.cit. p. 175

(142) G. Askwith, The Present Unrest in the Labour World

CAB 37/107/70, 25 June 1911

(143) News of the World, 20 August 1911, p. 8.

(144) Wilson Papers Ms.2605/18. Letter from Wilson, probably

10 September 1911.

ourselves'.⁽¹⁴⁵⁾ Home Secretary Churchill was even more opposed to the stoppage, for, according to Lucy Masterman, he telephoned Lloyd George when the strike had ended, to say 'I'm very sorry to hear it. It would have been better to have gone on, and given these men a good thrashing'.⁽¹⁴⁶⁾

The Tories shared that fierceness. The Annual Conference of the Conservative and Unionist Party in November blamed the increased cost of living, the Government, and agitators. The latter factor received a great deal of attention. The Times believed that the strikes had Syndicalist origins, and represented 'a revolt against society',⁽¹⁴⁷⁾ while the Spectator saw in the events of the summer of 1911 a new type of industrial revolt, with 'a network of interdependent and sympathetic movements'.⁽¹⁴⁸⁾ The Daily Sketch held similar views, insisting that agitators had 'organised enormous, chaotic strikes. They linked up one strike with another, and proceeded to rioting'.⁽¹⁴⁹⁾ The Honourable George Peel felt that Syndicalism itself had been 'ousted by something akin to anarchy',⁽¹⁵⁰⁾ and even the King was much disturbed by the unrest. In particular, he was worried that a revival 'might lead to (a) political element being introduced into the conflict which might perhaps affect, not the existence, but the

(145) Daily Mirror, 21 August 1911, p. 7

(146) L. Masterman, C.F.G. Masterman (1968 ed.), p. 208

(147) Times, 21 August 1911, p. 7

(148) Spectator, 19 August 1911, p. 268

(149) Daily Sketch, 23 August 1911, p. 3

(150) G. Peel, The Future of England (1911) p. 38

position of the Crown, independent of other evils'.⁽¹⁵¹⁾

However, these were not the only people who blamed the unrest onto the Syndicalists. Burdick's study of the subject has revealed that 'foreign Syndicalist publications, during the period, viewed the London and Liverpool strikes as strong evidence that the Syndicalist movement was coming to dominance within England'.⁽¹⁵²⁾ Moreover, the Independent Labour Party claimed that its agitation had been the basis of the unrest. The Chairman of the Party, William Anderson, told the Annual Conference in May 1912 that 'the responsibility for all the upheaval and industrial disturbance is being laid at the door of Socialist agitators. We do not seek to evade our share of the responsibility. Millions of workers have been deeply influenced by Socialist thought, and this is resulting in a change of temper in the face of oppression, a quickness to resent wrong, a keenness to grapple with the inequalities and wrongs of our civilisation, a growing sense of working class comradeship and solidarity', but he went on to warn that 'industrial action can never take the place of political action. Syndicalism...has made no real appeal to the British workers, and offers them no means of escape from the exactions of landlordism and capitalism'.⁽¹⁵³⁾

(151) CAB 37/107/107. Letter from the King to Asquith,
6 September 1911

(152) E. Burdick, Syndicalism and Industrial Unionism in England until 1918, Vol. 1 (D.Phil., Oxford 1950)
p. 277 f.n.

(153) Report of the Twentieth Annual Conference of the Independent Labour Party (1912) pp. 40, 41,
27 May 1912

Whether or not it was the Syndicalists who were behind the strikes, a section of the community attacked the disloyalty shown to Britain as a country. The Weekly Dispatch carried a cartoon: 'John Bull (to hooligan) "The strikes have at least taught me that all my worst enemies are not Foreign"'.⁽¹⁵⁴⁾ Thus, the paper had suggested that there were traitors inside the country, inducing decent men to leave their work. An anonymous opponent of militancy maintained that the unions sought 'by methods of monstrous tyranny and rabid violence to compass the downfall of society'.⁽¹⁵⁵⁾ This was not an uncommon attitude. The official historians of the Times, Pound and Harmsworth, record that Shadwell, an assistant editor, 'had too much admiration for the working man to believe that those were not coerced by a minority of trade unionists'.⁽¹⁵⁶⁾ The Daily Express agreed that there had been a very large number of workers who had no wish to leave their work, but who had been 'compelled in fear of their very lives to join the ranks of the unemployed'.⁽¹⁵⁷⁾

Out of this emerged the idea that the working class was harming itself by agitation. A cartoon by Bernard Partridge in Punch epitomises this: 'Police Constable "Who have I got

(154) Weekly Dispatch, 27 August 1911, p. 6

(155) One Who Resents It op.cit. p. 6

(156) R. Pound and G. Harmsworth, A History of the Times.

The 150th Anniversary and Beyond 1912-1948. Part 1

1912-1920 (1952) p. 59

(157) Daily Express, 14 August 1911, p. 4

here? Why, a bottle throwing hooligan." 'Mr. Punch "March him off; that's the worst enemy of labour. You've done your duty, as you always do"'. (158)

Solutions to Strikes

Just as there were a variety of opinions about the causes of the strikes, so, also was there an assortment of solutions. Some were quite modest, given the degree of disturbance that the country had suffered. The Daily Dispatch was convinced that the nation would accept a law to settle disputes by compulsory arbitration, but, if the country did reject it, 'we must be further along the road to anarchy than the most pessimistic of us have yet realised'. (159) The Daily Mail made the same proposal, but with less confidence. It concluded that 'employers may be amenable to its decisions, but how can the workmen be compelled?' (160) Yet it was not only the Conservative newspapers which advocated Governmental action. Reynolds's Newspaper was convinced that 'nothing short of a permanent, peaceful method of settling labour disputes will satisfy the general public', (161) but it was not sure what this method should be. The Morning Leader pointed out that 'all this widespread unrest of labour must naturally suggest the inquiry whether some new machinery cannot be set up to deal with industrial deadlocks in a more

(158) Punch, 23 August 1911, p. 135

(159) Daily Dispatch, 24 August 1911, p. 4

(160) Daily Mail, 14 August 1911, p. 4

(161) Reynolds's Newspaper, 27 August 1911, p. 1

satisfactory and scientific fashion'. (162)

A different type of solution came from those who advocated restricting the activities of the unions. William Satchwell, an Inspector of Tickets at Manchester Royal Exchange, wrote to the Home Office suggesting that any damage to life or property should be chargeable against trade unions. (163) The King himself asked his Prime Minister to 'devise a scheme, although not entirely preventing strikes (perhaps that is not possible), would prevent a threatened strike from coming to a head, and might be the means of preventing "sympathetic" strikes from taking place'. In particular, he asked that peaceful picketing should be made illegal. (164) Asquith wrote to Sir Edward Grey, who was about to visit the King, informing him of this letter, and telling Grey that he was 'sending a rather cold water reply...If you have an opportunity you might put to him the impossibility of handling problems of this delicacy and complexity by anything in the nature of a legislators' coup de main'. (165)

Yet others were advocating publicly some sort of legislation. W.A.S. Hewins, the first Director of the London School of Economics, from 1895 to 1903, insisted, in his election address as Conservative candidate in the by-election at Hereford City in March 1912, that 'labour unrest is

(162) Morning Leader, 11 August 1911, p. 4

(163) H.O.45/10654/212470/11, 12 August 1911

(164) CAB 37/107/107. Letter from the King to Asquith, 6 September 1911

(165) Grey Papers. F.O.800/100 f.265. Letter from Asquith to Grey, 9 September 1911

universal in the country, and the Government is much to be blamed for not taking steps long ago to deal with it'. (166)

The Daily Graphic knew what these steps should have been. It asked 'whether the unlimited privileges enjoyed by trade unions can any longer be maintained, and whether, in cases where the vital interests of the nation are affected, it ought not to be made a criminal offence to aid or abet a strike'. (167)

The Economist advocated, quite simply, that all strikes be made illegal, 'not merely to secure all parties from aggression, but also to preserve the general public from danger, loss, and grave inconvenience'. (168) Such answers were not confined to the Tory press. The Liberal paper, the Daily Chronicle, wanted a law banning all transport strikes: 'The whole life of the country cannot be allowed to become paralysed, nor can the food supply of the people be suffered to be in peril, because the danger is involved in the course of an industrial dispute. It is no case of favouring one side or the other; it is a case of the protection of the community'. (169)

Other solutions were even more extreme. One letter in the Home Office files appealed to Churchill 'on behalf of the middle class of people who are suffering from the effect of the general strike the sole cause of which is none other than the Socialist Tom Mann'. The writer advocated expelling him from the country, and said that there were plenty of young men prepared to take the law into their own hands to achieve that

(166) W.A.S. Hewins, Election Address (Hereford 1912) p. 3

(167) Daily Graphic, 16 August 1911, p. 3

(168) Economist, 16 ^{September} ~~August~~ 1911, p. 558

(169) Daily Chronicle, 17 August 1911, p. 4

end. (170) The Sunday Times continued this threat, and established it as a genuine policy: 'We suggest that every male citizen of a certain social class shall be voluntarily enrolled as a special constable, instructed in the use of the rifle and the bayonet, and placed under a special command...Let society express itself in a manner which admits of no misunderstanding'. (171) This is quite clear: the Sunday Times was preparing for a real class war, fought out quite literally in military terms, with the higher classes trained in warfare, so as to defend themselves against the attack of the lower classes - or perhaps, even to take the initiative, so as to ensure that the workers were sufficiently intimidated as to remain subservient.

The Standard advocated an idea almost equally extreme. It wondered if 'it is time to consider whether there is not much to recommend in the Continental plan of putting mischievous agitators under effective restraints in times of crisis'. (172) The Roman Catholic paper the Universe made the same point, insisting that 'it is the amputation of sedition-mongers from society that is primarily needed'. (173) All of these comments imply that any concept of "law" or of "society" was that of the middle class, and ignored other principles such as justice, equality, or a balance of power between the classes. The workers were expected to behave in certain ways,

(170) H.O.45/10654/212470/68. Letter from W. Davil(?) to Churchill, 16 August 1911

(171) Sunday Times, 3 September 1911, p. 6

(172) Standard, 22 August 1911, p. 6

(173) Universe, 22 August 1911, p. 6

and would be condemned for failing to do so, no matter how inadequate their conditions were. Indeed, the ruling classes could do virtually anything to maintain the subservience of the lower orders and nobody would mind. On the contrary, many would applaud.

J. Ellis Barker had warned that 'the revolt of labour is apparently only beginning, but the State cannot afford to keep neutral in the coming struggle because it threatens to endanger its own existence'.⁽¹⁷⁴⁾ The Home Office files reveal that the Government was paying especial attention to events, and was expecting further trouble. Special Constables had been sworn in during August, and such people were regarded as a sound base for future preparations. In September, the Home Secretary wrote to all Chief Constables informing them that 'it is of great importance that the steps which have been taken for the registration of suitable persons ready to serve as Special Constables should be continued and that in every Police District a classified Register of persons whose servants would be available for the assistance of the Police if any serious emergency should arise'. He defined this force more carefully: 'The "First Police Reserve" should consist of men of the most useful class, viz., men who are accustomed to discipline and have been trained in the Police or Army, or are otherwise specially qualified for Police Work...In the registration of persons willing to work in the Police Reserves the greatest care should be taken only to register men of suitable age, physically fit for the work, and of steady

(174) J.E. Barker op.cit. p. 450

habits and trustworthy character'.

A Conference of Chief Constables was to be held at the end of October. McKenna produced a confidential draft for this, informing the readers that reservists 'may at the discretion of the Chief Constable be supplied with a revolver or other firearm for the protection of property'. (175)

A deputation of Chairmen of Watch Committees and Chief Constables visited the Home Office on 10 November 1911 to discuss the question of Special Constables. Alderman Thewlis of Manchester said what others had observed: 'Former strikes have been practically confined to the particular works or places where the dispute arose, but in the recent strikes the dissatisfaction spread over all our cities and towns'. He urged that pickets should be limited in number, and confined to the place of the dispute, while Alderman Cattell of Sheffield advocated that peaceful picketing should be made illegal. (176)

Thus, the Government was very concerned about the industrial situation. There were two distinct activities which occupied the attention of the Home Secretary and his colleagues: the strike itself, and the violence which could be perpetrated in the course of a stoppage. In the latter case, the usual solution was to use the Police and the Army. Few people actually disapproved of this method once the riots had begun, and it was probably sensible of the Government to ensure that adequate provisions had been taken to deal with

(175) H.O.45/10663/214312/1A,76, 15 September 1911 and n.d.

(176) Ibid/101 pp. 6,7,9-10

any further outbreaks in what were unusually troubled times. However, it seemed that this special force might be used simply to break a strike. Here, the Government would be taking sides in a simple trade dispute. Of course, there was a section of the community which would not have objected to this. Such people had their own solutions, such as the imprisonment of strike leaders. These tended to be the more Conservative elements of the society, while the Liberal press tended to be less extreme, though most expressed concern, and pondered over what could be done to reduce the amount of unrest. The press, perhaps, divided on roughly political lines, but at least a part of the Liberal Cabinet was following policies approved of by hard line Tories. There was a general consensus that the existing laws were inadequate to deal with the upsurge of unrest that had frightened so many people.

Yet the anger and the fear quickly subsided. As soon as the rail strike had ended, the Morning Post congratulated those involved for remaining peaceful: 'in no other country in the world would a crisis so serious have passed with such relatively slight suffering or crime'.⁽¹⁷⁷⁾ The outburst of the working class was virtually forgotten, or blamed upon agitators, and nothing was done to relieve the conditions of the poor. It seemed as though the troubles had been dismissed as soon as they had subsided. It is possible that the papers did not really mean what they had said about the vicious, barbarous, unpatriotic strikes. On the other hand, it is clear

(177) Morning Leader, 21 August 1911, p. 4

that the traditional attitude of the society excluded any possibility of militancy, so that many people would have been outraged at the events. Industrial peace could cause no comment, as it was only to be expected, and the sooner the society returned to its old-fashioned ways, the better many would feel. Indeed, some concessions had been made so grudgingly that it would not have been surprising if the employers had revoked them later. Looking at the period with the aid of historical hindsight, it seems evident that revolution was unlikely, although sections of the press behaved as though it was just around the corner, and the Government was preparing, just in case. Moreover, it is clear that strikes could be settled, no matter how serious they appeared, because employers could afford to pay higher wages, despite their denials at the time. On the other hand, no attempts were made to remedy the evils of the social structure after the summer of 1911. This suggests that few people had learnt anything from the events.

Chapter V

The Industrial Council and its Failure

Of all the suggestions to prevent a repetition of the strike wave of the summer of 1911, one, in particular, received widespread publicity, and was accepted as one of the few practical possible solutions. It was an idea put forward by Sir Charles Macara, the President of the Master Cotton Spinners' Federation. In July 1911, he made public a plan that he had been advocating privately for some time. He wished to see the creation of 'a new, impartial, non-political Government Department to deal with...deadlocks'. This would consist of 'a permanent non-political chairman, deputy and staff, together with an advisory body consisting of the men both on the side of Capital and Labour'. The point was that 'when efficiently organised bodies come to a deadlock in negotiations over a disputed matter they should take their case before a tribunal capable of giving an impartial decision...There is no suggestion of arbitrarily enforcing that tribunal's decision...What the tribunal would ensure is that the matters in dispute would have calm and dispassionate consideration'. (1)

Buxton, the President of the Board of Trade, did not feel that taking away the powers of Conciliation of the Board of Trade, and giving them to an industrial court, under an

(1) Sir C. Macara, 'Proposed Industrial Court for the Settlement of Labour Disputes', Financial Review of Reviews, October 1911, pp. 6,9,10

industrial judge, was a sound policy. He argued that 'so great a change as this is not really practicable, and, if practicable, would not meet the situation'.⁽²⁾ Instead, he proposed the Industrial Council, which closely resembled the body advocated by Macara. It was a voluntary organisation, with an equal number of representatives of employers and employees, financed by the Government, and with a Governmental nominee in the Chair - Sir George Askwith. The members, on the employer's side, were George Ainsworth, Chairman of the Steel Ingot Makers' Association and President of the Cleveland Ironmakers' Association; Sir Hugh Bell, President of the Iron, Steel and Allied Trades Federation; G.H. Claughton, Chairman of the L.N.W.R.; W.A. Clownes, President of the London Master Printers' Association; J.H.C. Crockett, President of the Incorporated Federated Associations of Boot and Shoe Manufacturers of Great Britain and Ireland; F.L. Davies, Chairman of the Board of Conciliation for the Coal Trade of Mornmouthshire and South Wales; T.L. Devitt, Chairman of the Shipping Federation; Sir T.R. Ratcliffe Ellis, Secretary of the Lancashire and Cheshire Coal Owners' Association; F.W. Gibbins, Chairman of the Welsh Plate and Sheet Manufacturers' Association; Sir Charles Macara; A. Siemens, Chairman of the Executive of the Engineering Employers' Federation; R. Thompson, past President of the Ulster Flax Spinners; and J. White, President of the National Building Trades Employers' Federation.

(2) CAB/37/107/98, 9 August 1911

The Trade Union representatives were Thomas Burt, M.P., General Secretary of the Northumberland Miners' Association, former President of the T.U.C., a staunch Liberal; Thomas Ashton, Secretary of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain; C.W. Bowerman, President of the Printing and Kindred Trades Federation and Secretary to the Parliamentary Committee of the T.U.C.; F. Chandler, General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners; J.R. Clynes, Organising Secretary of the National Union of Gas Workers and General Labourers; Harry Gosling, President of the National Transport Workers' Federation; Arthur Henderson, M.P.; J. Hodge, Secretary of the British Steel Smelters, Mill, Iron and Tinplate Workers' Amalgamated Association; W. Mosses, General Secretary of the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades; W. Mullin, President of the United Textile Factory Workers' Association; E.L. Poulton, General Secretary of the National Union of Boot and Shoe Operatives; A. Wilkie, M.P., General Secretary of the Shipconstructors' and Shipwrights' Association; and J.E. Williams, General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants.

Askwith explained that the functions of the Council were to give its opinion, privately, on matters referred to it, and recommend, when requested, or it could make its findings public, if this had been agreed before the Council met. Both sides in a dispute could invite the Council to decide a question, on the understanding that they bound themselves to accept the decision, and the Board of Trade or the Government could refer a case to it, or, indeed, invite its opinion on any point

The Industrial Council was well received, when it was announced, together with its membership, in October 1911. The Liberal press was especially enthusiastic. The Daily Chronicle heralded it as 'a great and welcome advance towards industrial peace',⁽³⁾ while the Morning Leader believed that 'the stability which our independent industries will gain from its decisions will be a national asset of the highest value'.⁽⁴⁾ The Daily News observed that 'it would not, of course...eliminate the strike or the lock-out; but it will tend to diminish their number and restrict their ravages'.⁽⁵⁾ The Westminster Gazette was convinced that it would be a benefit to most of the community: 'The Syndicalists who dream of the general strike as the means of bringing capital to its knees and subverting the existing order of society will, of course, regard the Industrial Council as an anathema...But for the others, who are the vast majority, and who have in view not the subversion of society but the betterment in definite and practical ways of working class conditions, the Industrial Council is a great move forward'.⁽⁶⁾ A large section of the Tory Press was equally optimistic. The Morning Post felt that 'the best wishes of the whole nation are with the new Council and its Chairman',⁽⁷⁾ while the Daily Mail maintained that 'if it fulfils reasonable hopes

(3) Daily Chronicle, 11 October 1911, p. 4

(4) Morning Leader, 11 October 1911, p. 4

(5) Daily News, 12 October 1911, p. 4

(6) Westminster Gazette, 11 October 1911, p. 1

(7) Morning Post, 11 October 1911, p. 6

(it) will be an instrument of great value for the prevention of serious labour disputes'.⁽⁸⁾

Thus, it started with the support of a wide section of the middle class, who wished to find some permanent solution to the industrial unrest. Yet, from its foundation, it had many critics, especially within the labour movement and the employers' associations. The Council was not elected, and its decisions were not binding on anyone who sought its advice, so that there was no real need for anyone to consult it. The trade unionists represented on the Council were mainly moderates, and William Thorne, the President of the T.U.C. at the time, refused to become a member, simply because it was intended to prevent strikes, and thus reduce the militancy of the workers.⁽⁹⁾ The trade unionists who were members of the Council tended to be the very people whose advice was so frequently ignored at this time. The failure to attract such men as Thorne might have suggested that it was equally unlikely to appeal to the increasingly militant working class.

It was not only the militant working class who were unimpressed by the creation of this body. At the other end of the political spectrum, it was rejected by an extreme group of Conservatives who attempted to introduce legislation of their own. The Bill was not debated, so the amount of support it might have received cannot be measured, but five M.P.'s were instrumental in the introduction of a Bill to reform the 1906 Trades Disputes Act. They were Sir Frederick

(8) Daily Mail, 11 October 1911, p. 6

(9) Labour Leader, 20 October 1911, p. 663

Banbury, a retired stockbroker, and Chairman of the Northern Railway Company; Sir Henry Craik, Allen Bathurst, Sir Alfred Cripps, a barrister, and John Rawlinson, another barrister. The Bill received its First Reading on 1 November 1911, and a week later, Banbury asked the Prime Minister if he would 'give facilities for the further stages of the Trade Disputes Act (1906) Bill?'⁽¹⁰⁾ Asquith refused, so that it must have appeared that he and his Liberal colleagues were satisfied with the arrangements that had already been made, even if a small group of Unionists had made it very plain that they were anything but happy.

The first chance for the Government's new machinery to deal with industrial disputes arose very soon after its establishment. For at least eighteen years before 1911, cotton had been one of the most strike prone industries in the country, together with mining and engineering-shipbuilding. The cotton trade, despite this, was in a healthy state, and provided Britain's most valuable export. According to Mitchell and Deane, the value of its exports was twice that of any other industry in the period 1911-13.⁽¹¹⁾ The employers were well organised, as were the unions. Sir Charles Macara had been President of the employers' association, the Master Cotton Spinners' Federation since 1894, and he remained in that position until 1914. He founded the

(10) House of Commons Debates, Vol. 30, cols. 878, 1644,
1 and 8 November 1911

(11) B.R. Mitchell and P. Deane, Abstract of British
Historical Statistics (Cambridge 1962), p. 305

International Federation of Cotton Spinners in 1904, and was its President until 1915. The men were equally well grouped. In some districts, virtually every cotton operative was a member of the appropriate trade union. The Amalgamated Weavers' Association was especially anxious that every cotton worker should be a trade unionist. In May 1911, its General Council decided that in areas with an 85% membership, it was prepared to offer financial support to members who refused to work with non-unionists.⁽¹²⁾ This threat went unnoticed by the general public, but a dispute on that issue broke out later in the same year. In October, some men gave notice of intended strike action, unless everyone in their mills joined the union. The Times opposed such action, but blamed agitators for arousing the operatives: 'It is difficult to conceive that any sensible man, left to himself, would think it worth his while to subject his family to privations merely because three or four non-union men work in the same mill. This kind of trouble comes from the subtle machinations of professional agitators, who care little about the welfare of those they dupe with inflammatory appeals to prejudice'.⁽¹³⁾ The Daily Graphic, without producing any evidence for its assertion, found it 'not surprising that public opinion should be growing more and more impatient of the intolerable tyranny

(12) E. Hopwood, A History of the Lancashire cotton Industry and the Amalgamated Weavers' Association

(Manchester 1969) p. 78

(13) Times, 10 October 1911, p. 7

of modern trade unionism'.⁽¹⁴⁾

The strike led to a general lock-out, affecting 126,000 workers, just before Christmas. Strangely, the Industrial Council was not invited to investigate the dispute. The relevant employers' body was the North East Lancashire Master Cotton Spinners and Manufacturers' Association, the Chairman of which was Wilkinson Hartley, and it was he who had a leading voice in reaching the decision to lock out the members of the Northern Textile Trades Federation. Thus, Charles, in a recent survey, has explained that the failure to use the Industrial Council was in no way the fault of Macara.⁽¹⁵⁾ Certainly, Macara thought that it should have been consulted. He wrote to the Prime Minister, pointing out that 'many prominent men who rendered valuable assistance in the autumn...with the movement I led which resulted in the establishment of the Industrial Council by the Government in October last, are at a loss to understand why this Council was not used at all in connection with the recent lock-out in the cotton trade'.⁽¹⁶⁾ In his autobiography, he explained that 'while the Industrial Council met a number of times for discussion, it never had a chance to settle a single dispute, and one can only come to the conclusion that they were afraid of the practical men holding controlling positions

(14) Daily Graphic, 9 October 1911, p. 3

(15) R. Charles, The Development of Industrial Relations in Britain 1911-1939, p.63

(16) Buxton Papers. Letter from Macara to Asquith, 30 March

in industry becoming too powerful or too popular in carrying out the work for which they were so eminently fitted'.⁽¹⁷⁾ Such comments would appear to confirm Charles' view that Macara was unable to persuade the cotton employers to use the Council. The records of various associations ignore the dispute completely, so that no decision can be reached from that material, but it must be remembered that Macara was very influential among the cotton owners. He had led the movement to form the Manchester Cotton Association, and had helped to bring the local bodies together into the Federation of Master Cotton Spinners' Associations. It is unfortunate that no evidence has been found to reveal whether or not Macara did use his influence and position to attempt to persuade his colleagues to arbitrate through the Industrial Council.

Whatever Macara may have advised, the lock-out did take place. Its origins were clear, and unusual - an aggressive strike over the closed shop. A large section of the press was equally clear in its attitude to this question. The Manchester-based Daily Dispatch asked, rhetorically, 'can employers consent to such a vast revolution as this?'⁽¹⁸⁾, while the Daily Telegraph maintained that 'the unions are tyrannical and insist on coercing every operative into their ranks...an end not only to all industrial labour but of all personal freedom. The owners of cotton mills are simply bound to protest...otherwise they cannot be masters in their own

(17) C.W. Macara, Recollections (1921) p. 173

(18) Daily Dispatch, 23 December 1911, p. 4

house'.⁽¹⁹⁾ This was the argument adopted by many of those who opposed the concept of the closed shop. Victory for the men would mean the establishment of 'tyranny', according to the Daily Express, Weekly Dispatch, and Spectator.

As the demand of the men was adjudged to be unacceptable, support for the employers followed. The Morning Post and the Birmingham Daily Post congratulated the owners on their firm stand, while the Standard, after expressing anger that men could strike on such an issue, looked at the principle involved: 'Capital, on this occasion, is fighting not merely for itself, but for the tens of thousands of labourers who have not yet bowed their necks to the yoke of the trade union wire pullers, and these still form the majority of the English working classes'.⁽²⁰⁾

The Daily Mail revealed its attitude to the working class when commenting on this dispute. It urged a return to work, as the industry was experiencing high demand, and a cessation of production entailed a loss to the nation: 'It will be a grave reproach to the good sense and patriotism of organised labour if the promised "boom" in the cotton trade is destroyed'. The writer suggested that the argument could continue in a time of poor trade.⁽²¹⁾ Thus, the Daily Mail was considering the matter purely from the point of view of the middle class employer, anxious for the largest profit^{at} all ~~the~~ times. The claims of labour were ignored, and the men were even condemned

(19) Daily Telegraph, 28 December 1911, p. 11

(20) Standard, 28 December 1911, p. 6

(21) Daily Mail, 28 December 1911, p. 4

for deciding to strike at the time most opportune to themselves.

The Conservative papers were arrayed against the cotton operatives. In general, this had been the case in the summer of 1911, with the Liberals tending to side with the men, or at least to display more sympathy. On this occasion, the political division of opinion was not so apparent. The Daily News, for example, did not approve of a closed shop, arguing that men should have the right to leave their unions should they wish to do so. This would ensure that the unions did not exceed their powers, and was 'a prudent check on possible tyranny, and...a wholesome guarantee against the abuse of the immense powers with which unions are rightly and properly endowed'. (22)

The lock-out continued into the New Year, and George Askwith, who had just been knighted for his services to the nation in industrial affairs, acting in his customary position as arbitrator, persuaded the men to return to work for a six month trial period. The Morning Post saw this as a salutary lesson for those firms which, in various industries, were prepared to concede to the men: 'All those who value the industrial position of England will rejoice that by the fairness of the employer it has received a severe check at least in the cotton trade'. (23)

Events from October 1911 to January 1912 are extremely instructive when studying industrial relations in the years prior to the First World War. In answer to the wave of unrest the Government established the Industrial Council, encouraged

(22) Daily News, 27 November 1911, p. 4

(23) Morning Post, 20 January 1912, p. 6

by the majority of the nation - or at least the majority of recorded comments were favourable, and hoped for its success. A group of Unionists did not believe that the body would be sufficiently strong, and attempted to introduce legislation which would make a strike difficult by removing the right to picket, but, in the main, the Conservatives and the Liberals hoped that the new organisation would prove to be the answer to industrial unrest. Their earnest desire was that all disputes would be referred to the Industrial Tribunal, and actual stoppages of work would seldom, if ever, occur. The power of the employer, and, perhaps more importantly, the union, would diminish when this safe body could consider the matter in dispute. In fact, it achieved little. It lacked any real power, so that it was ignored. The first major dispute after it had been set up was in the cotton industry, where the instigator of the movement leading up to the foundation of the Council was a leading light; yet even there it remained unused. The unrest in the cotton industry centred around the question of the closed shop, and it was this issue which united a large section of the nation against the actions of the men and their union. A large part of the Conservative press consistently assumed that the unions ~~would~~ were ~~be~~ in the wrong, and this case was no exception. Indeed, the return to work was hailed as a victory for the employers, and the firmness displayed was urged upon others faced with labour unrest. On the other hand, a large part of the Liberal Party had previously supported the men's claims for better conditions, higher wages, and recognition of the union. This matter was further than many would go. It is interesting

that the cotton industry was one in which the unions had long been recognised, and in which there existed a sophisticated method of dealing with grievances. Thus, the cotton owners could be regarded as enlightened, certainly in comparison with other groups who refused to even negotiate with the unions. Thus, it is strange that the Industrial Council was ignored, especially considering Macara's position within the cotton industry, and his activities leading up to the Industrial Council. It is obvious that employers' organisations, just like trade unions, seek ^{to gain} the maximum benefit out of any situation, and look at an incident from their own point of view, but, nevertheless, to ignore the Industrial Council does seem strange. Certainly, the fact that nobody used the Industrial Council during the cotton lock-out destroyed its effectiveness as the Liberal Party's answer to industrial unrest, and it also showed that even reasonable employers would make a stand over certain issues, without regard for the wishes of the Government, for the Government must have hoped to see the Council used.

It is unfortunate that there is not more material on the Industrial Council. Certain questions loom large, and the answers to them are speculative. It would be valuable to know why the Council was ignored, and to discover exactly what Macara was doing during the dispute. However, the published and unpublished sources provide no clues. The private papers of Macara have not been uncovered, despite an extensive search, which included solicitors offices in Lancashire. Indeed, the minutes of many of the employers' associations fail to even record the simple fact that the

lock-out took place, while dealing with other matters involving arguments between employers and men in the same year. Thus, the historian is left to ponder about the failure of the Industrial Council, without the necessary documents to reach a firm decision.

Chapter VI

The Coal Strike

There had been discontent in the coal industry for some years over the methods of remunerating colliers. The problem centred around face workers, who were paid according to the amount of coal hewn, so that their wages varied with the type of seam encountered. If it was thin, or twisted, or if the roof was difficult, or much water was present, the miner would earn considerably less than he could expect under easier conditions. Different areas had evolved various methods to arrive at their pay rates in such cases. In the north of England, the collier did nothing but cut the coal, and he could appeal to a Joint Committee if he considered that his wage had been worsened by the physical circumstances of the seam. Nevertheless, Sidney Webb has recorded that Durham hewers 'would sometimes find themselves earning, net, under £1 in a fortnight'.⁽¹⁾ In South Wales, this method of consultation did not exist, ~~and~~ Moreover, the collier had to take his tubs to the surface, and also set timber and rip stone, for which he was paid at prearranged rates. Thus, the system of payment was more complicated, and, coupled with the extremely variable faces of the region, provided more chances of friction than in the north of England. Consequently, the notion of establishing rates of pay for working in difficult seams had a wider following in Wales than elsewhere. The strike of 1910-11 in the Cambrian coalfield was over wage rates, but out of this emerged a national movement for a special payment for those working in abnormal places.

(1) The Story of the Durham Mines 1662-1921 (1921) p.94.

In September 1911, there was a Special Joint Meeting of the Coal Owners' and Miners' Representatives of Great Britain to discuss this matter. The owners accepted the principle of a different pay scale for men obliged to work in such conditions, but they insisted that it was a local question, which should, therefore, be referred to the individual districts for negotiation. The miners wanted a national settlement, and proposed that the rate for working in an abnormal place should be the average wage of workmen under normal conditions. As neither side would give way, there was a deadlock, which left the way open for the Executive Committee to link that question to the demand for a minimum wage for all underground workers. The Annual Conference of the Miners' Federation, at the beginning of October 1911, discussed the minimum wage, and decided that the District Federations should meet the employers, and then report back to a Special Conference, which took place in the middle of November. Local talks had given little satisfaction, but the Conference decided against ordering a strike ballot at that time. On 20 November, a further Conference took place, and agreed to ballot the men. A factor which could have caused this change of mind was the fact that the owners in the English Federated Area had conceded the principle of the minimum wage. This included Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cheshire, North Wales, and the Midlands. However, after criticism from other employers, they backed down and withdrew their acceptance. The ballot was to take place on 10-12 January 1912. John Wilson, a Lib-Lab M.P. since 1890, pointed out that in his district, Durham, a majority of two thirds was needed before a proposal could be

executed, ensuring that there was a very real demand for action, and he persuaded the Conference to adopt this at a national level.

The result was announced at a Special Conference at Birmingham on 18 January 1912, and was decisive. 443,801 had voted for strike action, and 115,921 against. This represented a total vote of about 80% in favour of militancy. The Conference decided that the members of the Miners' Federation should give in their notices, and cease work at the end of February 1912. However, it was by no means certain that a strike would occur. Negotiations continued. On 1 and 2 February, the miners fixed their claims, after the various districts had met individually to discuss the question. On 7th, the Executive Committee and seventeen additional representatives met the owners at the Westminster Palace Hotel. The South Wales owners, headed by D.A. Thomas, a former Liberal Member of Parliament, and now 'the master mind on the side of the employers',⁽²⁾ left the meeting after hearing the men's demands. The meeting continued, with both sides advancing their own proposals. The other owners decided that payment by results was the best method of wage remuneration in the pits, while the miners insisted that the concept of a minimum wage should be accepted. Thus, the Conference ended in deadlock, and no more were proposed. The miners were ready to strike, but they still hoped that they might

(2) D. Evans, 'The South Wales Coal Industry' in M.H. Mackworth (ed) D.A. Thomas, Viscount Rhanda

gain their demands by discussion. David Shackleton, a former cotton operative who had been a Labour M.P. and President of the T.U.C. before becoming a Senior Labour Adviser at the Home Office, felt that the leaders had become unpopular because they 'stand for arbitration and conciliation as the best means of settling trade disputes'.⁽³⁾ This comment is instructive, showing that knowledgeable observers could believe the union representatives were working very hard to achieve a peaceful solution to the dispute, while the militancy came from the grass roots level.

Certainly, the Government was keen to prevent a strike. On about 20 February, the Prime Minister wrote to Thomas Ashton, the Secretary of the Miners' Federation, and offered to mediate. On 27th, a Conference of one hundred and seventy delegates agreed to proceed to meet Asquith, Grey, Lloyd George, and Buxton. The Prime Minister attempted to persuade the men to discuss the actual sums demanded in each district, but they refused, insisting that their own proposals were the lowest figures that could be accepted. The Government then advanced four points:-

1. It was sometimes impossible for colliers to earn reasonable wages.
2. The solution was to be through district arrangements.
3. The Government would confer with the parties.
4. If the owners and the men could not reach a decision, the Government representatives would do this for them.

The Miners' Federation accepted the first and second points, and would agree to the others, provided that the rates agreed to at their Conference were adopted. The employers did not share a common policy. The English Coal Conciliated Board, which coincided with the English Federated Area, agreed to the proposals, as did Cumberland. Durham accepted, though reluctantly. The Northumberland owners rejected them by a small majority. The answer of the Scottish employers was ambiguous, while that of South Wales was a straightforward rejection. Although the Government continued to attempt to effect a settlement - Haldane assured his mother that 'all that can be done is being done'.⁽⁴⁾ The strike began on 1 March 1912.

Opinion on the eve of the stoppage was divided. A typical comment in support of the miners appeared in the Manchester Guardian: 'The average wages actually made by a hewer probably compare favourably enough with those of other workmen, although we must remember that the arduous and exacting character of underground work is likely to use up a man's strength prematurely', so that life earnings were probably less than those in other industries. The notion of a minimum wage was advocated.⁽⁵⁾ Sir Arthur Markham, the coal owner and Liberal Member of Parliament, told a Liberal Party meeting at Creswell that 'if he were a miner, and had done a fair and honest day's work, and could

(4) Haldane Papers N.L.S.Ms.5987 f.77. Letter from Haldane to his mother, 29 February 1912

(5) Manchester Guardian, 16 January 1912, p. 8

not get a fair day's wage, he would strike',⁽⁶⁾ a remark which reveals that not all employers were irrevocably opposed to the cause of their employees. Other Liberal papers lent their support to the men. The Westminster Gazette and the Daily Chronicle argued that the colliers obviously had grievances, which ought to be remedied, and the News of the World emphasised the contribution to the national economy made by the miners.⁽⁷⁾

The Morning Leader could not understand what all the discussion was about. The demand for a minimum wage was not in itself excessive. It is no more than most organised trades have long ago secured, meaning, in fact, no more than a day wage'.⁽⁸⁾ The Daily Chronicle adopted the same argument: 'When the whole body of employees in an industry so vast as coal mining demand unanimously the application of a quite unrevolutionary principle already satisfactorily at work in other trades, surely there is an overwhelming case for the employers to consider it, upon terms'.⁽⁹⁾ The last two words were of considerable importance. What the writer meant was that a minimum wage should be paid, providing that there were some safeguards to ensure that the miners produced a reasonable effort at the coal face. This was one of the points raised by those who opposed the concept. These people fell into several categories: there were some who felt that it would lead to malingering; others who believed that a

(6) Derbyshire Times, 20 January 1912, p. 3.

(7) News of the World 25 February 1912 p8

(8) Morning Leader, 2 February 1912, p. 4

(9) Daily Chronicle, 23 February 1912, p. 4

national coal strike would ruin the country, but insisted that the mine owners should not give way; and those who held that the movement was organised by Socialists or Syndicalists, whose aim was to destroy the economy.

As early as October 1911, the Daily Graphic had warned that with a minimum wage, 'a considerable percentage of men will give very little work in return for the guaranteed wage. The result would be that many collieries would have to close down altogether'.⁽¹⁰⁾ This argument was used by the Morning Post, the Financial Times, and the Economist, all of which pointed out that the closing of pits would cause unemployment, and increase prices. The same cry was to be heard in the House of Commons. Bonar Law commented on the 'irresistable tendency to reduce the output and produce less for very nearly the same amount of money', while Laurence Hardy, a Unionist business man who had associations with coal and iron work, believed that most of the men in the collieries with which he was associated earned less than the minimum that the miners wanted, so that the demand had to be regarded as impossible.⁽¹¹⁾

Some papers tried to be reasonable, and considered both sides. W.H. Renwick, writing in Nineteenth Century and After, admitted that 'there is undoubted hardship to those colliers who work in abnormal places', but a minimum wage could not

(10) Daily Graphic, 2 October 1911, p. 3

(11) House of Commons Debates, Vol. 35, Cols. 1738, 1757,

be considered, because it placed 'a premium upon idleness and an encouragement to the shirker to win as little coal as possible'.⁽¹²⁾ The Birmingham Daily Post agreed. There was no provision for checking the amount of work done, so that the claim 'to what is virtually an unconditional minimum is, on the face of it, inadmissible, and so long as it is maintained, the employers must offer resistance'.⁽¹³⁾

Thus, a section of the press and some Conservative politicians refused to support a minimum wage, because they did not believe that the collier was honest enough to work properly for it. They maintained that only the inducement of piece work could ensure this. The consequent argument, that to grant the minimum wage would cause a price rise, seems to have been a secondary consideration to the assumption that the minimum wage could cause a fall in profits, and had, therefore, to be rejected.

The effect on the nation was another reason for opposing the threatened strike. This anxiety was shared by representatives of all political views, who agreed with the Daily Mail that a stoppage would be a 'national catastrophe'.⁽¹⁴⁾ A cartoon in the News of the World depicted the anxiety felt by many people. An owner and a miner were arguing as their car, named "British Coal Trade" was about to plunge over the cliff, "National Stoppage", onto the rocks below, which represented

(12) R.H. Renwick, 'The Coal Crisis', Nineteenth Century and After, February 1912, pp. 380, 381

(13) Birmingham Daily Post, 11 January 1912, p. 6

(14) Daily Mail, 9 January 1912, p. 6

"misery" and "ruin", while John Bull implored them to stop.⁽¹⁵⁾ Sir Edward Grey's speech in Manchester on 17 February 1912 indicated that his fears were as acute as those of the cartoonist. He spoke of the terror aroused by the prospect of the Napoleonic invasion a century earlier, and compared the possibilities to those of 1912: 'Today we have perhaps a greater danger coming from within, not from without - the danger of industrial catastrophe, which might assume such proportions that no ships, no soldiers, no police, nothing at the disposal of the Government could protect the country from the consequences of it'.⁽¹⁶⁾ This military metaphor was used by various people during the strike period. The Observer, for example, declared that 'economic war on this scale is only less serious than war between armies and navies. A coal strike would be a disaster only next in destructiveness to an invasion'.⁽¹⁷⁾ The anonymous "One Who Resents It" wrote at this time: 'To say that war was declared on society in July 1911 and that the campaign has not ceased yet is not to exaggerate the position in the least'.⁽¹⁸⁾ Senior politicians were just as disturbed. Viscount Milner, the experienced Conservative politician, whose views were rigidly orthodox - he had wanted the House of Lords to reject the Budget and the Parliament Bill - described the situation as 'severe',⁽¹⁹⁾ while Lord Furness informed the

(15) News of the World, 25 February 1912, p. 1

(16) Empire, 18 February, 1912, p. 1

(17) Observer, 18 February 1912, p. 8

(18) One Who Resents It op.cit. p. 93

(19) Milner Papers Ms.275 (1912) Diary, 2 March 1912

House of Lords about his feelings: 'I earnestly believe that if the chieftans of Capital and Labour persist in using against each other the weapon of stubborn tenacity, and refuse to walk in ways more in harmony with common sense, they will inflict upon the nation...one of the gravest injuries it has ever sustained in the whole course of history'.⁽²⁰⁾ A source closer to the Government, Llewellyn Smith, wrote to Buxton, expressing similar concern: 'The coal outlook, as you say, looks bad, but there is still time for further consideration and the very magnitude of the calamity that would be caused by a National Stoppage will, I hope, induce caution. D.A. Thomas is making an ass of himself, as usual: I presume he sees some personal advantage in a stoppage'.⁽²¹⁾ Certainly, Thomas did not seem to want any compromise. He was quoted on 23 February, saying that the owners did not want the strike to be postponed,⁽²²⁾ while David Daniel, the Secretary of the North Wales Quarrymen's Union, observed him, a few days before the strike began, after a meeting in Downing Street had failed to produce a settlement: 'D.A. Thomas I saw walking alone in Victoria Street with a sinister smile on his lips'.⁽²³⁾ In fact, he was not the only owner anxious to face the stoppage. A Scottish employer, Robert Moore, wrote to Bonar Law, informing him that 'down here -

(20) House of Lords Debates Vol. 11, Col. 16, 14 February 1912

(21) Buxton Papers, Letter from Smith to Buxton, 15 January

1912

(22) Manchester Guardian, 23 February 1912, p. 8

(23) Daniel Diaries N.L.W.Ms.536, 26 February 1912

we coal people would like to fight it out'.⁽²⁴⁾

The enemy to be fought was often seen to be Socialism or Syndicalism. The Referee expressed the opinions of many: 'It is needless to say that Socialist agitators are well in front of the present dispute'.⁽²⁵⁾ The Daily Express renewed the military concept, in pointing out that the miners 'have been the tools and the dupes of noisome agitators, who have stung them to revolt with wild words and frantic baits. The men, the Syndicalist Socialists, are the curse of the coalfields and the country, and the enemies of the people. They want war at any price. They preach the general strike as a step towards universal anarchy, and they see in this struggle an opportunity of advancing their frankly revolutionary aims. These are the men who, masquerading as trade unionists, want to overthrow all established authority'.⁽²⁶⁾ The Standard agreed that what these men wanted was 'something closely resembling civil war'.⁽²⁷⁾ Sir Arthur Markham, who had expressed so much sympathy for the miners in this dispute, believed that the old leaders had been 'replaced by extreme Socialists'.⁽²⁸⁾

(24) Bonar Law Papers 25/2/58: Letter from Moore to Law,
26 February 1912

(25) Referee, 14 January, 1912, p. 7

(26) Daily Express, 29 February, p. 4

(27) Standard, 26 February 1912, p. 8

(28) Sir A.B. Markham, 'The Coal Strike', Quarterly Review,
April 1912, p. 555

It is extremely difficult to assess the influence of Syndicalists in this conflict, but there is evidence that some militants were active within the Miners' Federation. As early as February 1911, Tom Mann's Industrial Syndicalist had devoted a complete issue to the position of the miners, and had included an article by W.F. Hay and Noah Ablett entitled 'A Minimum Wage for Miners'. These two men were active in South Wales, and were amongst the authors of The Miners' Next Step (Tonyandy 1912), which advanced a Syndicalist policy for the pits. The old leader of the South Wales Miners, William Abraham, better known as "Mabon", was disturbed about extremist infiltration into the union. He told John Burns that he regretted 'he did not take a bolder line with the hot heads years ago'.⁽²⁹⁾ In October 1911, in the elections to the Executive Committee of the South Wales Miners' Federation, Syndicalists won all three seats. Lenin paid particular attention to events in Britain, where he found encouraging signs. In general, he declared, the 'strikes are assuming a mass character; moreover, they are ceasing to be purely economic and are developing into political strikes', and the action by the miners showed that 'the workers have learned to fight'.⁽³⁰⁾ Thus, it is clear that there was a core of Syndicalist support in South Wales

(29) Burns Papers B.M.Add.Ms.46334 f.57. Diary, 27 February 1912

(30) V.I. Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 18 (Moscow 1963) pp. 270, 467. Quotations from Pravda, 12 August 1912, 1 January 1913

did he?
or tactical
appraisal?

if nowhere else, and at least one Socialist leader abroad believed that the miners were leading the way to proletarian unrest in Britain. However, the extent of the influence of Syndicalism upon the result of the miners' ballot remains unknown. Certainly, some newspapers believed that it was the determining factor, and were worried for the future. This led to a demand that the Government should intervene to prevent the cessation of work. The News of the World took a relatively moderate line, insisting that there should be compulsory arbitration,⁽³¹⁾ while the Daily Mail went a little further, demanding that the strike 'must be repressed by the whole power of the Government'.⁽³²⁾ Exactly how this was to be accomplished was unclear, but presumably the method would have included the use of troops to force the miners to work. Any type of intervention, and especially one of this kind, would have involved the Government in activities not normally within its ambit, and could have established a dangerous precedent, but that was unimportant to those who believed that the workers were there to work, and not to protest. Lord Northumberland certainly felt that something ought to be done. He wrote to Asquith, explaining that there were two reasons for the strike wave: 'One may be that the men are entitled to a rise owing to good trade, but the chief reason is that the men can picket and intimidate all workmen and employees and destroy property without any fear of being stopped from so doing by your Government. This had undoubtedly been

(31) News of the World, 14 January 1912, p. 8

(32) Daily Mail, 17 February 1912, p. 4

caused by the Trades Disputes Act of 1906, and I implore you to repeal this by a short Act of Parliament as one immediate means of reducing these strike troubles. Owing to this Act, intimidation and sympathetic strikes have increased in every direction, and it is now necessary for your Government to take strong action in this matter'.⁽³³⁾ Charles Bathurst, the Chairman of a colliery company, was of the same opinion, and wrote to Bonar Law, asking him to attempt to repeal the clause in the 1906 Act which permitted peaceful picketing.⁽³⁴⁾

Thus, on the eve of the strike, there was a general consensus that the situation was serious, but no real agreement on the causes or the solutions. It was not entirely a division on political lines. The Liberal press did tend to argue that the miners had a reasonable case for a minimum wage, while the Conservatives did not. Nevertheless, one of the most fierce opponents of the men's claims was D.A. Thomas, a staunch Liberal. However, in general, the Conservatives were more afraid of the dangers of concessions, and were more likely to urge the Government to intervene so as to end the dispute. This, of course, would have meant siding with the employers.

Certainly many people expected something to happen to prevent a stoppage. The Standard summed up this view, when pointing out that 'the calamity would be so tremendous that

(33) Crewe Papers, C/39, Letter from Northumberland to Asquith, 17 February 1912

(34) Bonar Law Papers, 25/3/40, Letter from Bathurst to Law, 16 March 1912

the public has been unable to take it seriously'.⁽³⁵⁾ The cessation of work came as a surprise to much of the nation, but it was rapid. By 2 March 1912, the pits of Britain had become inactive. The Government continued its efforts at mediation. On 7 March, the Prime Minister met the Miners' Executive Committee at 10 Downing Street, and invited them to attend a joint meeting. Several days later, the Miners' Conference accepted this offer, on the condition that the discussions were confined to the principle of the minimum wage. Between 12th and 14th, this Joint Conference took place, with Asquith as Chairman. On 14th, he suggested district negotiations. The miners realised that this involved the possibility of a split in their united approach, and so insisted that their main figures should be accepted first. On 15 March, Enoch Edwards, the President of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, informed the Miners' Conference that the Prime Minister had promised legislation, and his reply had imposed four conditions:-

1. No resumption of work until the Bill had passed through Parliament.
2. A time limit of one month after that date to settle the details.
3. The wages to be retrospective from the resumption of work.
4. The Bill had to contain the minimum figures of five shillings for men and two shillings for boys.

(35) Standard, 17 February 1912, p. 6

On 19 March, the Bill was introduced. It contained no figures. The following day, the Miners' Conference reiterated its demand for the inclusion of five shillings and two shillings - "five and two" as it was called. Nevertheless, the Bill continued. On 21st, it passed its Second Reading; on 26th the Third Reading, and on 27th it went to the House of Lords. It became law with the granting of the Royal Assent on 29 March. Needless to say, the miners were not enthusiastic. On 27th, their Conference decided to take another ballot of its members. The result was announced on 3 April. The vote had produced a narrow majority for the continuation of the strike, by 244,011 to 201,013. The colliers of Lancashire and Yorkshire were more against a return to work than those of the other regions:

	For strike January	For continuation April
	%	%
South Wales	85	32
Scotland	84	57
English Federated Area	82	62
Northumberland	75	56
Durham	67	66
Rest of England	65	42

Out of the vote in the English Federated Area, 72% of miners voting in Lancashire had elected for continuance, and 77% in Yorkshire. The Executive Committee decided that the majority in favour of remaining on strike was too small, and so it was called off, and the men returned to work, placing their faith in the Minimum Wages Act, which laid down that the actual rates

were to be fixed by Joint District Boards, retrospectively from 29 March. The Chairmen, appointed by the Board of Trade, were to have the casting vote. If the District Boards had been unable to make a settlement on wages or rules three weeks after it had been convened, the Chairmen were to take all the decisions. In fact, within that time, agreements were reached in Lancashire and Cheshire, South Derby and the Forest of Dean, and after three weeks in Cumberland and Warwickshire. In the other districts, the Joint Boards achieved nothing. In these areas, the figures decided upon by the Chairmen were often considered unfairly low by the men, and this was a cause of resentment.

Opinion did not remain static while all this was taking place. The longer the strike continued, the greater were the effects on the national economy. Industry could not continue without coal, so that as R. Page Arnot put it, 'there was a gradual slowing down of the pulse of economic life'.⁽³⁶⁾ Actual figures for the number of men temporarily unemployed by the action of the miners vary, but were considerable. The numbers given out in the Daily Mail Yearbook were typical:-

4 March	250,000
6 March	350,000
7 March	375,000
8 March	400,000
9 March	450,000
13 March	565,000
20 March	720,000

(36) R.P. Arnot, The Miners. Years of Struggle (1953) p. 103

25 March 800,000⁽³⁷⁾

The official view of the situation was expressed in a paper circulated to Cabinet members, commenting on the increase in pauperism, and the establishment of relief committees in some towns, but observing that there was an adequate supply of coal, and that there had been no run on the banks.⁽³⁸⁾ However, Mrs. Wood of Bradford, writing to her friend, the newly elected Tory M.P., W.A.S. Hewins, informed him that 'we are feeling the coal strike badly in Yorkshire, and if it is not settled soon, we shall have a regular panic'.⁽³⁹⁾

Although panic and violence did not materialise, it had been widely expected. Before the men had even left work, the Home Office received several requests for troops, and the War Office was taking precautions to ensure that the transmission of messages would be facilitated if disturbances did arise.⁽⁴⁰⁾ Many people expected violence. Sir Ernest Jardine, the textile machine manufacturer and Unionist M.P., told Sir Austen Chamberlain on 12 March that he was going to his country house, and, considering the mood of the time, went to a gun smiths, to purchase enough weapons to protect his household, should the need arise. However, he was unable to do so, as the shop had sold out of revolvers, including

(37) Daily Mail Yearbook of 1912 (1913) p. 57

(38) CAB 37/110/56 30 March 1912

(39) Hewins Papers, 56/144. Letter from Mrs. Annie Wood to Hewins, 17 March 1912

(40) H.O.45/10674/218781/6,9,11,89

one hundred in that and the previous day.⁽⁴¹⁾ Clearly, a group within the community were seriously disturbed at the possibilities of an insurrection, or at least extensive rioting.

Another example of the concern about the possibilities can be found in a letter sent to the Home Secretary by Lord Loreburn, the Lord Chancellor. His forecast of events was pessimistic: 'If there is a breakdown then want and scarcity may be within sight very soon, and when once it is begun acutely the progress, bread riot, etc., may be very sudden and grow at an incredibly rapid rate in number and intensity. It is not only reserves of police, etc., but also reserves of food, transport, etc., which may soon be needed. I do hope you are now equipped for this contingency. In my opinion not a day has to be lost in getting ready for all that may happen'.⁽⁴²⁾ Robert Cecil, the barrister and Unionist Member of Parliament adopted a slightly different approach, arguing that the miners had to be opposed at all costs, as their victory 'would really mean anarchy and ultimately actual fighting'.⁽⁴³⁾

Thus, a group of well-informed political figures were seriously alarmed at the possibility of unrest and violence. The ordinary citizen might not have access to this amount of information, and would have to reach his decisions from the

(41) A. Chamberlain op.cit. p. 444

(42) McKenna Papers, MCKN 4/4/19. Letter from Loreburn to McKenna, 24 March 1912

(43) Bonar Law Papers, 25/3/19. Letter from Cecil to Law

newspapers. Here, comment was very varied. Those of a Liberal disposition tended to support the miners. For them, there were no great fears of an imminent catastrophe. The Morning Leader believed that 'everybody - who is not a South Welsh or Scottish coal owner - agrees that the minimum wage ought to be conceded', and a few days later, the same paper demanded that the Government should legislate **for it.** (44) Sir Arthur Markham, who had already sided with the men, announced that some areas had paid a minimum wage for years, including the Leen Valley of Nottinghamshire, all of Warwickshire, and most of the large companies in Derbyshire. He insisted that 'in these districts there is no complaint that the output of coal has been diminished by this system of payment'. (45)

Sir Richard Redmayne, an experienced colliery manager, and a former Professor of Mining, was His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Mines. As early as July 1911, he had warned of the 'great probability of unrest culminating in a general strike', because of the unpopularity of the three shift system, which had resulted from the Eight Hours' Act, the question of abnormal places in South Wales, and the activities of young militants. (46) His opinion at this time has not been discovered, but in his autobiography, he sided with the men on this issue: 'Whilst one would not go so far as to say that strikes are a justifiable means of attaining an end, even supposing the end sought were a rightful one, it is difficult

(44) Morning Leader, 5, 15, 16 March 1912, p. 4

(45) Sir A.B. Markham op.cit. p. 560

(46) CAB 37/107/78 22 July 1911

to see what other course was open to the workers in the past towards securing the amenities which they now enjoy, and one is forced to admit from an historical review of the subject that in many cases the miners were in the right - though I know I will be criticised for so saying. Such, in my opinion, was the case in regard to the 1912 national strike'. (47)

For such people, the Minimum Wages Act was entirely logical and reasonable. The response of the Daily Chronicle was a common one: 'The first impression on the public is likely to be one of relief', but, after further thought, could not understand why the Government was prepared to antagonise the miners by omitting the "five and two". (48) Even the Manchester Guardian, which had not always been sympathetic to the cause of men involved in trade disputes, gave limited approval to the legislation: 'Given the circumstances of the case, the national emergency, and the failure of a settlement by agreement between the parties, the Bill brought in by the Prime Minister...appears to us, in general outline, to be the best - perhaps we may say the only possible - method that could be devised for dealing with the situation'. (49)

If the Liberal press was in favour of the Bill, the Cabinet itself was divided. Lord Riddell later claimed,

(47) Sir R.A.S. Redmayne, Men, Mines and Memories (1942) p.

(48) Daily Chronicle, 16, 23 March 1912, p. 4

(49) Manchester Guardian, 20 March 1912, p. 6

quoting from his diary, that Lloyd George and Rufus Isaacs wanted to see the inclusion of the "five and two"⁽⁵⁰⁾ and Haldane thought the existing Bill 'a good one',⁽⁵¹⁾ but Lord Morley and Churchill 'expressed doubts as to its expediency'.⁽⁵²⁾ Austen Chamberlain believed that Grey detested the Bill,⁽⁵³⁾ but at a Cabinet meeting, he proposed that the figures should be included, and, if it did result in a loss for the coal owners, the Government could make it up. Grey suggested a fund of £250,000 for this purpose. Asquith agreed, should the scheme prove absolutely necessary, but Burns, McKinnon, Wood and Runciman were 'very adverse'.⁽⁵⁴⁾

Such Liberal opposition was not whispered in secret. Public announcements were made, though not by the leading politicians, who had to remain loyal to the decision reached, bound by the cloak of collective responsibility. The Daily Chronicle, though editorially in favour, included criticism. It printed a series of articles, side by side, discussing the issue of the minimum wage from several points of view. Professor Alfred Marshall, who held the Chair of Political Economy at Cambridge University, declared firmly against the concept, claiming that it would become the 'beginnings that might bring a national disaster'. In the next column, L.T. Hobhouse, a Liberal, and Professor of Sociology at the

(50) Lord Riddell, More Pages from my Diary (1934) p. 44

(51) Haldane Papers, N.L.S.Ms.5987 f.108. Letter from
Haldane to his mother, 19 March 1912

(52) Letter to the King at Windsor CAB 41/33/41, 16 March 1912

(53) A. Chamberlain op.cit. p. 463

(54) Letters to the King at Windsor CAB 41/33/44, 26 March 1912

University of London, declared the claims 'modest', while, along side that, W. Pember Reeves, the Fabian, argued that 'Parliament cannot fix miners' wages but it can give arbitrators a lead.'⁽⁵⁵⁾ Thus, an extremely wide range of views on the topic were presented in the Daily Chronicle. The Morning Leader encouraged discussion of the points involved by permitting the Independent Labour Party M.P., Philip Snowden, to contribute an article, the contents of which could have done nothing to enhance the reputation of the Independent Labour Party amongst militant workers. The piece observed that 'the miners have won a tremendous victory, not only for themselves, but for wage labour as a whole. There is a possibility that the results of this great success may be lost by the pursuance of a mistaken policy'.⁽⁵⁶⁾ Now Snowden might urge caution for several reasons. It could have been that he did not want public opinion to move against the miners, or he may have been worried that if the miners pushed too hard, they would make the employers even more determined to crush them, either at this time, or whenever the opportunity arose. On the other hand, it could have been that he wished to appear bourgeois and respectable, and did not want to arouse public disapproval by siding with miners engaged in a national strike. It is possible that Snowden was representing the interests of the Independent Labour Party with this article. This does imply that his motives were not entirely honest, and there is no evidence for such an accusation. Yet the

(55) Daily Chronicle, 25 March 1912, p. 4

(56) Morning Leader, 7 March 1912, p. 4

- Labour Party, despite the unrest of the period, failed to increase its support at this time, which does suggest that it could not match the militancy of the workers. It would be unrealistic to suggest that this article was so important and so unpopular that it caused a loss of support for Labour as a whole, but it could be that Snowden's attitude was typical of those held by the Labour hierarchy, and all of them together, contributed to the failure of the Labour Party to gain popular acclaim. Such an argument cannot be proved, and relies upon a particular interpretation of Snowden's words, but given the state of the Labour Party, and its failure to attract interest at this time, it does not seem an unrealistic hypothesis.

The Manchester Guardian did not need to employ outsiders to draw attention to the dangers of the position. It sympathised with the miners, and supported the Bill, but it felt that 'industrial war on a large scale is incompatible with the existence of society, and that compulsory arbitration, accompanied by the prohibition to strike or to lock-out, is the only practicable way to avoid it'.⁽⁵⁷⁾ Some Liberal politicians were equally worried. Lord Crewe, the Secretary of State for India, and Leader of the Liberal Party in the House of Lords, wrote in his diary a complaint about 'the apparent callousness of the miners, who are essentially the best of working men, in contemplating the shortage of a necessity of general life'.⁽⁵⁸⁾ Such an attitude epitomises

(57) Manchester Guardian, 22 March 1912, p. 6

(58) J. Pope-Hennessy, Lord Crewe (1955) p. 138

the traditional concept of the relationship between employer and worker. The men were at fault by their strike action. That the owners had brought about the strike by refusing to grant a minimum wage was not even considered - the men should accept the edicts of their masters without question, and then they were fine fellows. It was this very view which was being challenged during the whole period of unrest before the First World War, and some people did start to adapt their thinking to the changing circumstances of the time. Not so Winston Churchill. He had gained a reputation as an advanced Liberal, but he was rapidly losing this. According to Lucy Masterman, he was 'becoming less and less radical in his sympathies, and was practically in a "shoot 'em down" attitude'.⁽⁵⁹⁾ However, if he was becoming increasingly opposed to the demands of labour, another Cabinet member was giving active support. Herbert Samuel was M.P. for Cleveland, where the local iron ore miners, although voting against the strike, were involved in the stoppage. They had £10,000 invested in Middlesbrough Corporation, but their broker, 'for anti-strike reasons' refused to advance any money on this security. Thus, there was no strike pay. The men met Samuel, who gave them £10,000, and took over their securities: 'I saw no risk. Even if the Cleveland men had not come out on strike, they could not have gone on working, as the mines close as soon as the coal supply stops, because the blast furnaces cannot work without coal, and the iron stone cannot be used when the blast furnaces stop'.⁽⁶⁰⁾

(59) L. Masterman op.cit. p. 234

(60) Samuel Papers A 156/402. Letter from Samuel to his mother 17 March 1912

Clearly, the Liberal Party was divided on the question of the miners' strike, and some politicians and newspapers emerge as greater sympathisers with the men than others. Some side with the miners, even when the strike was taking place, though everyone accepted that it was damaging to the economy. On the other hand, the more traditional Liberals thought that the employers had the right to dictate terms to their employees, so that the men were in the wrong. In essence, this was the Conservative's reaction to labour unrest, so that their approach tended to represent a wider spectrum of opinion. Two cartoons in Punch sum up these opinions. In one, entitled 'The Victim', a miner is standing over Britannia, who is kneeling and bound, and he holds the rope that ties her. The other, called 'The Final Arbiter', shows the Spectre of Famine, assuring Asquith that "If you can't settle this, I will".⁽⁶¹⁾ Thus, the feeling was, in the words of Emily Shawcrop, a vicar's wife from Worcestershire, that the country was 'in the midst of apparent ruin and utter muddle',⁽⁶²⁾ but no-one seemed able to produce a viable alternative policy.

It was, of course, easy to attack the miners for jeopardising the national economy - many people really did not believe that they could have a case if the owners had rejected their demands. Further, a national stoppage had never occurred before, so that this would add to the feelings of anger and

(61) Punch, 6 March 1912, p. 175; 27 March 1912, p. 233

(62) Hewins Papers 56/145. Letter from Mrs. Shawcrop to

frustration. Indeed, many people found it easy to convince themselves that the miners were well off, and thus, did not deserve any consideration. For instance, Lord Lansdowne, the Leader of the Unionists in the House of Lords, declared that colliers were 'liberally paid and...do their work under conditions which seem undistinguishable from the conditions under which men employed in other industries perform their allotted task'. In the same Debate in the Upper Chamber, the Bishop of St. Asaph observed that 'no doubt the risks and hardships of his occupation are exceptional, but his work is not unhealthy, his wages are higher than those of most workmen in the country, and his hours of leisure are larger and more at his command'.⁽⁶³⁾ Several newspapers adopted the same argument, while others decided that the miners had not even wanted to strike. Henry Seton-Karr, a former Conservative Member of Parliament, told the readers of Nineteenth Century and After that 'there is good reason to believe that many did not understand what they were voting for; while others voted in the belief that there would be no strike; or that it would only last a few days. The desire to have a holiday and spend some strike funds actuated many'.⁽⁶⁴⁾ Walter Sichel made a similar comment: 'On the whole, it would seem that no large section of the miners came out with any fixed or definite aims. Not a few of them wanted, apparently, to make their

(63) House of Lords Debates, Vol. II, Cols. 667, 763-4.

27 and 28 March 1912

(64) H. Seton-Karr, '"We are the Government Now"', Nineteenth Century and After, April 1912, p. 615

union disgorge something for a holiday at last'.⁽⁶⁵⁾ In the same way, less than half way through the stoppage, the Daily Telegraph declared that it had information which demonstrated that 'there is no longer any doubt that most of the miners have had enough of the strike both in spirit and in pocket, and they are not going to stay away much longer from the work where high wages await them'.⁽⁶⁶⁾ However, there was no kind of evidence to support such statements, and the result of the

but over
120,000 men
then in the 1st.
ballot?

(second ballot must have indicated that a large number of miners were convinced that the struggle was worth continuing. Thus, the claims that the men did not really want to strike, and were prepared to return to work, appear to have been wishful thinking. Perhaps the writers put forward these unsubstantiated claims simply because they wanted them to materialise. It is certainly indicative of the way in which some newspapers would misrepresent the news concerning the course of labour disputes.

Yet no clear alternative policy had been advocated. According to Chamberlain, it was Bonar Law's and the official Conservative opinion that 'there were only two courses - one to hold aloof but to say and TO PROVE that absolute protection by police, special constables, military or whatever was needed, would be given to those who were willing to work; the other compulsory arbitration with effective penalties by imprisonment and by attachment of funds against all who aided, abetted

(65) W. Sichel 'The Strike and the Stricken', Fortnightly Review, 1 May 1912, p. 831

(66) Daily Telegraph, 14 March 1912, p. 11

or procured resistance to the award. He thought the first course the right one and I agree; the second he thought possible and justifiable and I agree again. But we both thought that it was not our business to hurry the Government, and that the mass of the public must feel the effects of the strike before it would give the necessary support to the Government for such drastic action.'⁽⁶⁷⁾ This policy of inactivity meant that the Conservatives appeared to have nothing to contribute. As back-bench M.P. Robert Sanders put it, 'it cannot be said that anyone on our side has useful proposals to make'.⁽⁶⁸⁾ Not that the Conservative side was entirely without suggestions. A.H. Heath of Stoke-on-Trent wrote to Bonar Law, with the idea that it should made a criminal offence to interfere with the right to work, with a punishment of at least two month's hard labour. He added that 'special constables might be sworn in at the request of owners to secure freedom and security'.⁽⁶⁹⁾ The solution of the Morning Post was more simple, 'a short Bill to attach the funds of bodies engaged in this conspiracy might even be welcomed by a public grown desperate through unemployment and want'.⁽⁷⁰⁾ If the idea of seizing the funds of trade unions was startling, the proposal of the Weekly Dispatch was even more extreme. While the second ballot was taking place, the

(67) A. Chamberlain op.cit. p. 441, 7 March 1912

(68) Sanders Diaries, vol. I. f. 31, 11 March 1912

(69) Bonar Law Papers 25/3/24. Letter from Heath to Law,
12 March 1912

(70) Morning Post, 9 March 1912, p. 8

paper declared that the mines should be opened, and that 'they should still be kept open, under police and military protection, if the ballot is against ending this senseless strike'.⁽⁷¹⁾ There was no explanation of how this could be done, and whether it was merely those miners who wanted to work who would be allowed to enter the pits, or every collier, in which case coercion would have intensified the labour unrest. In either case, a democratic decision of the men would have been overruled. The Standard could see no reason for such complicated methods. The answer was simple: 'The Welsh coal owners are prepared to keep their pits empty until the union funds are exhausted, and strike pay ceases. Then the men would come in again, having learned a useful, and as some of their employers think, an indispensable, lesson'.⁽⁷²⁾

All of these approaches indicate a harsh attitude to the problem of labour unrest. The essential difference between such policies and those held by the majority of Liberals can be seen from an article in the Westminster Gazette: 'The worst feature is, to our thinking, what some short-sighted people appear to think the best. This is the possibility that organised labour may be drained of its funds, and reduced to impotence by the prolongation of this struggle. Let us be quite sure that the downfall of trade unionism would be a great disaster, since it would merely pave the way for the operation of Syndicalists and other violent agitators whose

(71) Weekly Dispatch, 2 March 1912, p. 6

(72) Standard, 2 March 1912, p. 6

perpetual theme is that trade unionism is played out'.⁽⁷³⁾ Thus, one of the most loyal organs of the Liberal Party wanted to destroy the extremist element within the trade union movement, just as the Conservatives did, but wished to preserve the official unions. Here lay one of the differences between the two parties. Neither approved of industrial unrest, and both wanted work to be uninterrupted by strife, but the Unionists thought that one of the ways to achieve this end was to destroy trade unionism, whereas the Liberals realised that the trade union movement had grown too large for such repression, and sought ways to reduce the degree of militancy.

The Tories tended to see Syndicalism as the driving force behind the strike and its prolongation. It was not just the newspapers, such as the Morning Post, Daily Mail and Sunday Times who felt this. Prominent individuals made similar remarks. The Bishop of Southwell, in his sermon during an intercession service at Chesterfield Parish Church, told his congregation, which was composed largely of miners, 'there are forces at work today which may oust your leaders, and introduce a system of new leaders; a system which I dare to proclaim is wicked, cruel, and criminal. I mean the system which goes by the name of syndicalism, the men being used as pawns in the game of war'.⁽⁷⁴⁾ Thus, the press was not alone in arguing that Syndicalism was a force which had to be opposed.

(73) Westminster Gazette, 27 March 1912, p. 1

(74) Derbyshire Times, 23 March 1912

The tone of the language used could identify the political affiliation of the speaker. The Conservative section of the community tended to regard the strike as a conspiracy, and condemned the Government for failing to regard it as such. Sir Almeric Fitzroy, who had acted as Private Secretary to several Conservative ministers, and at this time was Clerk to the Privy Council, expressed himself briefly, saying that the miners 'should have been told that a general strike would not be allowed. It should, in short, have been treated as a conspiracy against the State'.⁽⁷⁵⁾ Many newspapers adopted the same line. The Sunday Times explained that the strike relied on disrupting industry, and so should be dealt with as 'a criminal conspiracy against the citizens or treason against the State',⁽⁷⁶⁾ while the Observer attacked the Government: 'In a sane nation, under a competent Government, any movement to bring about an artificial fuel famine should be regarded as no less admissible than an artificial bread famine, and treated as conspiracy'.⁽⁷⁷⁾ The Financial News, which was normally a very moderate supporter of the Conservatives, was equally angry, pointing out that 'we should offer a warm reception, and an instant answer, to a foreign invader. Need the temperature of the reception be lower, or the reply less peremptory and decisive when the assailant is a home-made thing'.⁽⁷⁸⁾

These comments led to even greater condemnations of the

(75) Sir A. Fitzroy, Memoirs, Vol. 2 (n.d.) p. 480

(76) Sunday Times, 10 March 1912, p. 10

(77) Observer, 31 March 1912, p. 8

(78) Financial News, 7 March 1912, p. 6

Government. The Morning Post warned that with any compromise 'the people will rise in their wrath and demand that the Government end the strike, and their wrath will be directed not only against the Government for neglecting to take strong measures, but against the miners for refusing a reasonable compromise. And the Government might be driven, either by legislation or extra-ordinary administrative action - for anything is justified by emergency - to take drastic action against the form of syndicalism which is now being used by the miners'. (79)

The Liberals had accepted the minimum wage legislation as the best way of ending the strike, and the Daily Chronicle had even criticised the Government for failing to include the "five and two", but there was little chance that the Conservatives would approve of the Bill. This was unusual in itself, for it was normally the Liberals who opposed State interference, and the Conservatives, especially over the question of protection, who were inclined to invoke it. Here the roles were reversed, with Liberal support for the legislation and Tories, such as Austen Chamberlain, arguing that 'State interference is bad and...can only be rendered tolerable if, in trades where the State does interfere, strikes are forbidden and rendered illegal and all disputes are compulsorily referred to arbitration'. (80) The press was even more condemnatory. The Daily Express, for example, insisted that the Government had 'surrendered, bag and baggage,

(79) Morning Post, 9 March 1912, p. 8

(80) A. Chamberlain op.cit. p. 449, 16 March 1912

to the Syndicalists'.⁽⁸¹⁾ Parliamentary Debates on the Minimum Wage revealed that the view of the press was shared by many Unionists. Sir Robert Cecil denounced the legislation as 'a mere surrender to the Syndicalists'. The Daily Express article appeared the following day, so the phrase could well have been borrowed from this speech in the House of Commons. In the same Debate, Claude Lowther, who was a former diplomat, holder of the Victoria Cross from the Boer War and the Secretary of the Anti-Socialist League, described the strike as 'purely political', and warned that 'Syndicalism unchecked spells industrial suicide'.⁽⁸²⁾ In the House of Lords, the Marquis of Lansdowne maintained that the Bill was a means of 'buying off the assailants of the country'.⁽⁸³⁾ It could have been that the whole of the Cabinet did not support the Bill. Chamberlain reported a meeting between Grey and Balfour which indicated the attitude of the former: 'Grey was gloomy in the extreme, did not conceal his detestation of the Bill or its dangers, but we were on the brink of revolution, we must sacrifice principle, and let the future take care of itself. We must do anything to end the strike. London would be without water or light, etc., etc. Do you wonder that a Government, in which he ranks as a strong man, is not equal to such a crisis?'⁽⁸⁴⁾ This could be extremely important material. There is no record of such a meeting in the Balfour

(81) Daily Express, 20 March 1912, p. 4

(82) House of Commons Debates Vol. 35, Cols. 1773, 2164-5,
19 March 1912

(83) House of Lords Debates, Vol. 11, Col. 665, 27 March 1912

(84) A. Chamberlain op.cit. p. 463, 26 March 1912, referring
to a meeting the previous day

Papers, nor in the Grey Papers, but neither of them kept diaries, or, if they did, they have not survived. The Grey collection contains manuscripts relating, in the main, to foreign affairs, and so gives little help, but the extensive archives of Balfour do not contain any letters relating to the encounter. This does not imply that Chamberlain reported events which did not take place. It is evident that Grey was deeply concerned about the stoppage. He wanted to meet the miners' leaders to try to persuade them to accept the Bill as soon as it was introduced, and return to work immediately, but was advised against this by Llewellyn Smith,⁽⁸⁵⁾ and his speech in Manchester in the middle of February indicated the serious view he took of even a threatened strike. On the other hand, it was Grey who had proposed the inclusion of the "five and two", and even a fund to make up any loss incurred by the owners. Of course, this could be indicative of the fear displayed by Grey, who, as Chamberlain reported, just wanted the whole affair settled as soon as possible, no matter what. Thus, there could well be some validity to Balfour's alleged meeting with Grey, and the latter was probably extremely disturbed about the possibility of further disaster and unrest following on from the miners' strike.

Certainly, the Government was obliged to withstand a barrage of criticism attacking the alleged weakness displayed in introducing the Bill. The Conservative barrister Henry Duke told the Commons that 'the Government denies its elementary duties when it offers the reward of success to the

(85) Grey Papers F.O. 800/89 f.205-6. Letter from Smith to

Grey, 23 March 1912

persons who have brought the country to the plight in which it is, when it refuses to the country any safeguard for its future security, and when it refuses to the worker any protection for his individual liberty'.⁽⁸⁶⁾ The Liberals expected that the legislation would end disputes, but Duke was insisting that, on the contrary, it would act as an encouragement to industrial disorder. Others opposed the Bill because it appeared so one-sided in favour of the men. There was no guarantee that they would accept it, although the owners would be compelled to do so, and, moreover, there was no check to ensure that the men would do a reasonable day's work in return for their promised minimum wage. As it was so difficult to supervise colliers at the face, many thought that some sort of promise should have been extracted from the miners. Moreover, there was no clause to prevent strikes in the future. Thus, the Financial Times dismissed the Bill as 'extremely unsatisfactory', especially as the local boards had 'no power whatever to enforce their rulings', so the men could refuse to accept any decision they did not regard as sufficiently high.⁽⁸⁷⁾ The Morning Post took a slightly different line: 'The principle of the minimum wage was given without the complementary principle of compulsory arbitration. Disliking both, but believing that one cannot be given without the other, we regard that settlement as being unduly favourable to the men'.⁽⁸⁸⁾ The Observer made similar

(86) House of Commons Debates Vol. 35 Col. 2134, 19 March 1912

(87) Financial Times, 20 March 1912, p. 10

(88) Morning Post 27 March 1912, p. 6

comments, hinting that something should have been included to make strikes less frequent, but the Daily Express was far more explicit. It insisted that the Bill 'will be a halter round the neck of the State unless it is swiftly supplemented by reasoned legislation designed to make impossible a coal strike or a railway strike or any industrial upheaval threatening the life of the community'. (89)

Perhaps the most interesting comment came from the fifth son of the late Marquis of Salisbury, Lord Hugh Cecil, whose belief in true Conservatism was unmoved by the passage of years. He was amazed that the Bill should have been passed, and informed his readers, incredulously that 'measures have been taken to protect miners, although adult men'. (90) Of course, it must be recognised that it was a drastic piece of intervention into the free working of the economy. It was the first example of legislation to fix men's wages for almost one hundred and fifty years, so that the response of a hardened Tory could well have been one of amazement. Lord Hugh Cecil was forty three at this time, which was, perhaps, young enough to have noticed the changes which were taking place in the society, and the gradual erosion of the old ideas of laissez faire, but if ^{he} had observed them, he would have disapproved, for he was a real Conservative, one who did not want change, and in particular, nothing which could affect his position in society. No doubt, he and many like him, could not conceive that legislation was necessary, for the men could always

(89) Daily Express, 8 April 1912, p. 4

(90) H. Cecil, Conservatism (1912) p. 187

refuse the employment if they did not like the wages. However, once having accepted the terms, they had to remain unaltered.

Thus was the community split. The Liberals tended to feel that the demands of the miners were reasonable, and that legislation was the best solution. Nevertheless, some distinguished Liberals recorded their disapproval of the strike itself, and many were anxious about the possibilities of major industrial unrest, such as had occurred in the summer of 1911. They were worried about the effects on the economy, and deeply disturbed about the activities of labour agitators, yet they clung to a belief in moderation. Mrs. Masterman, in a recent conversation about Asquith, said that he 'would put down what he thought were fair terms - and they probably were' - but they could not be amended, and had to be accepted. (91)

Thus, he was sympathetic to the cause of labour, but only so long as he was in control. This was typical of the paternalistic attitude towards the working class displayed by the wealthy in Victorian England.

The question of what to do when the men took militant action was discussed in a paper entitled Industrial Unrest, prepared by Buxton, and circulated to members of the Cabinet. He denied that 'Syndicalism, as such, has yet acquired any hold in the country', but saw 'the almost complete collapse of the Labour Party in the House as an effective influence in labour disputes'. The men resorted to strike action because there seemed to be no alternative, but 'the comparative ill-success of the Railway Strike, the failure of the miners to

(91) Interview given by Mrs. Masterman to this writer at

extract their terms, have shown that the country is not so easily held up as was supposed'. Thus, Buxton argued that the men had been put in their places, but 'the public, sick of, and suffering from strikes and industrial disputes, would, as a whole, heartily welcome some stringent action to prevent them, or to bring them more speedily to a conclusion', but he did not know how. Compulsory arbitration would be resented, and it would be difficult to use sanctions to enforce decisions. There would be insufficient cells to imprison all strikers, and if strikes themselves were made illegal, the men would demand extensive legislation on wages and conditions.⁽⁹²⁾ The following day, Sir George Askwith issued a Cabinet paper, with a similar title to Buxton's. It investigated the possibilities to end unrest. Firstly, he suggested doing nothing, but that would mean 'a constant war between the parties, growing bigger until possibly it would reach something like civil war, and even then matters would remain unsettled'. Secondly, he proposed that the Government could intervene to deal with each difficulty as it arose, but that solution 'ultimately offers no relief from the harassment of industry'. Finally, he urged that careful inquiry was the best start, rather than rushing into one of the popular answers, such as compulsory arbitration. There were three viable forms of inquiry: by Parliamentary Committee, which would include Labour M.P.'s, but they 'are not the labour leaders of the present labour movement, so it would be unrepresentative; by Royal Commission, which would provide

(92) CAB 37/110/62, 13 April, 1912

a mass of information, but would take a long time; and by Commissioners, who could look at selected industries, or all trades, and could include some of the real labour leaders. This was the best method, Askwith thought, and his view was endorsed by I.H. Mitchell, who worked in the Department of the Chief Industrial Commissioner. (93)

Thus, the Liberals were busily engaged in talking about reasonable ways of discouraging further strikes, though they ignored completely the Industrial Council, which they had established but months before, to arbitrate in trade disputes. The more conservative elements of the community were less conciliatory. Seldom did they agree with the moderate section of society when it claimed that the men had a case. In the miners' strike, they saw the minimum wage as a potential cause of unprofitable pits. Their mistrust of the working man led them to the conviction that the collier would become a malingerer, and they concluded that at the heart of the disturbance lay sinister Syndicalists, who wished to destroy the economic fabric of the nation. Hence, the strike could only be seen as a conspiracy against the State, and, as such, had to be resisted to the utmost. This attitude is well expressed by J.F.C. Hearnshaw, who, immediately after the First World War, looked at the problems of Britain, and concluded that 'the great coal strike of 1911 and the railway strike of 1912 (sic) were distinctly Syndicalist, that is, revolutionary, in character. They were both marked by flagrant breaches of contract, by lawless violence, remorseless intimidation, widespread sabotage, by open defiance of

the State, by reckless disregard of the community, by anti-social criminality'.⁽⁹⁴⁾ If the author perhaps recalled events that did not really happen, that too is significant. He was so perturbed that he believed that they could have occurred.

In fact, the coal strike was remarkably peaceful. As soon as it had ended, the Times was congratulating all concerned because of this: 'In no other country could a strike approaching this in magnitude and character have been conducted in a similar manner. In most countries, there would have been riots and bloodshed from the first. The national character has asserted itself...friendly and cordial relations between masters and men have subsisted from beginning to end'.⁽⁹⁵⁾

If there had been little or no violence, Hearnshaw was right that there had been 'reckless disregard of the community'. The Conservative view of the social structure of Britain becomes increasingly clear, in the light of remarks like that. Britain is a single entity, and everyone has a place in it. The owners of capital are the most important members of the society, because they wield the most power. The working man has a position at the bottom of the power scale. He has rights - basically, the right to fair treatment - and it is the most powerful members of the community who will judge whether or not one of their number has acted unfairly. The workers cannot assume such a role, and if they

(94) J.F.C. Hearnshaw, Democracy at the Crossways (1919) p.260

(95) Times, 8 April 1912, p. 7

act in unison to improve their conditions, they are likely to be condemned for acting against the interests of the society, and not praised for acting in the interest of a large section of it. This must be true, if the original concept of social structure is accepted. Needless to stress, it was not only Conservatives who held such opinions. Some Liberals also maintained such ideas. The difference between many Liberals and the majority of Conservatives lay merely in the different interpretations of social justice, rather than notions of class order.

The workers were expected to be loyal and brave, and would be praised when they acted in such a way. Hence, after the Cadeby Colliery disaster in July 1912, when the rescue parties demonstrated remarkable courage and tenacity, the press lauded them. As the Manchester Guardian pointed out, 'the victims and heroes of Cadeby are the men who only a few months ago were standing out with their fellows for a minimum wage - striking and picketing and sending up coal bills and making some of us even talk angrily about calling out the troops to overcome them'.⁽⁹⁶⁾ It may appear that there was something of a dichotomy in views here: the collier was courageous in an emergency, but cowardly and evil when seeking a wage advance. However, there was no real contradiction. It was not the miner who was evil, but the strike itself, and, in particular, the minority who persuaded the men to cease work. The very courage of such people in a pit accident provided a splendid example of how the worker,

(96) Manchester Guardian, 10 July 1912, p. 8

when properly led and activated, behaved in the way that the community expected. Thus, the heroism displayed by the men during a pit tragedy brings forth comments on the splendid character of the collier, because he is acting in a public-spirited fashion, just as the rest of society thought that he should. On the other hand, a strike, though it might similarly imply hardship, courage and self sacrifice on the part of the workers, was not public spirited, but the very opposite: the interests of the "public" in whose favour he struck. The wage earning class in his industry simply did not appear to figure in this kind of attitude to society.

Chapter VII

The London Dock Strike of 1912

Very soon after the conclusion of the miners' strike, the London tailors ceased work, having failed to negotiate a higher wage with the employers. This was not taken very seriously, for, as the Times explained, 'Londoners of the upper or middle class have as a rule a stock of clothes which might at a pinch last them for years'.⁽¹⁾ Since this was the type of dispute to which everyone was accustomed, one which did not harm the public, it attracted little attention or comment, but the whole question of industrial stoppages was considered in a Debate on Industrial Unrest in the House of Commons on 8 May 1912, when a great deal of sympathy for the working class was expressed. Keir Hardie seemed to accept that militants were extremely active, for he claimed that 'Syndicalism is the direct outcome of the apathy and the indifference of this House towards working class questions', but on this occasion, some members agreed that wages and conditions ought to be improved. Crawshay-Williams, a recently elected Liberal, announced: 'I conceive it to be our duty, as the ruling body in this great nation, to see to it that labour gets its due without the miseries and calamities of industrial strife'.⁽²⁾

One group of workers who did not feel that they were being treated fairly were the London dockers. They had been

(1) Times, 7 May 1912, p. 9.

(2) House of Commons Debates, Vol. 38, Cols. 520, 503, 8 May

successful in the summer of 1911, with the result that the unions had been able to increase their memberships in the Port, but unrest continued. Much of the trouble resulted from the settlements of August 1911. On 21 August, most had returned to work, but the men in the short sea trades remained out. Previously, they had been paid the same as the overseas men, who were to receive 8d and 1s under the Rollitt Award, but the short sea workers had been excluded from this agreement, and remained on 7d and 8d. Many were members of the Stevedores' Society, whose standard rate was 8d and 1s. The National Transport Workers' Federation had taken up their case: some firms had conceded and their employees resumed work, but the rest did not. On 21 August, the Short Sea Traders offered 8d and 10d, but this was rejected. Two days later, both sides agreed on arbitration, and a return to work came at the end of August 1911. In October, the award went against the men, but on 27 December, the Chamber of Commerce Arbitration Board granted the stevedores a rise from 8d and 1s to 10d and 1s, together with an increase in piecework rates.

In the meantime, another dispute had occurred. The "Sea Belle" was owned by Mr. Leach, who also controlled the Mark Brown Wharf. He paid his men 7d an hour, according to the terms of the Devonport Agreement. Most of his dealings were with the short sea trades, but occasionally, overseas vessels such as the "Sea Belle" used his wharf. Now, according to the Rollitt Award, men in the overseas section were to be paid 8d and 1s when the employers were shipowners or contractors, but, at the end of October 1911, Leach refused. This resulted in a boycott of the vessel, so the Port of London Authority

took it into dock, where their employees refused to touch it. In November, the Board of Trade intervened, and persuaded Leach to accept arbitration. On 27th, the Lord Chief Justice decided in favour of the men. It was hoped that this decision would apply to all overseas vessels using wharves, but the employers declined to interpret it in that way.

Unofficial stoppages took place in the short sea trades in December, and were intensified in January 1912, when the new stevedores' agreement came into operation, making an even greater differential between union members in different sections of the docks. The Stevedores' Society instructed its members to return to work, while negotiations took place, but they never materialised.

Just as the men wanted parity on wages, so also they demanded equality of job opportunity. The London Master Stevedores' Association employed Society foremen, and recognised the right of Society members to be taken on first, but this did not apply in the new areas of organisation, the branches that had been established as a result of the dispute of 1911.

Another union with grievances was the Lightermen's Society. It had allowed sailing bargemen to join in 1910, and they had all been on strike in 1911, with the result that an agreement had been reached between the Society and the barge-owners. The Board of Trade had drawn up a schedule for sailing barge work, to operate retrospectively from 21 August 1911. It had been completed in December, but by May 1912, none of the owners had paid the back money, and many had retained the old rates. Both the union and the Board of

Trade had failed to gain the money.

The tugmen were employed by members of the Association of Master Lightermen. By 1911, they had no collective agreement, and no uniform rate for deckhands. On 28 March 1912, the Lightermen's Society invited the owners to discuss this, and were refused. The union submitted its terms, and gave notice of a strike on 26 April. The Association of Master Lightermen replied by threatening a lock-out of the whole of the lighterage trade if the deckhands struck. The Government intervened, and the notices were withdrawn.

Thus, there was widespread discontent on London docks, and Askwith was correct to assert, in a paper circulated to Cabinet members in April 1912, that 'an immediate upheaval was possible, and that at any rate there is grave unrest which may possibly come to a head'.⁽³⁾ The following month, it did. Since 1910, a man called Thomas had been employed as a watchman by the Mercantile Lighterage Company. He had been a founder member of the Foreman Lighterman's Union, which was not affiliated to the National Transport Workers' Federation. Although he was no longer employed as a foreman, he declined to take the N.T.W.F. card. A union delegate approached the manager of the firm and was told that all complaints should come through the Masters' Association. This meant that no action would be taken, so all the men in that company were called out on 16 May. The work was given to other lighterage firms, but their employees blacked it, and were dismissed. On 19 May, the Lightermen's Society

(3) CAB 37/110/63, 14 May 1912

called out all its members. The employers refused Askwith's offer of negotiation. The London District Committee of the N.T.W.F. met two days later, and the Dockers' and Stevedores' Unions promised not to do the work of the Lightermen. At the same time, the Executive Committee of the N.T.W.F. was called to London, and called a general strike in the Port of London on 23 May.

Askwith's immediate reaction was that 'the main cause of the dispute is the question of union and non-union labour'.⁽⁴⁾ In other words, Askwith took the strike at its face value, but Harry Gosling, the President of the N.T.W.F., later claimed that the issue of Thomas was one of a whole series of grievances - and certainly, there were plenty of others - and a strike would have taken place anyway. This matter was merely 'a match to a fire ready laid'.⁽⁵⁾

The Government acted at once, and appointed Sir Edward Clarke to hold an inquiry into the origins of the unrest, and he began his investigations on 24 May. Within a few days, his Report was published, but sides had been taken well before it had been passed. The Times maintained that it was a conspiracy 'planned by the agents of the National Transport Federation',⁽⁶⁾ while the Daily Express believed that it was 'really a fresh action in the revolutionary campaign of Syndicalism, a new

(4) Buxton Papers. Letter from Askwith to the King, 24 May

1912

(5) H. Gosling, Up and Down Stream (1927) p. 158

(6) Times, 23 May 1912, p. 9

blow in the sacred cause of muddle-headed anarchy'.⁽⁷⁾ The Daily Telegraph was in a thoughtful mood. It insisted that the stoppage was 'to an even greater extent than those of the miners and the railwaymen inspired by a spirit of ruthless class warfare' and commented that 'the irony of the situation is that the public thus threatened was never so well disposed as it is today towards the claim of labour to enjoy a larger share than has hitherto fallen to it of the fruits of an enlarged prosperity. It has learned in the past twelve months more of the truths about the conditions of the working class existence than had come to its knowledge in a life-time; conscience and sympathy, considerations of national honour and the national well-being, are moving the people to seek remedies, to discuss ways and means of curing the disease of industrialism, of which constantly recurring labour trouble is the symptom. There is a harsh interruption of this mood when the country finds itself plunged into a situation in which trade union leaders are assuming all the airs of omnipotent and ruthless despots holding the language of menace and proclaiming themselves ready to inflict upon all and sundry incalculable loss and suffering. They do not maintain - nobody could maintain - that there is no other way of securing the legitimate object of improving the condition of a section of the working class'.⁽⁸⁾ Clearly, the Daily Telegraph clung to the traditional view that the conditions of the working class should be improved as and when the employers thought fit. It is interesting that the writer argued that the rest

(7) Daily Express, 24 May 1912, p. 4.

(8) Daily Telegraph, 24 May 1912, p. 10

of the community was becoming aware of the conditions of working class life, and was attempting to alleviate the worst parts of it. The Daily Telegraph had been one of the firmest opponents of militant action, and had always faulted any strike action, demanding repression, but it had not supported alternative policies which would render the strike redundant.

That paper and others with a similar outlook, would attack this strike, just as they had attacked all others. Thus the Observer denounced the stoppage as 'a particularly naked exhibition of revolutionary strategy. It is a strike which does not know its own mind - a product of casual impulse, supplemented by official manipulation'.⁽⁹⁾ Other papers regarded the dispute as an act of disloyalty to the nation by the dockers, or even an attempt to ruin the country, so that the Government was criticised for failing to do anything. Yet it was not only the Conservative papers which appealed for Governmental intervention. Haldane wrote to Lloyd George, telling him that 'unless the Government acts decisively in this transport strike, it will be very much blamed',⁽¹⁰⁾ and also to Buxton, informing him that 'I am strongly of opinion that we shall all be held deeply responsible unless a striking step is taken which may give this dispute a chance of being checked; the only sanction we have got at the present time is public opinion. It appears to me that nothing short of an almost immediate announcement of a public enquiry will

(9) Observer, 26 May 1912, p. 6

(10) Lloyd George Papers C/4/17/2. Letter from Haldane to

satisfy Parliament and the people that the Government has done its duty'.⁽¹¹⁾ Reynolds's Newspaper made a similar point, pointing out that the 'question of labour unrest and dissatisfaction is knocking at the door of the Government waiting to be dealt with',⁽¹²⁾ though, in fact, Asquith was on holiday, which would have delayed any Cabinet decisions on this issue.

Thus, for the Conservatives, there was the usual accusation that the strike was unjustified and instigated by men who looked for trouble for its own sake, and it was proposed that the Government should intervene. There was also the more liberal element of the society, who thought deeply about the background to the unrest. The Westminster Gazette was not very happy about the cause of the strike, and warned that if the dockers wanted frequent stoppages, 'the most stubborn kind of masters get the excuse, of which they are only too glad to avail themselves, for saying that the union must be broken; and the more enlightened kind of masters have no strong ground to withstand them'.⁽¹³⁾ The Daily Chronicle was equally dubious about the origins of the strike, and asked 'was it worthwhile bringing the whole trade of the Port of London to a standstill because of a dispute about this individual?'⁽¹⁴⁾ However, one Liberal paper did not think that the closed shop was an unreasonable demand. The Daily News and Leader argued that it 'is substantially the same as what the doctors and

(11) Buxton Papers. Letter from Haldane to Buxton, 21 May

1912

(12) Reynolds's Newspaper, 26 May 1912, p. 1

(13) Westminster Gazette, 25 May 1912, p. 1

(14) Daily Chronicle, 25 May 1912, p. 4

lawyers assert, and, having the power, assert successfully. The doctors' trade union and the lawyers' trade union can, and in effect do, prevent a doctor or a lawyer working at his profession except on terms approved by the union. It is a very old principle, and there is a great deal that can be said for and against it. When labouring men put it forward, judges and lawyers call it tyranny and persecution and it would be interesting to know how many of the doctors who are zealous supporters of the British Medical Association's ultimatum to Mr. Lloyd George, happen to sympathise with the Amalgamated Society of Watermen'. (15)

Thus, many opinions had been expressed before the results of the investigation by Sir Edward Clarke was announced. He was a man who might not have appeared unduly sympathetic to the working class. After leaving school, he worked in his father's silver smith's shop, before becoming a clerk in the India Office. He read for the bar, supporting himself by journalism, and entered Lincoln's Inn in 1864. He was appointed Q.C. in 1880, and in the same year was elected Conservative M.P. Clarke served as Solicitor-General from 1886 to 1892, but declined office in the Government of 1895-1900, and criticised it freely, so he was asked to resign from his seat. He had a reputation as an able barrister, fair, honest, but tending to be conservative in outlook.

His report dealt with six complaints made by the men:-

- (1) The employment of Thomas when he was not a union member. Clarke concluded that the strike over this was wrong.

- (ii) A similar allegation of breach of agreement made between the short sea trades and the N.T.W.F. on 23 August 1911 over the employment of non-union men. Again, Clarke decided that the men did not have a case.
- (iii) The refusal of the Association of Master Lightermen to meet the Amalgamated Society of Watermen, Lightermen and Bargemen, to discuss wages and conditions: 'It is clear that the peremptory refusal to consider this application for a higher wage was one of the causes, and not an unimportant one, of the present dispute'.
- (iv) He had been offered no explanation of why certain bargeowners had refused to pay the new rates from 1 January 1912.
- (v) As far as wharfingers not paying the amounts agreed in the Rollitt Award, there had been a decision in favour of the men, and Clarke could 'not understand why that decision was not accepted as governing the case of all overseas ships'.
- (vi) A carter who was not paying the accepted rates had left the Master Carters' Association to avoid censure. Clarke was unhappy about this. (16)

Some points had been in favour of the men, and others against. The reception of the press was equally mixed, ranging from that of the Daily Herald which believed that it was 'a striking vindication of the men and their leaders',⁽¹⁷⁾ to that of the Daily Telegraph, which argued that the Report proved the strike to be 'the most wanton, the most indefensible, the most deeply discreditable to the leaders of labour concerned', since trade unionism became a power.⁽¹⁸⁾ Thus, the Report was acceptable, because it proved that the men were villains. Lord Devonport, the Chairman of the Port of London Authority would not even applaud the conclusions. The men were supported in part, so the Report was condemned. Devonport pointed out that at the Inquiry, there had been no oaths, and no examination of witnesses. Devonport asked, in his autobiography: 'How an experienced lawyer like Sir Edward Clarke came to imagine he could arrive at sound conclusions by such a procedure is more than I have ever been able to understand'.⁽¹⁹⁾ An even more sustained attack on the conclusions was made in the House of Commons at the time. Sir Frederick Banbury was well-known for his strongly conservative views. He had retired as the head of a stock-broking firm in 1906, and had been a Unionist M.P. since 1892. He dealt with the Report clause by clause. The first two were in favour of the employers, so needed little comment. On the third point, he asked why the Association of Master Lightermen should meet the Amalgamated Society of Watermen, Lightermen and Bargemen. They had made an agreement on 27 July 1911,

(18) Daily Telegraph, 27 May 1912, p. 10

(19) Lord Devonport op.cit. p. 174

and 'it is absolutely impossible to carry on business if, after having made an agreement within two or three, or five or six months, as the case may be, that arrangement is to be reopened'. On the question of the bargeowner refusing to pay the agreed rates, Banbury said that Clarke didn't hear the employers' side of the story. Mr. Brooks, who signed the agreement, insisted that Gosling had repudiated it, which was why the rates were not paid. On the fifth point, Banbury insisted that only Mr. Leach was paying 7d, and as far as the sixth was concerned, if someone wanted to withdraw from the Master Caters' Association, the Government 'should not interfere between employer and employed'. (20)

Thus, the Clarke Report produced a variety of comments, and no agreement about whether it favoured the men or the employers. However, on some points, Clarke had decided in favour of one side, and on others, his decision had gone the other way. Thus, it might have appeared that there was a basis for discussion. Buxton invited the N.T.W.F. and the Shipping Federation to a Conference at the Board of Trade on 31 May, but the employers refused to attend, and on 3 June issued a statement, part of which insisted that 'the agreements which they have signed have been flagrantly broken by the officials of the Transport Workers' Federation, and the same officials are now trying to make use of the Government to force shipowners to conclude a new agreement with them'. Devonport himself made a statement, undated, but probably on the same day, putting forward the feelings of the Port of London Authority, which, 'conscious of the unjustifiable

(20) House of Commons Debates, Vol. 39, Cols. 225-229, 5

pretext of this strike, prefer to allow matters to take their own course, leaving it to His Majesty's Government to initiate such action as it deems expedient'.⁽²¹⁾ Devonport wrote to Buxton a month later, reaffirming that there would be no negotiations while the men remained out on strike, for it 'was entirely unjustifiable and unprovoked and no allegation of unfair or inconsiderate treatment, either as regards pay or working conditions, has been substantiated - or even made against the Port of London Authority - by leaders or men. Our treatment of our workmen in the future will be precisely on the same lines as in the past when the (illegible word) submission of grievances has always been allowed and just and generous consideration accorded them'.⁽²²⁾ In his autobiography, Devonport reiterates that a conference was ruled out because 'the vital issue in the strike was one in which no compromise was possible'.⁽²³⁾

Support for the owners came from the usual sources. Papers such as the Times, the Daily Telegraph and the Morning Post argued that the men had broken their agreements, so that the employers had to adopt a firm line, to teach them a lesson. Opposition to this attitude was equally predictable. The Daily News and Leader was the most critical of the Liberal papers, followed by the Daily Chronicle. Both were convinced that the shipowners had placed themselves in the wrong by refusing to meet the union representatives, and the Daily

(21) Lloyd George Papers C/21/1/24 and C/21/1/25, 3 June 1912

(22) Buxton Papers. Letter from Devonport to Buxton, 2 July 1912

(23) Lord Devonport op.cit. p.175

News and Leader went so far as to suggest that 'they apparently prefer a war, which is not merely a war against a particular body of workmen, but against the principles of trade unionism'.⁽²⁴⁾ The attitude of the Manchester Guardian is interesting. It disapproved of the strike, but disliked the actions of the employers, pointing out that 'The public interest demands not that the strikers should be starved back to work in sullen resentment, determined to strike again at a more favourable opportunity, but that they should go back under conditions and in a spirit that will give some hope of future peace'.⁽²⁵⁾ Once again, the Manchester Guardian displayed its genuine interest and concern in the well being of the working class, while at the same time insisting that such people should conform to what it believed were the standards of proper behaviour.

Having refused to negotiate, the Shipping Federation counter-attacked through one of its ships, the "Lady Jocelyn", which was used during trade disputes on the docks. It would be loaded with strike breakers, and sail into the port, where it would remain as a floating hostel for the "free labourers" who had travelled in it. When the "Lady Jocelyn" sailed up the Thames, it was refused permission to land by McKenna, on the grounds that were it allowed, disturbances would result.

The Morning Post was displeased, observing that 'if the Imperial Government surrenders now to these strikes England passes under a new authority, the authority of

(24) Daily News and Leader, 1 June 1912, p. 6

(25) Manchester Guardian, 31 May 1912, p. 6

Syndicalism'.⁽²⁶⁾ The Debate in the House of Commons on the Protection of Workmen revealed that some M.P.'s felt the same way. Austen Chamberlain attacked the Home Secretary, who, 'in defiance of the Law and the Constitution, has arrogated to himself a dispensing and discriminating power which has no basis in law or justice'. He was referring to the way in which convoys were defended, but individuals who wanted to work, such as those on the "Lady Jocelyn", were not. Other Conservatives made similar comments, and several Labour Members took exception to their remarks. Ramsay MacDonald pointed out that 'the employers were not bringing these men from Newport to keep them in London; they are not bringing the inhabitants of doss houses from Sheffield and other places in order to make regular dock labourers of them; they are not giving them the extra money necessary to bring them down to London, and they are not giving them their beer and the carnal facilities they have to offer them as permanent things. No, it is for a special purpose...the right to work', which the same people always rejected when the Labour Party advocated it. Clement Edwards, the Liberal barrister who had a particular interest in trade union cases, as well as social and labour questions, insisted that the "Lady Jocelyn" 'has been utilised as a sort of floating boarding house for professional strike breakers by the Shipping Federation and the National Free Labour Association to my knowledge since 1890'.⁽²⁷⁾

(26) Morning Post, 1 June 1912, p. 6

(27) House of Commons Debates, Vol. 39, Cols. 883, 932, 12 June 1912

The way in which the Tories supported strike breakers during this dispute seems to have appeared extremely unrealistic to the Reverend Lord Williams Gascoyne-Cecil, the Rural Dean of Hertford from 1904 until his appointment as Bishop of Exeter in 1916. He wrote to his brother, Lord Robert Cecil, questioning the basis of Conservative social policy: 'Why is it necessary for the Unionist Party to advertise itself as being the greatest supporters of strike breakers? I have quite given up hope now of a return of the Unionists to power, from the working man's point of view the Unionist Party seems to be impossible. It is no good telling them that strikes tend to lower wages - every working man wanted to see the strikes succeed. They have, after all, a very real grievance namely the purchasing power of money has fallen so seriously that they are all poor and they believe that the money they are losing is going into someone else's pocket. Now however foolish and wrong it may have been of them to try and remedy a thing by a strike, it was a very natural course to take and however individually certain bodies of men may have broken faith the great crowd will only look at their own poverty and forget everything else'. Cecil warned that if the Tories drove the Government into taking harsher measures, then the Conservatives 'will be regarded as the anti-working class party'.⁽²⁸⁾ This was a particularly interesting comment. The fall in the standard of living was recognised by a member of the upper class, who was trying

(28) Cecil of Chelwood Papers B.M.Add.Ms.51160 ff. 153-4.

to moderate the tone of his political party. Cecil's attitude was not beligerent, like so many other Conservatives, but understanding and conciliatory. Unlike so many others, he could at least understant that a fall in real wages was quite likely to result in industrial unrest.

However, most Tories were far less concerned with finding explanations for the strikes, and regaining the support of the working man than with trying to defeat the dockers. Thus, the Government was urged to protect the strike breakers, the very thing that Lord William disliked. There was no agreement about the amount of support given to such people. The Labour Party maintained that the Government was providing too much, but others, such as the Financial Times and the Manchester Guardian, one Conservative, and the other Liberal, argued that the Government had achieved the right balance. Thus, one section of the community thought that the Government was doing enough, or even too much, while others maintained that it was not offering sufficient assistance. Bonar Law, the Leader of the Opposition, told the Commons that he did 'not believe there is a man in this House at this moment who doubts that there are thousands of men who used to work in the docks who are not working now, but who would be working if intimidation did not exist and if the Government had done what every Government ought to do - make perfectly certain that, while they do not interfere with men who want to strike, they make it certain that any man who wants to work should be able to work in this great Port'. In the same Debate, Normal Craig, a Unionist barrister, observed that 'no-one can say the men are out on

strike because they have any grievance they wish to have remedied', but 'they are out by order and because they dare not go back'. (29)

One way to investigate the question of intimidation is to study the numbers injured around the docks. Most people relied on impressions rather than facts - a cartoon in Punch epitomises this attitude: a worker was talking to Mr. Punch:

'Trade Unionist "Whose the Lady?"

Mr. Punch "That's Justice. She weighs arguments first, and then, if necessary, she uses her sword".

Trade Unionist "Ah! That's where we differ. I'm all for striking first and arguin' afterwards". (30)

However, some papers did attempt to discover the figures. The Daily Express published in heavy print a paragraph informing its readers that 'the Poplar Hospital is full of victims of this cowardly ruffianism, who have told their stories on their sick beds. In each case, they have been hit with loaded sticks on the back of the head while a party of these brave strikers engaged their attention in front. Some of the victims are young boys'. (31) Other papers, including the Times, claimed that non-unionist labour had been assaulted. Members of Parliament made similar accusations. Rowland Hurst, the Unionist, whose principal hobby was hunting with hounds, claimed that he 'went down to the East End, and in one yard alone the foremen told me that twelve of his men had

(29) House of Commons Debates, Vol.40, Cols. 869, 890,

1 July 1912

(30) Punch, 5 June 1912, p. 431

(31) Daily Express, 20 June 1912, p. 4

been assaulted outside in one way or another. There is also the evidence of the law courts and the reports in the press'. Clearly, these people believed that the London Dock strike had resulted in extensive violence, but Williams Crooks, the Labour Member for Poplar, insisted that there were only six cases of assault in the Poplar Hospital, and Ellis-Griffith, the Under-Secretary at the Home Office, informed the House that up to and including 20 June, twenty one people had been treated for assault in all hospitals serving the area of the strike. Eight had gone to Poplar, where six had been detained. He observed that 'these figures do not justify the opinion that a widespread system of terrorism exists'.⁽³²⁾ Thus, it would appear that the sternest critics of the activities of the strikers were more concerned with finding fault than discovering the truth. They used what they believed as evidence, rather than taking the trouble to investigate the veracity of their suspicions.

The intimidation could hardly have been as severe as some suggested, judging from the numbers returning to work. On 28 May, there were 1,035 employed on the docks, and on 19 June, 11,000, which was the normal level, and by the beginning of July, 18,000. The extra men can be explained by the amount of arrears and the inexperience of the new dockers.⁽³³⁾ This hardly bears out the accusations that men were too frightened to work.

(32) House of Commons Debates, Vol. 40, Cols. 45, 47,

24 June 1912; Cols. 213, 214, 25 June 1912

(33) Lord Devonport op.cit. p. 181

Some people were demanding that the Government should offer greater protection to those who wanted to work; at the same time, others insisted that the Government should intervene to settle the dispute. As early as 20 May 1912, the Government was advised to legislate, for 'the question of a minimum wage in the Transport trades and in Agriculture should be dealt with by special legislation with provisions applicable to each industry'. This was signed by Massingham, A.S., B.S. and J. Rowntree, Hobson, Hobhouse, Percy Alden and E.R. Cross.⁽³⁴⁾ Of course, this would have been written before the dispute had begun, but it indicates the direction of thought of one section of the Liberal Party. From the onset of the strike, it was clear that the Government was observing the events carefully. R.W. Matthew, an official at the Board of Trade, wrote to Buxton on 24 May, telling him of the King's anxiety about the dispute, and was going to see McKenna and Askwith about it. The Home Secretary had called at the Board of Trade that day 'to get some idea of what labour would be available to maintain the public utility services in the extent of their being endangered by the strike'.⁽³⁵⁾ The Cabinet itself discussed the possibilities of legislation. Lloyd George and Samuel suggested an act which would make representative agreements compulsory for everyone in the Port, or to give power to the Port of London Authority

(34) Lloyd George Papers C/21/1/17. Letter from various Liberals to Lloyd George, 20 May 1912

(35) Buxton Papers. Letter from Matthew to Buxton, 24 May

to fix wages. Asquith himself was unconvinced of the need for any action,⁽³⁶⁾ and Burns, especially, was 'against any legislative settlement that as a means of settling this strike would permanently fetter general amelioration of all classes of labour'.⁽³⁷⁾ On the other hand, Samuel believed that something had to be done: 'If the men recognise that they are going to be beaten, they may accept a promise of legislation...as sufficient saving of face to enable them to go back to work - if the employers can be induced to agree to complete reinstatement'. The type of legislation he had in mind was some sort of method 'of ensuring the validity of industrial agreements'.⁽³⁸⁾ Lloyd George was even more anxious, and was extremely disappointed that no action was to be taken. Lucy Masterman recalls that 'the Cabinet's action on the subject irritated George very much. "They make me wonder" was his comment "whether I am really a Liberal at all"'.⁽³⁹⁾

There had been a Minimum Wages Act for miners a couple of months previously, so a similar Act for London dockers would not have been without precedent, but nothing did materialise. However, the Government did approach the owners several times, and on about 4 July, Devonport confirmed this in a statement pointing out that 'the employers adhere to their decisions conveyed to members of the Cabinet Committees on several occasions when meetings have taken place, viz that they will

(36) Letters to the King at Windsor CAB 41/33/52 12 June 1912

(37) Burns Papers B.M.Add.Ms.46334 f.114, Diary, 11 June 1912

(38) Lloyd George Papers C/6/7/2. Letter from Samuel to Lloyd George, 13 June 1912

(39) L. Masterman op.cit. p. 235

agree to no conditions precedent to the men returning to work'.⁽⁴⁰⁾ The Government had done far more during the coal strike, perhaps because the mines were closed, while the docks were still working, although many men remained out for more than two months, so that direct intervention did not appear to be necessary.

Certainly, the Cabinet was divided on its course of action. In the same way, the press had a variety of opinions. The Conservative papers made their customary attack on the men who had broken agreements. This attitude was summed up in the Liberal Westminster Gazette, which published an article by J.G. Broodbank, the Chairman of the Dock and Warehouse Committee of the Port of London Authority. He maintained that 'never was a strike less justified in its cause, and still less will it be justified by its results.'⁽⁴¹⁾ It is noticeable that every serious stoppage was described as the least justified ever. Opponents of militancy were responding to the events of the times in the only way they could - with indignation, amazement and anger, for workers in all parts of the country, in a variety of different jobs, were behaving as never before, and disturbing the industrial peace of the country. Such behaviour could never be justified, and, therefore, had to be condemned.

One of the greatest criticisms was based on the accusation that the dispute was affecting the whole of the population. Thus, the Observer announced that 'the country will not long

(40) Lord Devonport op.cit. pp. 178-9

(41) Westminster Gazette, 4 June 1912, p. 2

tolerate strikes which attempt to reinforce pressure on the employers by direct attacks upon the general interest of the country'.⁽⁴²⁾ Benjamin Taylor made a similar point, writing in the *Fortnightly Review*: 'The new strike is nominally directed against employers, but is really waged against the public'. He knew why this unrest was emerging: 'Democracy is unsettled and undisciplined because every man is beginning to think he is as good as his neighbour - or better'.⁽⁴³⁾ This revealing remark, reflecting an elitist philosophy, presumably was intended to mean that democracy would have been better served if everyone did not regard themselves as equal. He, clearly, did not regard the working class as being anything like equal. His concept of a democratic society hinged on a social hierarchy, and he objected to the lower elements attempting to disrupt the arrangement, as, for example, in this strike.

A commonly offered explanation for such attacks on society as the dock strike was a hard core of agitators, who allegedly travelled the country, fermenting unrest. Those papers which had attacked the strike leaders in the past did so again, with the sternest words coming from the Standard: 'The strike was brought about gratuitously and deliberately by an unscrupulous clique of agitators who thought that the time had come to squeeze out free labour altogether and levy contributions on every worker by forcing him to take the "federation

(42) Observer, 9 June 1912, p. 8

(43) B. Taylor, 'Labour and Socialism', Fortnightly Review, 1 July 1912, pp. 76, 93

ticket". The men were induced to come out partly by pressure, partly by cupidity, partly by the braggart promises and threats of the wire pullers'.⁽⁴⁴⁾ John Burns, himself a former leader of the London dockers, blamed Ben Tillett, who had 'prevented an early settlement by his personal attacks', and by the middle of July, he recommended the leaders 'to tell the men they were beaten and to go back with a full surrender'.⁽⁴⁵⁾

The anger at the activities of the leaders was intensified by a speech on 24 July. On that day, Tillett spoke to the men on Tower Hill, and asked the crowd to call on God to strike Lord Devonport dead. He was probably expressing his impatience at Devonport's continual refusal to talk, after the men had been out of work for more than two months, but the result was a reaction against the workers, not only from those papers that would be expected to take exception to such a remark, but from others, such as the People, which argued that 'Mr. Ben Tillett has done more harm to trade unionism in ten weeks than Lord Devonport could do in ten years'.⁽⁴⁶⁾ The Daily News and Leader, a paper that usually sided with the men against employers who had not realised the changed mood of the period, described Tillett's words as 'an outrage', and maintained that 'it has been the tragedy of this struggle that it should have been subject to the mischievous influence of two men such as Lord Devonport and Mr. Tillett'.⁽⁴⁷⁾ William

(44) Standard, 20 June 1912, p. 8

(45) Burns Papers B.M.Add.Ms.46334 Diary f. 114 12 June 1912,
f. 138 17 July 1912

(46) People, 28 July 1912, p. 12

(47) Daily News and Leader, 25 July 1912, p. 6

Crooks told the House of Commons that the speech was 'repudiated by the majority of the Labour members in this House'. (48)

An attack on the Chairman of the Port of London Authority would have appeared reasonable to much of the nation. His unbending attitude was widely criticised. However, Tillett's words shocked the society. He had invoked the deity, and wished Devonport dead, and has thus forfeited the support of many people. However it was easy to see why Devonport attracted the extreme hatred of the union officials. He was the driving force behind the employers, and had gained a great deal of publicity by his attitude. Being intransigent himself, he refused to permit any face saver, and accused the National Transport Workers' Federation of intransigence. In his autobiography, Devonport explained his attitude in these terms: 'My position was that I was a public servant who had no option but to act as I did if I were to be faithful to my trust'. The N.T.W.F. had adopted an 'arrogant and ambitious policy', which had to be opposed. (49)

This clear-cut line taken by Lord Devonport allowed the organs of opinion to decide with clarity in their own minds what the role of the trade unions should be. There were those who accepted that trade unions should have power and those who rejected this concept, and wished to retain the traditional role of the employer as the man who owned the firm, and made all the decisions, including those concerning

(48) House of Commons Debates, Vol. 41, Col. 1361,

25 July 1912

(49) Lord Devonport op.cit. p. 186

his men.

The view of the Daily Herald was hardly surprising: 'If the Board of Trade is not willing or strong enough to bring Lord Devonport and the Port of London Authority to reason, then Parliament must be moved straight away. The nation can stand no more nonsense, intolerance and inhumanity in this business'.⁽⁵⁰⁾ The Nation was also unhappy that 'Lord Devonport is defying public opinion and the Government by his resolve to reduce the workers of the Port of London to the level of casual labour, and to break the organisation which is the sole bulwark of their independence and their self-respect'.⁽⁵¹⁾ The Daily News and Leader, though unhappy about Tillett's role, was equally dissatisfied with that of Lord Devonport, insisting that he 'is placing himself outside the pale of citizenship. There is yet time for him to retrieve the situation and if he will think for one moment not of his dignity but of the suffering which his policy is causing in thousands of homes he will agree to meet the men. They cannot accept less; he cannot give less. If he will not give so much then other measures must be taken without delay, for this crime against a people cannot be tolerated longer'.⁽⁵²⁾ The Westminster Gazette thought that Lord Devonport's policy was an attempt to destroy the unions, and rejected this aim: 'We cannot contemplate with equanimity the smashing of the unions, the wholesale substitution of non-unionist and casual for unionist and regular labour, the slipping back of the Port into the condition in which it was before the first dock strike. An employers' victory which had these consequences would be a disaster for London and for the whole country'.⁽⁵³⁾

(50) Daily Herald, 13 July 1912, p. 6

(51) Nation, 27 July 1912, p. 612

(52) Daily News and Leader, 11 July 1912, p. 6

(53) Westminster Gazette, 12 July 1912, p. 1

Another Liberal paper, the Daily Chronicle, agreed that the employers wanted 'to employ all the port labour on their own terms without any agreements at all and without any trade union negotiations. That is, of course, plain union smashing'.⁽⁵⁴⁾ Harold Spender, an experienced Liberal journalist who had also gained a double first at Oxford, was amazed that 'in the whole of their dealings with the workmen, the riverside masters of East London cannot claim one ~~in~~voluntary concession to labour - one single touch of uncoerced sympathy and consideration for the toiler. Devonport insisted on a return on new conditions, the men having forfeited all privileges and pensions. He had to be regarded as 'the most pugnacious of modern leaders in a great labour fight. The men might come back, but they must come back crawling on their knees'.⁽⁵⁵⁾ Buxton thought that Devonport was 'so very unnecessarily stiff',⁽⁵⁶⁾ and Burns felt that his attitude was dangerous. He had seen Devonport, and 'told him plainly that the defeat of the Dockers would mean no victory for Port of London Authority as humiliated men returning to work would do more harm than good. P.L.A. was created to humanise not to brutalise labour conditions'. His trouble was that he 'mistakes obstinacy for firmness and force for power'.⁽⁵⁷⁾ The moderate Liberal paper, the Manchester Guardian, was very upset. The men would return to

(54) Daily Chronicle, 9 July 1912, p. 6

(55) H. Spender 'The London Port Strike', Contemporary Review, August 1912, p. 177

(56) Buxton Papers Letter from Buxton to Askwith, 4 July 1912

(57) Burns Papers B.M.Add.Ms.46334 Diary f.111 5 June 1912,

work if there was a promise of discussion, and 'to deny so much as this to beaten men is thought by most people to be exceedingly hard measure', and Devonport's refusals had brought sympathy to the dockers. A few days later, the N.T.W.F. promised a resumption if the 1911 Agreement was honoured, and the reinstatement of strikers was "favourably considered". To decline this offer would mean that Devonport was 'unfit to retain his position as chairman of a great public undertaking'. (58)

Thus, the Liberal press was unanimous in its condemnation of the behaviour of the Liberal Chairman of the Port of London Authority. It was felt that he had gone too far in refusing absolutely to discuss the grievances of the men, and insisting that the men should return to work unconditionally. Such people did not believe that the destruction of the trade unions would be good for the men, or even for the employers.

Against this, there was the opposite view that Devonport had pursued the correct policy, and deserved to be congratulated rather than condemned. The Sunday Times was delighted that 'the masters have at last done what they should have done two years ago. They have taken their stand on the firm basis of economic law and human necessity'. (59) The Morning Post appeared to be even more satisfied: 'We congratulate the employers, and especially Lord Devonport, on their courage in resisting the pressure of Messrs. Tillett and Lloyd George. If they had succumbed their surrender would have ruined the Port of London, for it would have meant the victory of the

(58) Manchester Guardian, 12 July 1912, p. 8; 18 July 1912, p.8

(59) Sunday Times, 2 June 1912, p. 10

sympathetic strike and a whole series of new and incalculable risks against which no employer - however fair to his men, however eager to keep his engagements - could possibly provide'.⁽⁶⁰⁾ The Daily Mail agreed that the actions of the men gave the employers no option. They were 'quite entitled - we may almost say they are bound - to refuse to "consult" with those who stirred up their workmen without any valid cause'.⁽⁶¹⁾ After all, as the Financial Times put it, if the men had gained a closed shop, 'it is that conspiracy which, if successful, would have left London absolutely at the mercy of a handful of paid agitators, which has been defeated by the firmness of Lord Devonport'.⁽⁶²⁾ The Times summed up the attitude of a large section of the community when it maintained that 'the whole industrial community is much beholden to Lord Devonport and his colleagues for their firm resistance to one of the most arbitrary and arrogant attempts that can be conceived to use alike masters, men and the industrial unrest of the country to promote a mad and wicked scheme of personal ambition'.⁽⁶³⁾ The support for Devonport's actions was shown in November 1912, when he was cheered and applauded by the other guests at the Lord Mayor's Banquet.⁽⁶⁴⁾

Thus, Devonport was seen as the man who had saved the nation in an industrial war. Just as there had been few

(60) Morning Post, 20 June 1912, p. 8

(61) Daily Mail, 8 July 1912, p. 6

(62) Financial Times, 20 July 1912, p. 4

(63) Times, 29 July 1912, p. 7

(64) Lord Devonport op.cit. p. 186

alternative policies, so few solutions were offered to prevent disputes in the future. The British Constitutional Association, whose Assistant Secretary was W.V. Osborne, famous for the court case which had resulted in trade unions being unable to make levies for political parties, advocated permitting only two pickets, with badges, who could operate only at the work place. It was believed that this would end intimidation, and thus limit the extent of strikes,⁽⁶⁵⁾ and there were various suggestions about disfranchising a part of the population, or, once more, declaring strikes illegal, but little new was offered.

In the face of this consistent and stern policy by the employers, the men had little chance of success, and by the end of July, the N.T.W.F. was out of funds, and its leaders had to call off the strike, with no provision for reinstatement. The dockers were to be taken on inside the gates, which repudiated the Home Office agreement of 18 August 1911. Thus, all those who had applauded Devonport had their trust vindicated, though it had been apparent for at least six weeks that the owners would be victorious.

The dispute itself is instructive in illustrating the reaction to working class unrest. It would be far too simple to argue that the Liberals took one side, and the Tories another. Very few people believed that the men had a case, and they were attacked by the Conservatives and by many Liberals when they took strike action. The Government ordered an immediate inquiry, and Sir Edward Clarke produced

(65) Spectator, 29 June 1912, p. 1035

his report almost immediately. He found that both sides had been in the wrong on certain points. This aroused some sympathy for the men, but opinion was still largely against them. The Chairman of the Port of London Authority, Lord Devonport, took an exceptionally hard line, and refused to consider anything but unconditional surrender from the strikers. This resulted in a protracted dispute, and much suffering. Such an uncompromising reaction brought much criticism, for it was seen as unnecessarily harsh. This demonstrates the basic humanity of a large group of people. The working class might have been in the wrong, but they still deserved decent treatment, and it was the responsibility of those in higher positions to ensure that they were well looked after. Most of those displaying this attitude were Liberals, and included the most traditionally-minded. The opposite outlook was demonstrated by that section of the community which applauded Devonport's actions as the only ones likely to teach the men that they could not do as they wished. The role of workers in industry was to take orders, and do their jobs for the benefit of the national economy, so that if they or their families were to suffer, then it would be a sound object lesson. Thus, the 1912 London Dock Strike once again showed a division of society in principle in its views on how the workers and strikers should be treated.

Chapter VIII

Two Railway Disputes, 1912 and 1913

The events of 1911 had revealed that the railwaymen were becoming militant, and were faced by a group of employers who could be regarded as some of the most intransigent in the country. They were not even prepared to concede recognition to the men. Two incidents, one at the end of 1912, and the other in the first quarter of 1913, demonstrated the mood that had been created on the railways, and provide another excellent illustration of the ways in which the people of Britain reacted to industrial unrest.

Driver Knox

The first incident began on 26 October 1912, when Knox, a driver for the North Eastern Railway Company, was arrested in Newcastle for being drunk and assaulting the police. It appears that he came off duty in the afternoon, and between 9 p.m. and 9.40 p.m. drank two runs. He was cleared of the assault charge, but fined with 5s costs, two weeks later, for being drunk. Early in December, Knox was informed by Vincent Raven, the Locomotive Superintendent of the district, that, because of his conviction, he was to be downgraded from mineral driver to pilot driver. This meant a reduction in wages of about 9s a week. On 7 December, nine hundred men at Gateshead struck, against the advice of J.E. Williams, the General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. A week later, three thousand five hundred men were out, before a resumption of work on 14 December. The men were particularly angry at Knox's demotion because there was a thirty

hours' gap between his arrest and the beginning of his next shift, so they did not feel that the issue was one of public safety, even if Knox had been drunk, which he had denied.

J.H. Thomas, the Assistant Secretary of the A.S.R.S., asked the Home Secretary for an inquiry on 10 December, and this idea was adopted. On 13th, Chester Jones, a Home Office Commissioner, reported that he was not satisfied that Knox had been drunk. As a result, that same day, McKenna granted him a free pardon, so the men returned to work. The strikers had, of course, broken their contracts by leaving work, and were liable to fines. The union showed its conciliatory attitude by paying these, so as not to arouse the men by forcing them to pay, and so as to avoid prosecution by the Company.

Before the Inquiry, press opinion was virtually united in its opposition to the actions of the men. The Times described the stoppage as an 'explosive revolt against discipline', and insisted that any argument that the conviction had nothing to do with the company because he was off duty must be 'untenable'.⁽¹⁾ The Daily Mail went a little further, calling it 'a strike against public safety', and insisting that 'for the security of passengers it is essential that the drivers of main line trains should be abstemious men of high character'.⁽²⁾ The Standard claimed that the strike was 'an attempt to deprive the railway management of a right claimed by every employer, a right the free exercise of which is essential to discipline among a large body of men, and a

(1) Times, 9 December 1912, p. 9

(2) Daily Mail, 9 December 1912, p. 8

right, moreover, that in this special industry is the chief guarantee for the safety of the travelling public. We mean the right to demand that employees shall be men of good character and responsible habits'.⁽³⁾

Perhaps it was not surprising that the Conservative papers should side with the North Eastern Railway Company, but some Liberals did so as well. The Daily News and Leader found it 'difficult to be patient with the latest strike', because the men are 'practically fighting for the right of railway workers to endanger the safety of the public. They need not under such circumstances look for the sympathy of the public'.⁽⁴⁾ The Nation, a journal famous for its radical opinions, agreed that men could usually act as they wished outside of work, but there were a few exceptions, and this was one of them. 'A man must not so behave in his leisure time as to make himself incompetent, or prove that he is incompetent, for the particular job which he is employed to do, particularly when that job involves public responsibility'. Even if Knox had been wrongly convicted, as he claimed, nevertheless 'a strike on such an issue is not an incident of industrial warfare, but a strike against the public and the judicial authorities'.⁽⁵⁾ Given this position, the Morning Post could 'hardly see how the Company can give way, if it is to maintain discipline and continue to enjoy the confidence of the public',⁽⁶⁾ and the Daily Graphic was able 'to assure

(3) Standard, 9 December 1912, p. 8

(4) Daily News and Leader, 10 December 1912, p. 6

(5) Nation, 14 December 1912, p. 482

(6) Morning Post, 9 December 1912, p. 8

the North Eastern directors of the strong and universal support of public opinion in standing firm and to express the hope that the men's society will, for their own part, also stand firm in refusing the smallest sympathy to the strikers and in using their every influence to prevent a spread'. (7)

The strike itself was quickly labelled as 'the right to get drunk' by some people, notably the Daily Mail, Weekly Dispatch, Daily Mirror, and Daily Express, all of whom insisted that the men were completely in the wrong. It was left to the Daily Chronicle to make an obvious point, which seems to have been ignored by everyone else: 'The case illustrates what sometimes appears an almost irreconcilable conflict between the freedom from restraint which men claim as human beings, and the discipling which may be required of them if they are to be safe and efficient cogs in our great industrial machinery'. (8)

Predictably, support for Knox came from the Daily Citizen. It printed a cartoon entitled 'Held Up', depicting a train stopped at a signal called 'Justice for Knox'. (9) However, the majority of opinion was against the railwayman, and the strike by his colleagues. The whole of the traditional political spectrum supported the Company, which indicates that the employer was accorded the right to discipling his men as he felt fit, especially when a potential danger to the public

(7) Daily Graphic, 10 December 1912, p. 4

(8) Daily Chronicle, 9 December 1912, p. 6

(9) Daily Citizen, 10 December 1912, p. 5

existed.

The announcement of an inquiry brought a condemnation of the Government from many quarters, as it was believed that this was a submission to pressure, when firmness was the real solution. A typical remark from the Tory press was that of the Spectator, which held that such action was 'another step in the direction of placing trade unionist above the law of the land'.⁽¹⁰⁾ Similar remarks were to be heard in Parliament. Lord Charnwood informed the House of Lords that 'an impression is growing up that if a strike can only be made sufficiently injurious to trade, and if it can only cause sufficient suffering to the poor, then the Government will in some way or other intervene'.⁽¹¹⁾ In the Commons, Sir Frederick Banbury made an almost identical comment. One of his constituents had been convicted, and wanted the trial to be renewed, but had been refused. He wondered 'are we to understand that there is to be one law for a man who is a member of a trade union, and who thought that powerful trade union can make himself disagreeable to the right hon. Gentleman and his constituents, and another law for the ordinary citizen of this country, who is only one by himself, and who, unless he is able to obtain the assistance of a Member of Parliament, has no redress whatever'. John Rawlinson, a Unionist barrister, described the investigation as 'unprecedented', but McKenna had already denied this. He

(10) Spectator, 14 December 1912, p. 8

(11) House of Lords Debates, Vol. 13, Col. 198, 12 December

assured the House that a man had been convicted of poaching well before the Knox case, and had been sentenced to a month's jail. As a result, he had lost his job with the Thames Conservancy Board. The case had been investigated, and the man had been granted a pardon, with 'no strike, no trade union, and none of the incidents of publicity that attended Knox's case'. (12)

It was not altogether surprising that the attack upon an inquiry came from the Conservatives: while it could, no doubt, have arisen from a genuine feeling that the Government was in the wrong, it could have been that the Tories were merely making political capital out of the situation. However, what is surprising is that several Unionist papers were doubtful about the evidence that convicted Knox. The Morning Post had reservations, while the Sunday Chronicle declared that he was probably innocent. The police had given evidence for assault, and he had been found not guilty; it had been the same police who provided evidence for drunkenness, where there was far greater room for error than in an assault case. (13)

Needless to say, the papers most sympathetic to the cause of labour greeted the result of the inquiry most warmly, and saw it as a vindication of the men's actions. Reynolds's Newspaper ran a cartoon entitled 'And the Verdict was - Free Pardon'. It showed a pair of scales: on one side was the

(12) House of Commons Debates, Vol. 45, Cols. 1851-3, 19 December 1912; Vol. 50, Col. 950, 18 March 1913; Vol. 45, Cols. 1957-8, 19 December 1912

(13) Sunday Chronicle, 15 December 1912, p. 6

case against Knox - unsatisfactory evidence plus conviction, and on the other, the scales for - reliable testimony plus thirty nine years unblemished service. Words accredited to McKenna appeared underneath: "Now, gentlemen, I have asked you to weigh the evidence, and I am delighted with the decision".⁽¹⁴⁾ Two papers which had been extremely critical of the strike itself agreed that the whole dispute had showed how difficult it was for the poor to gain justice in England. The Nation had decided that, after all, there had been some justification for the stoppage of work, and asked 'how does it come about that justice has to be obtained - and sometimes, it is to be feared, only to be obtained - by irrational methods' and commented on 'a certain callousness and carelessness in our social system which, in spite of all our boasts about equality of all men before the law, still regard the police courts as essentially a place for disciplining the humbler classes'.⁽¹⁵⁾ The Daily News and Leader felt that the events had revealed 'a real peril to the liberty and reputation of those who cannot, for a dozen reasons, set up an elaborate defence against such charges - in a word, of most of the poor'.⁽¹⁶⁾

It was all very well for the Westminster Gazette to joke: 'Nervous traveller: "Oh guard! Before I get into the train, will you be so kind, please, as to make the engine driver say, very distinctly, 'Truly rural British constitution!'"'.⁽¹⁷⁾

(14) Reynolds's Newspaper, 15 December 1912, p. 8

(15) Nation, 21 December 1912, pp. 518-9

(16) Daily News and Leader, 16 December 1912, p. 8

(17) Westminster Gazette, 15 December 1912, p. 1

Nevertheless, several serious issues had been raised. There was the problem of finding some sort of balance between what an employee could do in his leisure time, and the way in which this could, in certain circumstances, result in a danger to public safety. On this, most people were agreed: if the community would be jeopardised, then the rights of the worker had to be limited. In this particular case, the fact that the man, even if he had been drunk, would not have worked for thirty hours after his arrest, was ignored. Perhaps it had been considered, and then rejected, so as to ensure the protection of railway passengers. The rights of employers were also raised. Here, some Tories believed that there was an absolute right for the owners to do whatever they wanted with their firms, and both Conservatives and Liberals agreed that where public safety was concerned, the employer had to be able to mete out whatever disciplinary measures he considered necessary. The result of the North Eastern Railway Company's demotion of Knox had been a wildcat sympathetic strike. This, again, was condemned almost universally as being unwarranted and unnecessary, but it was only the Conservatives who accused the Government of yielding to trade union pressure when it announced an inquiry into the conviction. This was indicative of the harder line which the Conservatives were prepared to take against strikers. Finally, the Knox incident left some of the Liberal papers wondering if it was always so difficult for the working class to obtain justice in England.

Thus, the dispute had revealed that there were probably more old-fashioned, autocratic thinkers in the country than

had been imagined previously. It certainly showed that some Liberal supporters would not always side with the men, as might have seemed the case before. As so many Liberals were convinced of his guilt, it was rather surprising that McKenna should order an inquiry. Perhaps he did so to prevent a spread of the strike. There is no material on this question. The Home Office files appear to ignore this event, and no private papers mention the case. Thus, the reason for the Home Secretary's intervention must be speculative. The reactions to this episode must be viewed in the light of another event which occurred the following month, and became a potentially serious incident several months later.

Guard Richardson

On 17 January 1913, when working a goods train from Nottingham to Sheffield, Guard Richardson was ordered by his foreman to put on three additional wagons. Richardson knew that according to the rules, this would leave him without an adequate brake, so he refused, and was given fourteen days' notice, despite his twenty-one years' service. Exactly one month after this incident, a guard on a mineral train left Storries Hill, Cudworth, for Gowhole sidings. The foreman ordered that more wagons should be attached, leaving an inadequate brake. The guard obeyed, and the train broke loose at the second wagon from the engine, and ran off the rails. This could have had some effect on later opinion regarding Richardson. His dismissal brought together the Executive Committee of the rail unions at Unity House on 5 March 1913, after which they demanded his reinstatement, and requested that, whenever any man was asked to vary from

any printed rule, he should be given written authority, and this was eventually agreed on 7 March.

These were the facts reported at the time, and there seems no reason to doubt them. The company involved, the Midland, issued a statement, but this was not done until 2 March, by which time most people had arrived at an opinion. It seemed that as far back as January 1909, the Midland Railway Company had issued an Appendix of Rules, which said that the loading of trains would eventually be arranged by the District Controller, and in November 1912, this was done. On 21 November 1912, Richardson objected when he was told to take more wagons than the Appendix Regulations permitted. He was informed that it was his duty to obey. On 17 January 1913, he refused again. He saw the Chairman and Directors, and said that he would disobey even the General Manager on this point, as it would be contrary to his rules. Consequently he was dismissed.

Needless to say, there was some comparison between this case and that involving Driver Knox. For Reynolds's Newspaper it was simple. It published a cartoon called 'A Confusing Inconsistency', explaining that when the incident involving Knox 'was before the public a little while ago the Railway Authorities insisted that their action was entirely in the interests of Public Safety. Now - in contrast to that attitude - the Midland directors have dismissed Guard Richardson for refusing to break their own printed rules for the safe working of the system'. In the centre of the drawing was a plump railway director, who was giving with one hand a notice to a railwayman, 'Driver Knox reduced for breaking the

rules of public safety', and with the other hand a notice 'Guard Richardson dismissed for refusing to break the rules of public safety' to another railwayman, who was pointing to a card upon which was written 'railway rules must be followed'. Underneath was the caption:

'If you break the rules of safety
You'll be punished for your act;
And if you REFUSE to break them
You'll be summarily "sacked"'. (18)

For the Daily News and Leader, the issue was equally uncomplicated. It pointed out that 'Knox was reduced out of regard for public safety. Richardson has been discharged for insisting on the observance of the company's own provisions for public safety'. The rules 'are intended to give the public a false sense of security for they can have no value if they can be set aside when convenience requires it', and, moreover, 'it is not a question of discipline. If it is, it is not Richardson who was guilty of indiscipline'. (19)

Support for Richardson, and the action of the Executive Committees, came, of course, from the two Labour papers. The Daily Herald would lend its support to virtually any militant action by the working classes, and the Daily Citizen was amazed that the Midland Railway Company, which would fine its workers for failing to carry its rule book, should wish to diverge from it. (20) In the House of Commons, J.H. Thomas

(18) Reynold's Newspaper, 2 March 1913, p. 9

(19) Daily News and Leader, 25 February 1913, p. 6

(20) Daily Citizen, 24 February 1913, p. 4

revealed that, on Richardson's 'appeal to the chief official at Derby, Mr. Owen, he was told that he must do what he was told, even if it was to take his train onto the wrong line...seriousness of such instructions, dangers...uncertainty...amongst the men as to what their duties are'. (21)

For more surprising was the attitude of many of the traditionally Conservative papers, which, albeit reluctantly, sided with the guard. The Daily Mail explained that Richardson's 'action was dictated, not by contumacy but by the honest belief that the rules were necessary for safe working', so that the Midland owners were 'in the wrong', especially considering that a driver had just received eighteen months for man slaughter after obeying his foremen, instead of the rule book. The Daily Mail insisted that 'it is unfair to ask railway servants to face such a risk as this'. (22) The Manchester Guardian, which adopted old-fashioned Liberal attitudes when dealing with labour disputes, took the same line, and made a similar reference to a court case. It agreed that 'there must be a limit to passive obedience if the subordinate is to remain a responsible agent', although the writer was unsure about this incident. However, he told his readers that 'we must remember that "breakaways" of long goods trains due to insufficient brake power are by no means uncommon occurrences', and pointed out that in the

(21) House of Commons Debates, Vol. 47, Col. 1824, 3 March

1913

(22) Daily Mail, 7 March 1913, p. 6

manslaughter trial, 'the judge declared that the foremen had no authority to give orders contrary to the company's written instructions'.⁽²³⁾ Nevertheless, the Manchester Guardian did not side firmly with Richardson. It has been extremely difficult to find any further information about the court case to which these two papers referred. The only additional details that have been uncovered appeared in an article in the Manchester Guardian. J.H. Thomas mentioned a letter he had received from a solicitor in the North of England, which furnished all the details, but provided no names.⁽²⁴⁾ It is unfortunate that a full report has not been uncovered, as that could prove conclusively that the conviction did occur, and would raise questions about the other newspapers ignoring the news.

Other Conservative papers did support Richardson, though with reservations, because the Midland had not issued a statement. This implied that any version of events offered by the union should be treated with the greatest caution, and journals such as the Daily Express and the Financial Times gave their support to the guard. The Daily Telegraph did so in an extremely grudging fashion. It admitted that 'it is impossible to doubt that the men of the Midland are genuinely convinced that injustice has been done', but the Company had not issued a reply. However, if Richardson and his supporters

(23) Manchester Guardian, 26 February 1913, p. 6; March 3 1913, p. 8; 27 February 1913, p. 7.

(24) Daily Telegraph, 26 February 1913, p. 10; 28 February 1913, p. 7

had stated his case correctly, then 'it would be idle to pretend that public opinion can support the company's action'. If the Daily Telegraph itself had doubts, its correspondents did not. David Morgan, who had been the traffic manager of Bat Docks, Cardiff, from 1882 to 1896, wrote to say that 'Richardson was right...he...deserved to be rewarded rather than censured and dismissed', and another letter, from an "Ex-Traffic Manager", stated that he was 'naturally all on the side of discipline but I cannot help thinking the Midland have placed themselves very much in the wrong'.⁽²⁴⁾

The Times adopted a rather different line. It agreed that 'the argument of safety is on the side of the men', but it was disturbed by an article in the January edition of the Syndicalist by 'A Midland Railway Guard', in which he argued that it was not necessary to strike in order to bring the railways to a halt. This could be done by the rigid observance of the rules. The Times wondered if there could have been any connection between the word and the deed, although it could find no evidence for such a suggestion,⁽²⁵⁾ and none has been found since.

Other papers were opposed to the threat of strike action, and argued that it was the wrong way to tackle the question, advocating, as an alternative, compulsory arbitration. These proposals came from, amongst others, the Spectator, the Daily Mail, and, as usual, the Daily Chronicle, all of which

(24) Daily Telegraph, 26 February 1913, p. 10; 28 February 1913, p. 7

(25) Times, 4 March 1913, p. 9

felt that Richardson had a strong case.

Llewellyn Smith had written to Buxton saying that, at the beginning of March, he believed that 'The Midland Company have not a friend at present',⁽²⁶⁾ but this was not true. The Company did have its supporters. When its statement had been issued, the Financial Times argued that their position was 'undoubtedly a strong one',⁽²⁷⁾ while the Standard did not think that the Midland directors could have acted in any other way,⁽²⁸⁾ and the Daily Graphic was delighted that the Company's version had been published, for 'reasonable people, of course, knew that there must be another side to the story and withhold their judgement until they have heard it...The railway unionists have only to ask themselves how their own Society would fare if every clerk they employ chose to adopt the attitude of Guard Richardson.' After all, 'the new tactic of manufacturing a universal strike out of a local grievance shows an indifference to the interests of the nation and of humanity which had hitherto only been found in mediaeval tyrants'.⁽²⁹⁾ The Morning Post went even further in condemning the men. It believed that 'the particular question at issue is really of secondary importance. What it is necessary to bear in mind is the agitation to which it

(26) Buxton Papers Letter from Smith to Buxton, 3 March 1913

(27) Financial Times, 4 March 1912, p. 4

(28) Standard, 4 March 1913, p. 6

(29) Daily Graphic, 3 March 1913, p. 4; 5 March 1913, p. 4

has given rise is inspired by tactical motives. It is a move in the old struggle between the railway workers and the companies over the issue of the men's Unions. The Unions wish to have the right to intervene between employers and employed in all disputes which may arise', and this was considered effectively proven when the writer asked 'is it conceivable that if he had been simply acting out of regard for the safety of the train he would have been dismissed for simply refusing to put on some extra carriages'. Thus, the Morning Post revealed that it did not believe that employers could really be in the wrong. The threat of a strike aroused that paper even further. It announced that 'apparently it is their intention to persevere in the attempt to use the dispute over Guard Richardson as the means of pressing the claim of the Unions for full recognition', and, should a strike materialise, 'the Companies are bound to stand together and to fight to the end. And whatever side public opinion might have taken over the particular case of Guard Richardson, it could not fail to declare itself against the extravagant demands of the unions'. (30)

Of course, a lengthy attack on the position of the men could be expected from such a paper, but the reaction of the Westminster Gazette was less predictable. It pointed out that Richardson had already refused to obey orders, and the Company had assured the public that the addition of extra wagons would not have caused any danger, so it was up to the men 'to make good their case'. (31)

(30) Morning Post, 25 February 1913, p. 8; 6 March 1913, p.8

(31) Westminster Gazette, 3 March 1913, p. 1

Thus, the affair of Richardson divided opinion, just as that of Knox had done several months previously, and, similarly, the split had not been on purely political grounds. The reinstatement was received with general approval, and such papers as the Times, the Daily Express, the Daily Telegraph, Sunday Chronicle, and the News of the World all expressed delight that the Midland directors had adopted what they regarded as the correct course, and were pleased that the matter had been settled peacefully. The Spectator was especially satisfied at the outcome, both because the employers had adopted what was seen to be the right course, but also because of the action of the union. Trade unions had two roles, 'first the protection of the individual workman against harsh or unjust treatment, and, secondly, a general improvement in the pecuniary position of the wage earning classes'. It rejected the latter view, and used Richardson as an example of the 'true function of trade unions'. (32)

The dispute had been settled because the employers had admitted that they were in the wrong. The cases of Knox and Richardson are particularly interesting because of their proximity in time, yet their distance in cause. In one, a driver was demoted because it was claimed that he had behaved in a manner contrary to the interests of safety, and it was generally accepted that had the facts been ~~that~~ straightforward, the company would have acted in an extremely reasonable fashion. In the other, a guard insisted on obeying his rule book, because he believed that to disobey it would be

against the interests of public safety, and for this he was dismissed. Many people felt that to sack him was illogical and unreasonable, and this viewpoint was by no means confined to Liberals. Railway safety had been a particular concern in late Victorian England, and it was understandable that, in the case of Knox, the papers sided with the companies, arguing that everything possible should be done to reduce accidents, or the possibility of accidents. With Richardson, the anxieties of the travellers was, once more, the central concern, so the company was in the wrong. The usual attitude was that the public should not be made to suffer from any inconvenience caused by workers, but here was a case where safety could be seen as a higher consideration. However, other papers denied that this was the point at issue, and argued that the incident was being used to foment trouble, although there was no evidence for such an assertion. Thus, the company was in the right, and it had acted in a perfectly sensible way. Such opinions could be regarded as being derived from sheer prejudice, but this would be something of an oversimplification. The question centred around who could give orders at work, and most people agreed that this was the right of the employer, especially on the railways, where safety was so much a factor that there could be only one authority. The question, with Richardson, was whether a man could be told to ignore his orders, which were laid down in his rule book, when he was still personally liable should anything go wrong, in the same way that a soldier would be responsible, should he obey an order which involved committing a crime, while no-one doubts that in principle the officer has

every right to give orders. This sort of attitude was significant. Many employers did believe that any order should be obeyed implicitly by all of their workers, and in this they were supported by traditionalists from both political parties. The workers themselves were increasingly prepared to oppose this autocratic approach to industrial relations, so that a dispute over this issue was always possible. The cases of Knox and Richardson are symbolic of the attitude that lay behind much of the unrest.

Chapter IX

The Strikes of 1913-14

The years 1911 and 1912 had seen large scale strikes involving sailors, dockers and transport workers, railwaymen, and miners. The next two years did not produce any stoppages of such magnitude, but rather a series of smaller disputes, which alarmed a section of the community because there seemed to be some trouble somewhere, all of the time, and often in trades which had previously seemed free from militancy.

Trade unions had been increasing their membership for years, but the period 1910-1914 produced an extremely rapid growth, which could have been connected with the well-publicised success of certain groups of workers:-

Year	Number of trade union members (in 000's)
1900	1,911
1910	2,477
1911	2,565
1912	3,139
1913	3,416
1914	4,135 (1)

The possession of a union card could have fostered a willingness to strike, but it is more likely that people were becoming increasingly discontented with their share of the

(1) Report on Strikes and Lock-Outs and on Conciliation and Arbitration in the United Kingdom in 1913 Cd. 7658 (1914-16) provides all the figures.

national prosperity. The year 1913 was distinguished by the fact that, although there was no single dispute involving more than fifty thousand workers, it had the largest number of strikes on record, and the highest number of people involved, apart from 1911 and 1912. Ignoring strikes which carried over from the previous year, the aggregate number of working days lost was exceeded only in 1893, 1898 and 1912, and there was a relatively high success rate for the men. All of these factors contributed to making 1913 an unusual year. Statistics show these points better than words:-

Year	No. of disputes	No. of workers affected (000's)		
		Directly	Indirectly	Total
1902	442	116,824	139,843	256,667
1903	387	93,515	23,386	116,901
1904	355	56,380	30,828	87,208
1905	358	67,653	25,850	93,503
1906	486	157,872	59,901	217,773
1907	601	100,728	46,770	147,498
1908	399	223,969	71,538	295,507
1909	436	170,258	130,561	300,819
1910	531	385,085	130,080	515,165
1911	903	831,104	130,876	961,980
1912	857	1,233,016	230,265	1,463,281
1913	1,497	516,037	172,888	688,925

Aggregate duration in working days of disputes beginning

Year	each year	previous years	Total
1902	3,082,291	396,964	3,480,255
1903	1,443,781	894,887	2,338,668
1904	1,316,686	167,534	1,484,220
1905	2,295,973	174,216	2,470,189
1906	2,570,950	457,866	3,028,816
1907	1,878,679	283,472	2,162,151
1908	10,632,638	201,551	10,834,189
1909	2,560,425	213,561	2,773,986
1910	9,545,531	349,300	9,894,831
1911	7,620,367	2,699,224	10,319,591
1912	38,142,101	2,772,574	40,914,675
1913	11,484,534	146,198	11,630,732

It is necessary to distinguish between the total numbers of days lost in a year from disputes beginning in that year, and the total number of days lost from all disputes in a year, which would include a number of days lost from disputes in the previous year: the two sets of figures can be very different. The table shows that 1913 was a year of unrest, and the workmen tended to gain their demands more often than was usual. It was a time of good trade and low unemployment, which meant that employers could not find alternative labour easily. Moreover, the favourable economic situation offered sound profits, so the owners wanted to see their firms active, and, moreover, they could afford to pay the advances. These factors probably account for the relatively large number of successes by the workers.

Year % of workmen directly involved in disputes, the results of which were:-

	In favour of workpeople	In favour of employers	Compromise or partly successful	Indefinite or unsettled
1904	27.3	41.7	30.9	0.1
1905	24.7	34.0	41.2	0.1
1906	42.5	24.5	33.0	
1907	32.7	27.3	40.0	
1908	8.7	25.7	65.6	
1909	11.2	22.3	66.5	
1910	16.3	13.8	69.7	0.2
1911	6.6	9.3	84.1	
1912	74.5	14.4	11.1	
1913	31.4	21.0	47.6	

Most of the strikes were fairly short, four fifths lasting for less than a month each, but the disputes involving the largest number of workers tended to last longer.

Limits of duration	No. of disputes beginning in 1913	Total no. of workpeople involved directly and indirectly	Aggregate duration in working days*
under 1 week	669	246,942	624,113
1-2 weeks	288	85,428	535,036
2-4 weeks	219	140,128	1,155,767
4-6 weeks	100	50,514	1,035,016
6-8 weeks	63	33,945	1,137,472
8-10 weeks	44	22,614	962,869
10-15 weeks	58	81,108	3,109,220
15-20 weeks	24	9,540	675,756
20-25 weeks	17	24,566	2,420,280
25 weeks and above	15	4,140	609,700
Total	1,497	688,925	12,265,129

* Aggregate duration of disputes beginning in 1913, and including all days lost by such disputes as were prolonged into 1914

Reactions in the years 1913-14 showed that an increasing number of people were coming to believe that something had to be done to prevent industrial unrest. For example, the Debates in the House of Commons on the Minimum Wage in March and April 1913 produced more support than would have been expected two years previously. Unionists from a variety of backgrounds revealed similar ideas on the subject. Richard Cooper, a partner in a firm of chemical manufacturers, argued that 'some movement forward in the lower paid wages of the people of this country is certainly the greatest domestic

problem we have to face at the present time...The higher the wage bill the greater is the industry and the greater the prosperity'. Lord Robert Cecil insisted that 'a less share of that wealth is going to the workers', and L.S. Amery, journalist, barrister, and recently elected M.P., agreed that 'the minimum wage should in this country be far higher than it is', but he could not accept the idea of legislation to gain this, as economic laws would ensure that higher wages with a certain volume of production and a certain number of people would mean that the less profitable industries went out of business and then more workers would be competing for a lower total production, which would result in lower wages. Arthur Bigland, a merchant, felt it 'a crime that women workers are paid wages as low as they are', ~~Thus~~, some Unionists, very different in outlook and experience, were, nevertheless, adopting a uniform approach to the financial difficulties of the poorer sections of the working class, just as many Liberals had done years before. A typical comment from the other side of the House came from William Ellis Davies, a former clerk articled to a solicitor, who had qualified, and won a Law Society Prize. Thus, he knew from personal experience the problems of a moderate wage. He maintained that 'it must be admitted on all hands that the conditions of the working classes has not grown in proportion to the increase which has taken place in the wealth of the country'. This reaction was very similar to that of the Conservatives already quoted. There was an awareness that faults existed in the nation's wage structure, and the beginning of a common policy to deal with the problem.

However, the same Debates revealed that others had retained the opinions which they had held before the onslaught of industrial unrest. Ernest Craig, a mining engineer and colliery proprietor, used the pits as an example, and noted that 'the lower grade section of the working men, finding themselves secure of a fixed minimum wage, no longer put forward their best efforts'. He believed that a national minimum would have 'a demoralising influence upon that class of workmen who are influenced more by their desire for an easy life than they are for conscientious achievement'. Leslie Scott, a barrister, was equally upset at the idea, saying it was 'obvious that any wholesale legislation adopting 30s as a fixed figure would destroy the industries of the country'.⁽²⁾ The Tory Spectator adopted a similar line about the financial organisations of the country: 'No doubt occasions arise where economic forces result in injustice, but on the whole they tend towards securing a balance of advantages and disadvantages in the different occupations of human beings, while simultaneously stimulating production and thus enlarging the possibilities of enjoyment for all'.⁽³⁾

It was evident that such persons as these had disregarded the causes of the unrest, and wished to see a perpetuation of the traditional patterns of society, even though the working class was becoming increasingly discontented

(2) House of Commons Debates, Vol. 50, Cols. 488, 525, 546, 556, 537, 13 March 1913; Vol. 51, Cols. 1298-9, 1322, 9 April 1913

(3) Spectator, 9 August 1913, p. 202

about the share of the national wealth it was receiving, and despite the growing feeling within the other sections of the community that perhaps the masses had been treated unfairly. The strikes of 1913-14 are important in demonstrating that the views of some people were changing, while others retained the attitudes of the previous decade. Because there were so many small strikes, it has been necessary to select a number of the more significant ones. They have been chosen either because they attracted national publicity, or because they involved groups of workers not previously associated with militancy.

Lancashire farm workers' strike

A large section of the community agreed that the wages of farm workers were inadequate, though this did not lead to an increase in their remuneration. It has been estimated that in 1914, the earnings of such men varied from 14s 3d in the South West to 22s 3d in the North, ⁽⁴⁾ and there were claims of lower pay. It was alleged that around Hereford, labourers were on 12s a week, with a cottage, and one row of potatoes, but money was stopped on wet days. ⁽⁵⁾ It was hardly surprising that the founder of the National Union of Agricultural Workers, George Edwards, should insist that things must be ensured to the agricultural labourer: first, a

(4) C.S. Orton and B.I. Felton 'A Century of Wages and Earnings in Agriculture', Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society of England (1931) pp. 233, 247

(5) Letter from A. Watkins in Westminster Gazette, 12 July 1913, p. 3

wage brought about by Act of Parliament, and aided by Trade Unionism; second, security of tenure in his home, and thirdly, free access to land'.⁽⁶⁾ Nor, really, was it unusual that an active reformer such as Rowntree should demand that 'the wages of farm labourers must be raised'.⁽⁷⁾ Again, it was not out of place that the editor of the Manchester Guardian, C.P. Scott, should write that 'better wages can be afforded'.⁽⁸⁾ More startling was the statement of Lord Hugh Cavendish-Bentinck, who told the House of Commons that 'we owe a deep debt of reparation to the agricultural labourer who has been victimised and exploited many times in his career'. A further indication of the increasing social concern of the Conservatives can be found in a letter from Stanley Baldwin, and the future Lords Aston, Halifax, Mountemple and Swinton. It told Bonar Law of the need for an inquiry to ascertain the best ways of raising the wages of agricultural labourers, especially 'in those districts where wages are notoriously low'.⁽¹⁰⁾

Despite this sympathy, which came from all sides, wages remained low, and on 20 June 1913, labourers in Lancashire - in the market gardening region within the triangle of Liverpool, Wigan and Southport - went on strike for a minimum

(6) G. Edwards 'The Life of the Labourer' in L. Gardner (ed.)

Land and Labour (N.d.) p. 37

(7) B.S. Rowntree, The Labourer and the Land (1914) p. 25

(8) C.P. Scott Papers B.M.Add.Ms.50901 f.89 Diary, 3 February 1913

(9) House of Commons Debates, Vol. 51, Col. 1315, 9 April 1913

(10) Bonar Law Papers 30/4/12 Letter from Baldwin et al. to

wage of £1 4s a week, which would have been a rise of 2s a week, a half day on Saturdays, finishing at 1 p.m., and union recognition. About two thousand men came out, and they gained their rise, with a 2 p.m. finish on Saturdays, so there was a return to work on 8 July. The Liberal press was pleased at this success, but the Standard was quite happy to argue that because farmers had never paid their men a fair wage, then such a system should be perpetuated: 'While it is right and proper that the rustic should get an adequate return for the sweat of his brow, or for as much of it as goes to the cultivation of his master's farm, it is equally proper to recollect that in the history of British husbandry the farmer has never been expected to bear the whole cost of every labourer's maintenance. The latter has almost always supplemented his wage by subsidiary employment whether on a strip of ground or in some handicraft'.⁽¹¹⁾ Thus, the Standard was not interested in joining the ranks of those Tories who were adopting a policy of social concern. It was quite content to continue advocating traditional answers, despite the growing opposition, and hoped to steer the force of public opinion away from such dangerous new concepts, which could disrupt the established social order.

Strikes in the Midlands

On 25 April, men at a railway wagon and carriage firm in Birmingham struck for higher wages. On 9 May, three hundred workers left the Tube factory at Wednesbury, demanding a rise of 2s a week for time workers and 10% for piece workers. A

(11) Standard, 12 May 1914, p. 10

week later, the dispute had spread to Walsall, and by the end of the month, all the tube workers in that town and in Wednesbury were on strike. A month later, the stoppage had reached West Bromich, Wolverhampton, parts of Birmingham, and the area in between. It was only the unskilled and semi-skilled who had walked out, but the result was that skilled men were prevented from working. At the height of the unrest, fifty thousand were affected. On 29 May, a representative of the Chief Industrial Commissioner visited the district where he attempted to persuade both sides to compromise. Early in June, the newly formed Midland Employers' Federation offered £1 3s to those in the Birmingham area, £1 1s to Black Country workers and nothing to any piece workers. The ballot resulted in the rejection of this offer by 4,717 to 99. Askwith's subordinate had not succeeded, so Askwith went in person, to attempt to redeem this apparent failure. He arrived on 2 July, and a settlement was reached two days later: £1 3s in Birmingham and £1 2s in the Black Country, rising to £1 3s after six months. This was signed on 7 July, and work was resumed the following week.

Once again, the Liberal press gave its approval to the actions of the men, and the Daily News and Leader made a noteworthy point: 'We are inclined to attach very considerable importance to this movement in the Midlands. It marks the progress of the idea of the minimum wage; that is significant. It may also mark the beginning of the overthrow of an obscurantist political domination. Trade Unionism and the temper of labour generally has been very inert in Birmingham country for some thirty years...the strike now over suggests that the

spell has been broken'. (12)

Not only had the men resorted to militant action, but examples of violence had been recorded, both in the press, and in letters from individual companies and the Midland Employers' Federation received by the Home Office. Of course, it could have been that there were particular circumstances in the Midlands trades which caused this reaction. The small workshops were on the decline, and, consequently, a reduction in the personal contact between employer and employed. The greater the alienation, the more difficult it becomes to sort out grievances without having to resort to strike action. In addition, the newer type of trade union organisation, with its emphasis on confrontation, was gaining strength in the Midlands. Nevertheless, an area which was not regarded as militant and engaged in a large stoppage, which had begun with the actions of a few men, had spread from town to town throughout the industry, with the whole body of strikers remaining solid until everyone was satisfied. There could be little doubt that unrest was rife in the Midlands, if nowhere else, and the rise in trade union membership, which helped to give rise to this, was in itself a manifestation of discontent.

Dublin

Trade unionism had been growing steadily in Dublin, thanks largely to the efforts of Jim Larkin, whose Irish Transport and General Workers' Union controlled almost all of the unskilled labour in the city except Corporation and builders' labourers,

(12) Daily News and Leader, 12 July 1913, p. 4

who were in different unions. By August 1913, there were only two large firms whose workers were still unorganised - Guinness Brewery and the United Tramway Company. Guinness paid the best wages in the city, as well as offering fringe benefits such as cheap houses and medical care, but they would not permit trade unionism, and would have been an extremely difficult target for Larkin, so he decided to concentrate on the United Tramway Company, whose Chairman, W.M. Murphy, owned or controlled the largest daily paper in Ireland, the largest department store, the most prominent hotel, and several railway companies in Ireland and West Africa. His United Tramway Company employed permanent and casual men. If a permanent man was ever late for work, the man at the top of the list of casuals took his job, and the tardy worker went to the bottom of the casual list. Anyone suspected of being in a trade union would be dismissed. Nevertheless, about half of the 1,700 tramwaymen had secretly joined the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union when the strike began on 26 August. Sir George Askwith later insisted that it was 'founded upon poverty, low wages and bad conditions', but also included a desire on the part of the leaders 'to establish the transport workers' union as the "one big union" in Ireland, and to put into practice the doctrines of Syndicalism', while, on the other hand, Murphy 'was out for a fight to the finish'. (13)

Whatever the causes, the strike had begun, and violence soon followed the cessation of work. There were riots from 30 August until 2 September, resulting in one death and four

hundred and thirty injuries. There were many who accused the police of employing excessive violence to curb the disorder. The Lord Mayor of Dublin moved a resolution at a meeting of the Corporation on 1 September, asking for a public inquiry into the behaviour of the police, and such papers as the Manchester Guardian, the Sunday Chronicle and Reynolds's Newspaper condemned the police. There was an official investigation, which exonerated the Dublin Constabulary. This was described as 'a travesty' by Frederick Booth, the Liberal industrialist, in the House of Commons. He had seen the disturbances, and described police brutality, as did George Barnes, who read many statements alleging misconduct by the police. (14)

After the riots, on 3 September, the Dublin Employers' Federation, which had about four hundred members, decided to lock out all of the members of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, and there was a major stoppage in Dublin. It received widespread publicity in Britain, and opinions on the merits of both sides were as varied as might be expected. The Conservatives made their customary condemnation of the agitators who had whipped the men into a fury sufficient to cause the unrest, but the Daily Mail, which, in the past, had been as opposed to trade union militancy as any other paper supporting the Tories, did not agree that the owners were necessarily right: 'Any employer who in these days declines to have any dealings with trade unionism is assuming a heavy

(14) House of Commons Debates, Vol. 58, Cols. 995-1010, 976-

responsibility and in the case of a company owning and operating a public utility such as a tramway the responsibility is proportionately heavier. That is an aspect of the recent occurrences in Dublin that is of far greater moment than the more or less of violence on the part of the police under the stress of transient excitement'. Later the same paper went so far as to demand 'the abandonment of the haughty mediaeval attitude towards labour'.⁽¹⁵⁾ Thus, the Daily Mail was making remarks that resembled closely those of the Liberals. It was beginning to realise that trade unions did exist, and were not going to disappear, so that it was necessary to accept their existence, and work with them, rather than create ill-feeling and unrest by constantly attempting to ensure their destruction.

The dispute itself continued until the end of the year, and received periodic coverage in the press. Such papers as the Westminster Gazette and the Manchester Guardian commented on the low wages paid in the city, and argued that they should be raised. Several Tory papers, such as the Morning Post and the Economist made similar points, and attacked the inadequate housing conditions as well.

Thus, the Dublin strike could indicate the extent to which some opinions were changing. Certain papers, which in the past had adopted traditional attitudes, were prepared to concede that the working class quarters of Dublin were an unpleasant place in which to live, and the Daily Mail could even appreciate the workers' cause, and went so far as to

(15) Daily Mail, 3 September 1913, p. 4; 22 October 1913, p. 6

criticise the inflexibility of the employers. However, it could have been that the men gained sympathy because their battle was a long and bitter one, and because it was waged in Ireland, and not in England, so that it was not regarded as part of labour's onslaught at home. Thus, it could be argued that the reaction to this dispute is not entirely relevant to this study. Nevertheless, it is significant that some Tory papers were sympathetic to the men in a disturbance centring around union recognition, and might reveal a growing tendency to accept and work with trade unions.

Tillings

Another stoppage caused by the reaction of employers to trade unionism occurred in London in September. The omnibus and tube company made a rule that its employees should not wear the badge of their trade union while at work. By the evening of 17 September, one hundred and twenty five men had been dismissed for refusing to obey this regulation, so the union called a strike, and members employed by the London General Omnibus Company came out in sympathy. The demand for reinstatement was quickly extended to include recognition.

The Daily Mail had already praised the bus drivers for their industry. It pointed out that in 1912 in the Metropolitan police district and the City of London, drivers worked a thirteen hour day, and had to exceed the speed limit because they were paid according to the number of journeys completed: 'The men have a right to better treatment as they are the very pick of their class, conspicuous for their skill and courage... unless these inordinate hours of labour for drivers are

reduced the companies cannot escape the charge of placing their own profit before the safety of the people of London'.⁽¹⁶⁾ The Home Office files reveal that rules at Tillings were strict, and a man could be suspended for failing to collect a 1d fare.⁽¹⁷⁾

Given the combination of strict employers, long hours, and the prevalent mood of militancy, trouble was always possible, but it was the employers who had forced the issue on the matter of the union badge, and they did not gain much popular support. The Liberal press weighed in on the side of the men, and the Daily Mail, which was increasingly becoming a paper ready to champion the cause of the working man, pointed out that the 'company has chosen, for some reason best known to itself, to issue a declaration of war upon a trade union...the sympathy of the public...will inevitably be with the men. The omnibus drivers and conductors are remarkable even among British workers for their courage, skill, efficiency and energy and they live on excellent terms with the Londoner'.⁽¹⁸⁾ Another paper which normally supported the owners in industrial disputes was the Daily Express, but on this occasion, it insisted that 'employers must get it out of their heads that their employees can be dragooned or treated like children. Strikes, syndicalist unrest and financial losses are often the result of masters forgetting the date'.⁽¹⁹⁾ Even the Daily Telegraph, one of the most consistent champions

(16) Daily Mail, 28 March 1913, p. 4

(17) H.O.45/10710/243128

(18) Daily Mail, 18 September 1913, p. 4

(19) Daily Express, 16 September 1913, p. 4

of the employers, agreed that 'the badge question was childish...If Messrs. Tilling had been well advised they would never have issued their rule at all...To forbid it was exactly the way to make the men cling to it, to create a purely fictitious attachment to it, and so invest it with a wholly false importance'. However, the union had brought up the question of recognition, which had to be resisted.⁽²⁰⁾ This was a matter which disturbed other journals, and the Financial Times and the Standard, in particular, warned that the union had to be defeated on that issue.

In a thoughtful editorial, the Daily Graphic examined the origins of the dispute and the problem of recognition, under the headline 'How to Provoke Strikes': 'Messrs. Tilling cannot be congratulated on the way in which they have conducted their relations with their staff. They first put forward a demand which they defended on certain grounds, and then when a strike was threatened, they ignominiously collapsed. The point at issue was the wearing of the trade union badges. Under normal conditions it is an unjustifiable interference with individual liberty for an employer to prohibit his employees from wearing a badge or any other harmless decoration. The whole point with regard to the trade union badge is the wearing of it by union men is intended to facilitate the terrorising of non-unionists. If Messrs. Tilling had taken this point and adhered to it, they would have commanded the sympathy of all persons who resent the ever-growing tyranny of trade unionists. Instead, they talked merely

(20) Daily Telegraph, 19 September 1913, p. 10

about the word Tilling on the men's caps...If "recognition" only means that the trade union officials are to be allowed to negotiate on behalf of the men, it is a claim that might very well, if it stood alone, be conceded. The danger is that recognition may be used as a base for compelling non-unionists to come into the union when they would prefer to remain outside. If this is what Messrs. Tilling are fighting they have a good case'.⁽²¹⁾ On the other hand, several papers could not see any objection to recognition, and accused the company of being reactionary. The Daily Sketch, for example, noted that the owners seemed 'to ignore the development of modern industry...They have declared definitely against the principle of collective bargaining, a principle which all Trade Unionists are pledged to support'.⁽²²⁾

The dispute was quickly settled. Askwith stepped in as mediator, and on 22 September, after a seven hour conference, concluded an agreement. The union was recognised, the dismissed men were reinstated, the right to wear the badge was given, and the men agreed not to participate in sympathetic strikes.

Here was an example of industrial unrest which produced a variety of opinions. Over the original controversy, support was almost exclusively for the men, although certain papers refrained from comment. However, when the issues were broadened to include recognition, the traditionally conservative papers changed their views, and defended the employers, as

(21) Daily Graphic, 19 September, 1913, p. 4

(22) Daily Sketch, 19 September 1913, p. 3

they had not accepted the principles of trade unionism, or at least rejected the concept of unions involving themselves in collective bargaining.

U.K. Employers' Defence Fund

Just a few days after the dispute at Tillings had been concluded, it was announced that the United Kingdom Employers' Defence Union had been formed, with funds of £50m. It was a national union of employers, each member of which guaranteed a certain sum of money, which would be used as a defence against the new trade unionism, and would also work to amend the Trade Disputes Act on picketing. Its supporters included Lord Avebury, the Duke of Bedford, Sir Arthur Clay, Lord Dysart, Sir Philip Magnus, M.P., and a variety of industrialists. Its foundation suggests that part of the community was so concerned about the industrial climate that they were prepared to spend large quantities of money to prepare themselves for further trouble.

However, it was not well received by the whole of the press. The Liberal journals felt that it could help to unite the trade union movement in opposition, and the Times agreed that it might be regarded as a threat to the unions. The Sunday Chronicle noted that agitators 'will not neglect to point out that employers who will close their works rather than grant a farthing an hour increase can put down 10, 20 or £50,000 for the purpose of smashing their unions'.⁽²³⁾ The Daily Mail agreed, saying that 'whatever may be the errors of the new trade unionism, some of the advisers of capital itself

(23) Sunday Chronicle, 26 September 1913, p. 6

can be equally myopic, equally provocative, equally anti-social'. (24)

On the other hand, other Conservative papers were enthusiastic about the measure, and its greatest champion was the Standard, which lauded its promoters as 'men of the highest repute, whose motives are beyond suspicion...Honest and self-respecting labour has nothing to fear from such an organisation. What it seeks to oppose is a reckless attack as damaging to the honest and capable workman as to his employer'. (25) It is intriguing that this paper was able to impute the finest moral motives to the employers' leaders, and at the same time to condemn those of the workers'. The Standard had never attempted to understand the position of the men, and provided another example of its cycloptic approach to social matters.

Debate on the merits and demerits of the body filled the correspondence columns of the newspapers, and an excellent version of the good that many anticipated from it appeared in the Times, in a letter by E.P. Hewitt: 'To expect a Radical Government, supported by the votes of Labour M.P.'s, to repeal the objectionable clauses of the Trades Disputes Act, or to otherwise deal with the question in a manner fair to employers and employed is hopeless: and it may be doubted whether even a Conservative Government would have the necessary courage. The only safe course, therefore, is for employers, relying upon themselves, and not upon the Government, to form an

(24) Daily Mail, 26 September 1913, p. 4

(25) Standard, 26 September 1913, p. 6

organisation as complete as that of the employees, and in doing so they are performing a service as useful to the public as to themselves'. (26)

In fact, very little was heard of the United Kingdom Employers' Defence Union after this, but its formation was significant, and its reception interesting, indicating that some papers were well aware of the likely working class reaction, while the hard core traditionalists did not care, and applauded the union of employers, which aimed to defeat the workers, and accepted it as the only union which should be permitted.

The case of Driver Caudle

Caudle was an experienced railwayman. Aged fifty-nine, he had been with the Midland Railway Company for forty years, and had been a driver for twenty nine years. On 2 September 1913, he was driving the Scotch express, and ran into a stationary passenger train at Aisgill, Cumberland. His previous record was excellent, with seven commendations for caution and maintaining a good look-out, but this accident was serious, with sixteen fatalities. An inquiry was ordered, and it transpired that he had taken his train through several signals which were at red. He had not seen them because he was oiling his box, and looking at his injector and water gauge. Small coal had reduced his steam level and kept him more busy than usual. The train he ran into should not have been there, but it had lost steam on an incline, and come to a halt. The trouble with this engine, just like Caudle's was

small coal. It had also been overloaded, with 243 tons instead of 230. The driver had asked for a pilot engine, but this had been refused. It was pointed out that the overloading was not dangerous: it merely meant that some speed would be lost. It was not uncommon for goods trains to lose steam on that stretch of the line, but very rare for this sort of passenger train. Thus, there were extenuating circumstances, but Caudle had made a mistake, and was prosecuted for manslaughter. The jury found him guilty, but asked for clemency, and he was sentenced to two months in the second division, which caused much discontent among railway workers, and aroused threats of a strike to secure his release. On 31 October, he was granted a pardon, and left jail. Such papers as the Daily Mail and the Manchester Guardian had followed the case, disliked the sentence, and welcomed the pardon. Cole and Arnot have argued that it was given as the direct result of the imminent stoppage, but provide no evidence. If it were the case, then it would be a clear indication of the Government's concern about the possibilities of a rail stoppage, and would show that this was an industry in which the Government was prepared to intervene, on the side of the workers, in order to ensure that the system continued to operate. It had initiated an investigation in the Knox case, and thus ended a dispute, and it had worked continually to prevent, and then to end, the 1911 strike. Of course, it is mere speculation on this occasion, for the pardon could have been granted on purely humanitarian grounds. Unfortunately, the Home Office files do not even mention the affair, but certainly the anger of the railway workers shows their restlessness, and typifies

the year 1913.

Discontent of postal workers

Postal workers had been expressing discontent at their wages for some time, and by November 1913 this had become a matter which could have resulted in a stoppage unless an advance was awarded. The men's demands were not treated very sympathetically in the press. Many papers, including the Manchester Guardian, Daily Mail, Daily Graphic and Sunday Chronicle, reminded their readers that the workers enjoyed medical attention and job security as part of their wages, so that they were better off than most of the working class. The Morning Post was amazed: 'There was a time when a Post Office servant would have thought it unworthy of his service and of his tradition to threaten a strike, when a sense of loyalty and discipline would have made the humblest Post Office servant recoil from such a proposal'.⁽²⁷⁾ Times were changing, at least as far as the men were concerned, and it is instructive to observe that papers such as the Morning Post wanted to live in the past, and made no attempt to discover the causes of the changes in attitude which brought about discontent amongst the postal workers.

This was a threatened cessation of work by employees in a public service and the State was generally considered to be a far better employer than private concerns, so the demand for a wage increase, and the possibility of a strike was not particularly well received: the men were fairly treated, and, therefore, they had no right to protest. Public employees

(27) Morning Post 12 December 1913, p. 6

actually did stop work in Leeds at this time.

Leeds Corporation strike

There had been a strike of gas workers in Leeds in June 1913, which had resulted in 857 men gaining advances of between 1s and 2s. The other Corporation workers wanted to gain a similar rise, but the Council had refused to discuss the matter, and a strike began in December. A few men continued to work, and they were assisted by clerks from the various departments, all of whom received 7s 6d a day, compensation for spoilt clothes, food and sleeping accommodation at their works, and police protection. Thus, the strike breakers were paid considerably more than the regular employees. They were assisted by ordinary citizens and by students at Leeds University, who were greatly encouraged in their efforts by Vice Chancellor Sadler. The Corporation remained firm, and the men were defeated. By 3 February 1914, about seven hundred former employees had not been reappointed. (28)

Just as many papers had argued that the postal workers had no case because of their additional benefits, so those of the Corporation employees were listed: job security, paid holidays, and better pay than in the private sector. Thus, the Morning Post, the Spectator, and the Daily Graphic dismissed the men's case. Even those moderate Liberal papers the Daily Chronicle and the Manchester Guardian argued that

(28) A useful account of the dispute, and especially the role of the students, appears in J.E. Williams 'The Leeds Corporation Strike in 1913' in A. Briggs and J. Saville Essays in Labour History 1886-1923 (1971)

the strike was anti-social in that it affected the whole community, and so it ought not to have taken place. The section of the press that was continually opposed to trade unionism - the Standard, the Sunday Times especially, blamed the Syndicalists, while the Times was delighted at the resolute action taken by the employers in Dublin, Leeds, and at the Post Office: 'The outstanding feature presented by industrial affairs, as this stormy year draws to a strong close, is the resolute resistance offered to the attacks of militant trade unionism on the community in three prominent cases'. (29)

Of course, support for the Corporation was not unanimous. The Daily News and Leader felt that there were faults on both sides. The employers had refused to even talk to the men: 'It is difficult to understand the indifference to the public interests of which they are the appointed guardians which such inaction implies in the Leeds Council. True zeal for the ratepayers real interests could not seriously contemplate the prolongation of the strike on any economic grounds. On the other hand, the apparent indifference of the men to the loss and mischief they are causing is not a point in their favour'. (30)

The way in which the Corporation refused to discuss the matter with the men brought adverse comment from the New Statesman and Arthur Greenwood, writing in the Economic Journal, as well as the Labour press, while Frank Smith pondered on the

(29) Times, 18 December 1913, p. 9

(30) Daily News and Leader, 16 December 1913, p. 6

logic of a Corporation that spent enough on breaking the strike to have paid the increased wages for several years. (31)

Thus, the Leeds Corporation strike and the unrest of the postal workers raised the question of the rights of employees in the public service. It was only the more radical section of the community which would accord to such people the right to strike, and even the traditionally Liberal Daily News and Leader felt that there was a distinction between such workers and those in the private sector. It was certainly true that they did receive better fringe benefits, but their wages were not high, and they were still working for an employer, even if they were paid out of the public purse. Some of the work did affect the health of the population of Leeds, and this could have been a cause of the opposition, though the reaction to the threat by postal workers makes this seem somewhat doubtful. It is more likely that a large section of the community felt that public employees should be ready for work at all times, simply because they worked for the community, whereas an individual had a person or group of shareholders as their employer. At least this distinction meant that some papers had accepted that there would be strikes, on the other hand, many of them had devised lists of industries in which strikes should not be permitted, and this dispute had emphasised the need for stoppages by public employees to be added to this list.

(31) F. Smith 'The Industrial Unrest from Labour's

Standpoint' Fortnightly Review, 1 May 1914, p. 902

Strike of London builders

1913 had seen a wave of small disputes in the London building trade, often over working with non-unionists. This led the employers to introduce its "document" in January 1914. They wanted all their workers to be bound by the following declaration: 'I agree, if employed by you, to peacefully work with my fellow employees (engaged either in your direct employment or with a sub-contractor), whether they are members of a trade society or not, and I agree that I will not quit your employment because of any of my fellow employees is or is not a member of any trade society; and I also agree that if I commit any breach of this agreement I shall be subject to a fine of 20s and I agree that the amount of such a fine may be deducted from any wages which may be due to me'. The men refused to sign, and by 24 January 1914, virtually all of London's builders had been locked out.

The Daily News and Leader advised the employers to forget about their "document", and to negotiate with the union, but other papers, such as the Daily Telegraph, the Daily Express, and the Spectator, felt that a stand had to be taken against the militant methods of the ~~trade~~ unions. Thus there was the usual range of opinion, and the Labour Party itself was especially watchful, because of the questions it raised. W.A. Middleton of the General Federation of Trade Unions wrote to the Joint Board of the Party, noting that 'the attack of the employers upon the building trades appears to me to so seriously endanger the general principle of trade unionism that I am anxious to do something about it and to do it very quickly', and he suggested meetings of the

Joint Board and the National Finance Committee to raise funds to resist the document, (32) but when this was convened, the decision was to observe the situation, and to take action when it seemed necessary.

The strike continued, and on 16 April, the employers agreed to withdraw the document, and the men held a ballot to decide whether to return to work, or to stay out for a closed shop. The terms were refused by 23,481 to 2,021, despite the advice of the Daily Citizen, which had urged a resumption. The other Labour paper, the Daily Herald, which was liable to lend its support to the men in any dispute, was delighted at the decision of the building workers, who had followed the policy that it had advocated.

In May, the employers threatened a national lock out if a settlement was not concluded. Another ballot resulted in a refusal to return to work by 21,017 to 5,824, contrary to the wishes of the relevant unions. The Daily Chronicle had been anxious that the men should have settled, but felt that their vote 'shows how far the trade unions, even old unions of skilled men like the Carpenters and Joiners, are moving away from the disciplined traditions that made them successful in the past. In the disciplined days, the present conflict would probably have been avoided, but, if not, it would certainly have been stopped'. (33) In fact, the masons did go back to work, and the national lock-out never materialised,

(32) L.F./J.B./11/1/77 Letter from Middleton to Joint Board
5 February 1914

(33) Daily Chronicle, 29 May 1914, p. 6

but the comment on the lack of discipline is indicative of the mood of the times.

The men were generally castigated for remaining out, as they did throughout the summer. The reactions to this dispute illustrate the fact that the notion of a closed shop was one which few people were prepared to accept at that time. The length of the stoppage indicates the degree of feeling on both sides but especially by the men, who remained out, even against the overwhelming public support for employers, and even though the trade unions and the official newspaper of the Labour Party favoured a return to work.

Strike at the Woolwich Arsenal

Another dispute over trade unionism began at the Woolwich Arsenal on 3 July 1914. An employee, a member of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, was instructed to erect some machinery on a concrete bedding which had been prepared by non-union labour. He refused to do this, and was dismissed. A union meeting later in the day decided to call out all the members of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers employed in the factory, and also to urge the unskilled unions to join in. This was so successful that by 4 July, between seven and eight thousand men had left their work. Two days later, production at the Arsenal came to a complete halt when men in the Army and Naval Ordnance Department responded to the strike call. At that point, about ten thousand workers were involved in the stoppage, and only a few hundred had reported for duty, and even they were defecting rapidly - the Arsenal was highly unionised, with almost everyone belonging to some

organisation. The Prime Minister intervened, and gained a resumption by establishing a Court of Inquiry, with Asquith as Chairman, two representatives of the Government, and two union nominees. The dismissed man was reinstated, and would not be punished if the result went against him.

The course of the dispute was followed in the press, where there was almost universal opposition to the behaviour of the men. Asquith was attacked by the Conservatives for surrendering to those people who were attacking the community, and the concept of the sympathetic strike was denounced. Even the Daily News and Leader was doubtful about the stoppage, and wondered if compulsory trade unionism might not prevent such unrest. It noted that opinion had turned against the men: 'No one conversant with the temper of the middle classes can doubt the effect which these continuous threats of instant and widespread calamity unless some particular wrong is remedied are producing on their minds. It is not true to suggest that the mass of the middle classes have any animus against labour; there is plenty of sympathy with the real grievances of the worker among shopkeepers and the less wealthy professional classes. But repeated threats of ruin unless this or the other alleged wrong is instantly redressed can have only one effect in the long run, human nature being what it is. The result will be such a set back to progressive aims as has not been seen in our time and from which it may well take a generation to recover. The strike, properly used, is a valuable and legitimate weapon for the assertion in the last resort of Labour's rights: employed merely vexatiously it will recoil to the ruin of

those who have misused it'.⁽³⁴⁾ Clearly, the degree of working class unrest had caused this paper, usually a supporter of the workers, to modify its stance. Even the Daily Citizen was not delighted at the militancy of the trade unionists, but the Daily Herald, as ever, pledged its full support to the strikers. It was the only paper which was unreservedly behind the men.

The stoppage at the Woolwich Arsenal produced the usual opposition from the Tory press, and a note of warning from the Liberal Party in general, and one of its leading and most radical organs in particular. Even the official paper of the Labour Party was not enthusiastic. The numerous disputes, and the increasing evidence of sympathetic strikes, or those over the issue of non-union labour appeared to be swaying opinion against the men, who were certainly becoming more militant.

The Triple Alliance

After several months of speculation, the various unions involving miners, transport workers and railwaymen came together in a federation known as the Triple Alliance, in June 1914. The participating unions agreed to take common action on wage claims, and in resisting their employers. This would greatly strengthen the hand of the men, and it would also prevent one group of workers putting another out of work during a dispute - all would be involved together.

Opinions on the establishment of this organisation were varied. Some of the traditional Conservative papers

(34) Daily News and Leader, 8 July 1914, p. 4

disapproved, feeling that it was part of the Syndicalist campaign, and that the association would operate against the interests of the community at large. Arguments in such a vein came from the Spectator, the Standard, and the Daily Graphic. On the other hand, equally traditional papers like the Times and the Daily Mail felt that the formation of this organisation would ensure that both employers and employees would think more carefully before seeking militant solutions to their disputes, because of the sheer numbers involved, and any stoppage would be shorter than before for the same reason. Radical journals such as the New Statesman and Reynolds's Newspaper concurred, and the Daily Herald took a similar line. The Syndicalists were bound to support such a move, as their policy was to unite the unions. The degree of support for the Syndicalists within the trade unions cannot be accurately assessed, but there can be no doubt that the movement did have a following. For example, the Tickmansworth branch of the newly formed National Union of Railwaymen produced a banner calling for 'political action' and 'industrial action' to arrive at a 'co-operative commonwealth'. The banner maintained that 'The liberation of the working class is the act of the workers themselves'.⁽³⁵⁾ This would indicate a degree of rank and file support for the Syndicalist aims of the Triple Alliance.

Thus, the views on the Triple Alliance were extremely varied: the extreme Tories saw it as a Syndicalist organisation which would aim to take over the country, while the

(35) Banner in the John Gorman Collection

extreme left wing hoped for just that, and those in between tended to feel that its very strength might prevent industrial unrest, though they were not altogether sure.

General range of attitudes by 1914

The Economist made a point which few of the Conservative papers had considered. It argued that 'though agitators may exploit and ferment, they cannot create a thing so deep and wide as labour's dissatisfaction with its own position'. (36)

R.A. Coulson, writing in the Sunday Chronicle, went even further. He felt that the country was on 'the brink of revolution', because 'society has failed, with a failure growing steadily more conspicuous, to incorporate the working man as a stable and contented element in her organisation'. (37)

The Daily Mail, although critical of the 'internal anarchy' of the unions, when the members ignored their leaders, was nevertheless disturbed that some employers 'are still too mechanical and aloof in their treatment of labour and too heedless of the innumerable aspects of the industrial relationship that lie outside the weekly payment of wages'. (38)

Thus, a section of the Tory press had moved into the twentieth century, and was able to realise that the faults were not always on the side of the men: the working class did have grievances, and the employers were not always dealing with these complaints in the best way. Their opinions had changed as the unrest had intensified. Clearly, something

(36) Economist, 4 October 1913, p. 637

(37) Sunday Chronicle, 4 January 1914, p. 1

(38) Daily Mail, 7 October 1913, p. 6

had caused the massive upsurge in militancy. J.R. Clynes, the former cotton worker, and Organising Secretary of the Lancashire District of the Gas Workers' and General Labourers' Union, who had been a Labour M.P. since 1906, later recalled that the strikes of 1913-14 'terrified the country, and civil war seemed at times to be very near'.⁽³⁹⁾ Such fear was expressed, for example, by "Politicus" in the Fortnightly Review: 'Organised labour has of late fallen more and more under the influence of men who despise law and order, who openly preach violence, and who aim not at improving the lot of the workers by legitimate means, but at destroying capital, making war upon society, and bringing about a revolution. More and more often, organised labour tries to improve its conditions not by negotiations, not by abstaining from work, but by attacking the community and by inflicting upon it the greatest possible injury. Attempts are made to deprive the public of coal in mid-winter, of ice in the height of summer, of the post at Christmas time, of electric light at night. A general strike was declared in Great Britain at the very moment when serious complications had arisen between Great Britain and Germany at the time of the Morocco crisis, with criminal selfishness and indifference, refused to adjourn the strike until the foreign situation had become clearer...Nowadays, every large strike in peaceful Great Britain is accompanied by riots, the deliberated destruction of property, arson, and violence...Great strikes no longer break out, but are "made" by a few leaders...The tyranny of labour, by undermining the foundations of British industry and of British wealth is one

(39) J.R. Clynes, Memoirs 1869-1924 (1937) p. 153.

of the greatest dangers which threatens Society and the State'.⁽⁴⁰⁾

This indicates a very real belief that a revolution was imminent. Perhaps the reader was almost hysterically opposed to working class militancy, but nevertheless, his fear and panic were real enough. Even those who were not so pessimistic were able to observe the increasing unrest, which was at least a cause for concern. Consequently, a variety of different solutions were advanced to prevent the continuance of the labour troubles.

Solutions

At the Labour Party Conference, Tom Fox, the President, commented on the 'seething mass of unrest and discontent amongst our people, an unrest amply justified by cruel social inequalities and intolerable industrial pressure. But, surely, the duty of the Labour Party is not to exploit what is termed unrest for party purposes. It is rather our duty to direct it helpfully and give it object and method'.⁽⁴¹⁾ Thus, the idea was to channel the discontent into politics, and try to elect a Labour Government. This was an unlikely event, as the Labour Party had not in the past been able to control or direct the industrial militancy.

A solution regularly advocated was the use of compulsory arbitration. Duxton examined this matter very carefully in a

(40) "Politicus" 'The Tyranny of Labour Fortnightly Review,

2 March 1914, pp. 406-7, 417.

(41) Report of the 14th Annual Conference of the Labour

Party (1914) 27 January 1914, p. 91

paper prepared for the use of the Cabinet in January 1914. He agreed that something had to be done, for 'if the Government make no legislative proposals next session to deal with industrial disputes, they would be subjected to considerable criticism, especially if there were widespread labour unrest this year'. However, he could not accept that compulsory arbitration was the answer'.⁽⁴²⁾

The Conservatives were more likely to adopt that method. The Unionist Social Reform Committee arrived at what it called 'a practical solution'. It believed that the strikes were 'not so much against particular employers as against the prevailing conditions of life', and had to be prevented. Thus, it advocated the creation of a single Labour Department at the Board of Trade. The Chief Industrial Commissioner would appoint a Board of Conciliation and Investigation, composed of three men, to look at any important strike, and offer advice. Its decisions would not be legally binding, though they could be made so should the lack of compulsion prove a hinderance. Wage agreements were to be contracts, with notice of termination or change, and there could be no strike or lock-out before the issues had been examined by a joint tribunal.⁽⁴³⁾

This resembled the moribund Industrial Council, except that there was to be a compulsory waiting period for the tribunal's examination, and was a typical solution of the

(42) CAB/37/118/14

(43) Unionist Social Reform Committee, Industrial Unrest: A Practical Solution (1914) pp. 1, 19-30

more moderate Unionists, seeking a compromise. The more extreme members of the community went even further. Lord Norton, the devout Anglican, wrote to Bonar Law, wishing that his Party 'would try to capture the Labour Party permanently by offering what Mr. Chancellor is now doing - a Tribunal to settle labour disputes without waste of Strike Funds and why not Trial by Jury as is done in the case of every breach of the Eighth Commandment'.⁽⁴⁴⁾ Such people invariably saw the working class as the wrong doers in the labour unrest, and sought to legislate against them.

Thus there was an extremely diverse range of opinions on the course and the direction of the labour unrest, and an equally varied range of solutions, all of which, significantly, were based on the expectation of further, and perhaps even better organised, militancy. The stage was set for a labour war, with the working class ready, and militant. That this never materialised was due to the outbreak of war.

(44) Bonar Law Papers 32/3/43 Letter from Norton to Law,
22 May 1914.

Chapter X

The Outbreak of War

Foreign affairs had been neglected by the majority of the press until the outbreak of war became imminent, but the labour movement had been prepared for years to prevent an outbreak of war which could lead to the working classes of different countries killing each other. The Second International, a federation of the Socialist parties of the world, discussed this question at its Stuttgart Conference in 1907, and after many alterations agreed unanimously that 'if a war threatens to break out, it is a duty for their parliamentary representatives, with the aid of the International Bureau as an active and co-ordinating power, to make every effort to prevent the war by all means which seem to them the most appropriate means, which naturally vary according to the intensity of the class struggle and to the political situation in general. Should war none the less break out, it is their duty to intervene in order to bring it promptly to an end, and with all their strength to make use of the economic and political crisis created by the war to stir up the deepest strata of the people and precipitate the fall of capitalist domination'. This was reaffirmed at Copenhagen in 1910 and Basle in 1912. On 15 and 16 July 1914, a special conference of the French Socialist Party, attended by Plekhanov and Rubanovich of Russia, Anseele and Wauters of Belgium, Vlieggen of Holland, and Liebknecht of Germany decided by a small majority that there would be a general strike should war be declared. After Austria had declared war on Serbia, the

International Socialist Bureau met at Brussels on 29 July 1914. Haase, of Germany, gave the impression that the German Socialists would oppose their country should it intervene, and they would refuse to vote war credits. A resolution was passed calling on the workers' movements to intensify anti-war demonstrations.

In Britain, the Daily Citizen urged the workers of Europe to stand firm, 'for if they do so they can prove themselves more powerful than the rulers who, for their own ends, would stifle working class liberty in blood'.⁽¹⁾ On 1 August, the British Section of the International Socialist Bureau issued a Manifesto to the British People which told them to act for peace, reminded them that they had 'never been consulted about the war', and encouraged demonstrations. It included the slogan 'Down with class rule...Down with war...Up with the peaceful rule of the people'. The same day, the Daily Herald made a similar plea: 'Stop the war. Let this be the united command of the British working class',⁽²⁾ and the Daily Citizen was convinced that this was the case, as the 'Socialists and Labour workers of Great Britain stand solid and four-square against war'.⁽³⁾ It seemed as though this was going to prove to be the case. A mass meeting at Trafalgar Square the following day, organised under the auspices of the British Section of the International Socialist Bureau, passed a resolution that 'the Government of Britain should rigidly decline

(1) Daily Citizen, 27 July 1914, p. 4

(2) Daily Herald, 1 August 1914, p. 5

(3) Daily Citizen, 1 August 1914, p. 4

to engage in war, but should confine itself to efforts to bring about peace as speedily as possible'. John McNair has described this as 'the greatest open air demonstration for years'.⁽⁴⁾ It was presided over by Hyndman, who, although a fervent militarist 'had so far scrupulously observed the peace resolutions of the International', but, despite these efforts, war was declared, and from that juncture, Hyndman 'launched a campaign to support the cause of the allies'.⁽⁵⁾ War was declared on 5 August; the Executive Committee of the Labour Party issued a statement which condemned 'the policy which has produced the war', but wanted to ensure that the working class did not suffer any hardships while hostilities lasted. That evening, a majority of the Parliamentary Labour Party rejected MacDonald's proposal to speak against war credits in the House of Commons, so he resigned as Chairman. The Independent Labour Party, on the other hand, did not lend its support to the war, and on 13 August issued a manifesto: 'Out of the darkness and the depth we hail our working class comrades of every land...Long live International Socialism'. It was signed by Hardie, MacDonald, Maxton and Snowden. However, the main section of the working class movement rapidly became involved in the war effort. On 24 August, the Industrial Truce was announced, by which the unions pledged themselves to refrain from striking for the duration. On 28 August, Asquith

(4) N. McNair, James Maxton. The Beloved Rebel (1955) p. 43

(5) C. Tsuguki, H.M. Hyndman and British Socialism (Oxford D. Phil. 1959) pp. 293, 294

wrote to Henderson, who had replaced MacDonald as the Leader of the Labour Party, inviting that organisation to co-operate in a recruitment campaign. The Parliamentary Labour Party agreed, and the National Executive of the Labour Party resolved, by the narrow margin of seven to four, that, 'in view of the serious situation created by the European war the Executive Committee of the Labour Party agrees with the policy of the ~~policy of the~~ Parliamentary Party in joining in the campaign to strengthen the British Army and agrees to place the central office organisation at the disposal of the campaign, and further recommends the local affiliated bodies to give all possible local support'.⁽⁶⁾ By the beginning of September, the Parliamentary Committee of the T.U.C. agreed to encourage enlistment, and 'thereby demonstrate to the world that a free people can rise to the supreme height of a great sacrifice without the whip of conscription', and on the result of this 'rests the preservation and maintenance of free and unfettered democratic government'.⁽⁷⁾ Within weeks, the labour movement was becoming increasingly absorbed in helping the Government. On 15 October, the majority of the members of the Parliamentary Labour Party and the Parliamentary Committee of the T.U.C. published a Manifesto blaming Germany for the war, and claiming that 'the victory of Germany would mean the death of democracy in Europe'.

Thus, although it had seemed that the workers of Britain would be encouraged to resist the war, the labour movement

(6) L.P. N.E.C. 29/1/1914 f.95 29 August 1914

(7) Statement issued by the Parliamentary Committee of the

rapidly supported it. G.D.H. Cole has claimed that the leaders 'had caught the war mood. They did not care to argue',⁽⁸⁾ and miners, especially, rushed to the recruiting stations. Lord Halifax wrote to Kitchener, telling him that he 'would be pleased, I think, with the way the miners are enlisting in these parts (South Yorkshire)...I do not think it is possible to see men animated by a better spirit. It makes one proud of one's country'.⁽⁹⁾ Redmayne, the Chief Inspector of Mines, later made a similar comment: 'From no class in the community did this call on their patriotism meet with a more spontaneous and conspicuous answer than from the coal miners. 40% of the miners of military age were absorbed into military service, and by far the greatest numbers left in the mines in the early weeks of the war, that is, in the autumn of 1914'.⁽¹⁰⁾

Ironically, the most famous opponent of the war was a former collier, Keir Hardie, who was M.P. for Merthyr Tydfil. He had a solid record of anti-militarism, and his attitude was unchanged by the outbreak of hostilities. His popularity in his constituency had been enormous. Jack Jones has recalled his father's comments about someone who had stood against Hardie about ten years previously: the opponent 'Might as well have stayed home, for they may as well try to shift a mountain as

(8) G.D.H. Cole, A History of the Labour Party from 1914

(1969 ed.) p. 21

(9) Kitchener Papers P.R.O./30/57/73 WS/& Letter from Halifax to Kitchener, 5 October 1914

(10) R.A.S. Redmayne, The British Coal Mining Industry during the War (1923) pp. 12-13

shift Keir Hardie. He's here for life".⁽¹¹⁾ Yet the war changed that. Hardie returned to the area to speak at Aberdare on 6 August 1914, and began to express his opinions on events, but he was unable to complete his speech because of interruptions. Such treatment upset Hardie deeply. A.J.P. Taylor has studied his reaction and discovered that 'the outbreak of war broke his heart. What shattered him was not so much the war in itself as that the working class went along with it. He said after a rowdy meeting at Merthyr, his constituency, "I understand what Christ suffered in Gethsemane as well as any man living".⁽¹²⁾ His stance was criticised in the national press, which accused him of trying to draw attention to himself by his statements.

The flood of recruits to the Army was surprising, if only because of the low status of the soldier. When Jack Jones had enlisted during the Boer War, his father told him that "only them that runs from the p'lice, an' them that are too lazy to work, goes to the army",⁽¹³⁾ but now everything was different, and there was a rush to the recruiting stations. This was not confined to the young. Sir Ellis Hume-Williams, the barrister and M.P., recalled that, with the declaration of war came for him 'the problem with which every other middle aged man was at once faced, namely "How to get a job of some sort at the Front".⁽¹⁴⁾ Margaret Cole has observed that after the

(11) J. Jones, Unfinished Journey (Oxford 1937) p. 118

(12) A.J.P. Taylor 'The Man in the Cloth Cap in Politics and Wartime and Other Essays (1964) p. 48

(13) J. Jones op.cit. p. 95

(14) E. Hume-Williams, The World, the House, and the Bar

Germans had invaded Belgium, the 'great majority of those who at the beginning of August were pacifist or "non-interventionist" now eagerly wished to go to war'.⁽¹⁵⁾ An anonymous writer has claimed that the literary editor of the Evening Standard told him at the beginning of August: 'What's rattling me is that I don't believe in it - I hate it and wish I'd got the pluck to stand up at street corners and say so - I'm going to join in as soon as we're landed in the mess. And I'm a pacifist'.⁽¹⁶⁾ It was the same with Sir Arthur Markham. His sister wrote later that the war 'swept away every other thought and consideration, his near pacifism vanishing in a night'.⁽¹⁷⁾ The Nation, a paper that had previously expressed anti-war sentiments, discussed the concept of an international working class strike against the war, and declared that it was theoretically sound, but the workers of Belgium were unable to strike, and the British had to help them.⁽¹⁸⁾ As Beatrice Webb put it, 'with one tiny exception, the whole nation is unanimous for the war'.⁽¹⁹⁾ The press tried to encourage more vigorous recruiting. The popular papers carried patriotic stories which demonstrated that the nation was united at this time, and the music hall developed a new repertoire of patriotic songs such as Pether and Trevor's 'Your King and Country Needs You'.

(15) M. Cole op.cit. p. 50

(16) Almost Anybody, About Nothing Whatever (1936) p. 117

(17) V. Markham, Friendship's Harvest (1956) p. 23

(18) Nation, 15 August 1914, pp. 728-730

(19) M.I. Cole (ed.) Beatrice Webb's Diaries 1912-1924 (1952)

H.A. Gwynne, the editor of the Morning Post showed how oblivious to death he had become when he wrote to Lord Kitchener, the Secretary of State for War. Gwynne advocated that Britain 'should fix on a number, say 620,000 men, as the number of troops that are always going to represent Great Britain in the firing line throughout this war, and that all other forces being raised will be used only as feeders to this force so that whatever happens there will be an army of 620,000 men, composed of the most efficient soldiers in the world, always in front of the German'.⁽²⁰⁾ This sort of an attitude was well depicted by H.G. Wells in his novel Mr. Britling Sees It Through (1916), in which an intellectual middle aged man, who had not believed that war was possible, became a super patriot at the outbreak of hostilities, though subsequently, with the death of his son, and their former German tutor, he began to think of the futility of war.

However, in 1914, virtually everyone supported the war. The Times was 'convinced that the young nation will respond with eagerness to...take up arms in this righteous struggle with a stern determination to fight for their homes and to crush for ever the menace which has threatened all Europe'. It was in no way surprised that the threat of an international strike against war had not materialised: 'The class war of Socialism and the international peace movement associated with

(20) Kitchener Papers P.R.O./30/57/73 SW/6 Letter from

Gwynne to Kitchener, 24 September 1914

it have evaporated into words and are in process of collapsing altogether...Now the occasion has arisen and the doctrine has been put to the test what do we find? France has gone to war with a Socialist at the head of her Government, supported by the greatest anti-militarist trade union organisation, which has issued a proclamation calling on all Frenchmen to serve their country; and one of the most famous prophets of anti-militarism in Europe, M. Gustave Herve, who was the other day preaching desertion to soldiers, led the way in asking permission to join the colours...M. Vanderville...the leader of the Belgian Socialists...has joined the Ministry. The Socialist Party has officially declared for the military campaign. Socialists have always allowed the armed defence of one's own country...(except) the largest Socialist body in this country. Its horror of militarism is so uncompromising that it even objects to the Boy Scouts...Defensive war involves the admission that Germany, against whom they are fighting, is engaged in an aggressive one. It is significant that the German Social Democrats have always declined assent to the anti-war Labour proposals...The spectacle we are witnessing furnishes convincing proof that the tie of nationality is still incomparably stronger than that of class... The evidence at home is not less emphatic. With one accord employers and employed have called a truce to the stubborn and widespread conflicts which were being waged in continuance of the industrial warfare that has signalized the last four years...Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's resignation of the Leadership of the Labour Party indicates their failure'. (21) Fabian Ware

(21) Times, 7, 10 August 1914, p. 7

was equally able to accept the situation, for several years previously, he had observed that 'so long as...patriotism is the controlling force, dominating all classes, the supreme instinct in the hour of crisis, no renunciation and no sacrifice will be thought too great in the cause of unity'.⁽²²⁾ The Spectator adopted a similar argument, pointing out that war 'has proved what any man with any real knowledge of his country should have known beforehand, that class differences are only skin deep. The unity that arises from common nationality supercedes the relatively trivial differences that arise from economic and social causes'.⁽²³⁾ Most papers made some comment along the same lines, and journals such as the Daily Mail, the Daily Graphic, the Manchester Guardian and the Quarterly Review noted how the working class had rallied to the support of the nation in her hour of peril, proving that the differences within the community were less important than the continuance of the nation itself. The Daily Express believed that 'the enthusiastic loyalty of the leaders and of the rank and file of the British trade unions is one of the happiest characteristics of the situation, and it prophesies more clearly than anything the birth of a newer and a better Britain when the storm has passed. We are glad to admit that men whom we have been forced to attack in these columns are co-operating with the Government in many important particulars'.⁽²⁴⁾ The Daily Telegraph, which had been one of the most bitter

(22) F. Ware, The Worker and his Country (1912) p. 276

(23) Spectator, 29 August 1914, p. 289

(24) Daily Express, 17 August 1914, p. 2

opponents of organised labour, discovered 'the national leadership of labour, as was to be expected, staunch for the country and the cause of humanity'. The National Anthem had been sung in the House of Commons by William Crooks, the Labour M.P. This pleased the Daily Telegraph: 'Who was it who gave the signal for the thrilling confession of the patriot's faith that lives in every heart today? It was one of the leading spirits of that powerful Labour group upon which, again, the unteachable ignorance of Berlin built such high hopes; the party that was to raise the British working class against the war, against the Monarchy, against the foundations of the State for the benefit of the bloated ambitions of Prussian aristocracy'. (25)

Reynolds's Newspaper had opposed the war, but, at the onset, supported Britain, and agreed that the worker 'has been as patriotic and as ready - more ready in most cases - to sacrifice himself in the interests of the nation as has the members of other classes'. (26) This was a common attitude amongst Liberals and supporters of the Labour Party. C.P. Scott, the editor of the Manchester Guardian, wrote to W. Mellor of the Manchester and Salford trade and Labour Council: 'I am strongly of the opinion that the war ought not to have taken place...but once in it the whole future of our nation is at stake and we have no choice but do the utmost we can to secure success'. (27) The President of the Labour Party in

(25) Daily Telegraph, 5, 6 September 1914, p. 6

(26) Reynolds's Newspaper, 16 August 1914, p. 1

(27) T. Wilson (ed.) The Political Diaries of C.P. Scott

1916, George Wardle, told the Annual conference that he was 'as convinced today as I was at the onset that there could only have been one greater tragedy than the war, and that would have been for Britain to have kept out of it. I am proud of the fact that the majority of the Labour Party threw itself into the struggle with all the ardour at its command, and my only regret has been that the decision was not unanimous'. (28)

G.R. Tweedie, a Liberal agent, noticed the same unity: 'The finest thing nationally about the War was the grim determination of almost every class of the community, without distinction of class or creed, to face any sacrifice that might be necessary to secure victory'. (29) The Duke of Lincolnshire wrote to Lord Curzon, just after the former's son-in-law had been killed in battle. His daughter was heartbroken, and the Duke of Lincolnshire clearly felt deeply for her loss, but dismissed his personal grief, and urged Curzon to 'think of the glorious way in which all our countrymen are behaving'. (30) Thus, a common sacrifice was tending to unite the nation at that time.

One consequence of the outbreak of war was the end of industrial disputes. The long and bitter strike of London building workers had terminated at the declaration of hostilities, as had the Liverpool dock strike, which had

(28) Report of the 15th Annual Conference of the Labour Party (1916) p. 83, 24 January 1916

(29) G.R. Tweedie, Yesterday (1932) p. 209

(30) Curzon Papers Eur.Mss.122/96. Letter from Lincolnshire to Curzon, 22 September 1914

begun on 13 July 1914. The Gelli Pit, belonging to the Cory brothers had been closed since October 1910 over a dispute about price lists, and the South Wales Miners' Federation had declared that none of its members could work there. This ban was lifted with the outbreak of war. Thus, the unions were making concessions in the war effort. This was illustrated further after the Government had taken over control on the railways. On 1 October 1914, a committee of eleven managers met the union leaders and agreed on a truce for the duration - no strikes, and the men renounced their claims for an eight hour day.

The labour leaders had been caught in a web of patriotism, which was well reflected by Crooks singing the National Anthem in the House of Commons in September 1914. It was, perhaps, not very surprising that the more orthodox labour men should become involved in this way. Thus, it was no shock to see a chapter of B. Fuller's The Life Story of the Rt. Hon. J.H. Thomas (1933) entitled 'The Recruiting Sergeant', or even to hear the miners' leader Herbert Smith described as 'patriotic to the core', because of his undeviating support for the war effort. (31) However, even some of the men who had been regarded as militant activists, such as Captain Tupper of the Seamen's Union gained a reputation for their vigorous encouragement of recruitment.

The anti-war group, centred around the Independent Labour Party, retained its fervour, despite a great deal of hostility.

(31) J. Lawson, The Man in the Cap. The Life of Herbert Smith (1941) p. 128

Margaret Cole has recalled that there was opposition to the war from all groups of society, including the Cabinet, the middle class, such as her father, on the Clyde, and in the South Wales coalfields, amongst the most class conscious.⁽³²⁾ Certainly, ordinary working folk were sometimes prepared to take a stand. For example, R.M. Fox, in his autobiography, remembers the war years well. He had just won a Co-operative Scholarship to Ruskin College, but the outbreak of hostilities prevented the reopening of the College. On Sundays, he used to go to Finsbury Park, where he asked "Have you got a sweating employer or a rack-renting landlord you can spare? Let him join up to fight for humanity, for civilisation, for democracy, for the women and children, for all those causes in which he has always been so enthusiastic".⁽³³⁾ The Home Office kept files on those who were known to oppose the war, and they were kept up to date by reports from the police and from local citizens who objected to unpatriotic speeches at such a time. The Home Office would issue instructions to prosecute if it was considered absolutely necessary, but the real enemies of the anti-war group came from the local population, who could threaten and even attack speakers whenever they wished.

Thus, the outbreak of war had changed the outlook of the majority of the British people. A fortnight before that date, industrial unrest was rife, and many expected even more serious internal disorder. The working class was distrusted

(32) M. Cole op.cit. p. 53

(33) R.M. Fox, Smoky Crusade (1938) p. 192

because of its militancy, while large sections of the workers were prepared, even anxious, to overthrow the authority of their employers at any time. The country was seething with unrest and agitation, yet within a few days, as far as the majority of the population was concerned, this attitude had disappeared, and had been replaced by a new dominant force, that of patriotism. Moreover, the middle and upper classes did not seem particularly surprised that the working man had not rejected his country, and participated in the international strike against war, to which the International Socialist movement had pledged itself. On the contrary, it seems to have been expected that the working man would behave as he did, and respond to the call made to him by his country. Some comment was made on this topic, but it was simply to point out that the working classes had acted in the way that the rest of the society considered proper, rather than relief that the militancy had not continued, with the needs of the nation ignored. Initially, it is surprising that the reaction to this burst of patriotism should have been one of nonchalance, as though no-one could have thought that any other behaviour was possible, but a more careful consideration reveals that the middle and upper class were responding quite normally, given the social structure of Edwardian England. The outbreak of strikes had been opposed, because the lower classes were not supposed to act in a manner contrary to the interests and wishes of their employers and the welfare of the community. Consequently, such manifestations of discontent were blamed on demagogues, rather than on the mass of the men themselves. When a crisis arose - be it a pit accident or a war - they

would then act in the decent British way. Patriotism had transcended class, but the Edwardian could not have anticipated anything else.

Chapter XI

Conclusions

The term "public opinion" is regularly used as an argument for pursuing a particular policy, yet there is no such thing as a single "public opinion", which can be invoked to describe the attitude of the nation to a particular event. Over any issue, there is likely to be a collection of essentially similar views, which vary in intensity. It is extremely likely that there will also be a variety of opposing beliefs, which, again, will vary in strength. Opinion will shift over time, and the people who agree on one point might well be opposed to each other on another topic. Hence, public opinion is difficult to measure, and can only be related at best to one event, or series of similar events.

When attempting to gauge public opinion, it is necessary to study all those factors which help to create it - the mass media, speeches, articles and books, as well as important individuals within a group. In addition, there is the instinctive reaction of a person - perhaps irrational and ill-informed, but nevertheless an opinion based on an inner feeling. Any analysis of public opinion in years gone by is likely to be even more difficult than a contemporary study because of the scarcity of some material, and this has proved the case in investigating the reaction to labour unrest in Britain before the First World War. Particular emphasis has been given to newspapers, because they were the most prolific source. The public and private views of

politicians, industrialists, trade unionists and individuals have been included whenever they have been uncovered, but, despite efforts to expand this side of the study, newspapers have tended to dominate the work. This is unfortunate, but unavoidable. It does mean that there may appear to be a series of more forceful opinions than was the case, and the Conservative bias of the press could present a somewhat distorted impression of events. However, it has raised several questions. The press is often accused of producing propaganda, so as to sway public opinion. This study attempts to look at the role of newspapers in the formulation of opinion, in the light of several current theories on this question.

The years 1911-14 saw the worst outbreak of industrial unrest since the Board of Trade began to keep records. There were more strikes, more people involved, and more working days lost than ever before. Moreover, these were often not simple stoppages in a single workplace, but regional or national strikes. The first-ever national rail strike took place in 1911; the first national coal strike in 1912. The walk out by sailors in 1911 was also national, while the disputes in the docks in the same year spread around the country from one port to another. In the Midlands, groups of unskilled men left work one after another in 1913. There was a new element in this because while there had been periods of high strike activity before, the strikes had not been so widespread. Of the serious disputes, perhaps only the Great Dock Strike of 1889, the coal lock-out of 1893, and the engineers' dispute of 1897 can be compared with those of 1911-14, as they,

alone, involved a large number of workers. However, they were by no means national stoppages. The 1889 Dock Strike involved only the Port of London; the coal lock-out was confined to the English Federated Area; the dispute of the engineers, at its peak, affected only 702 firms and 47,500 workers. These were the only major cessations of work prior to 1911-14, that can be compared to that period. It is instructive to look, briefly, at these disputes before venturing some conclusions on the main theme, for the similarities and contrasts between the reaction to these two sets of disputes may perhaps allow us to judge what was general and what was unique in 1911-14.

The main contrasts, apart from the passage of time between them, was that the earlier disputes to be examined were seen as single events, whereas the public attitude in 1911-14 was coloured by the fact that these disputes followed each other rapidly, and could possibly be seen as part of the same movement. A movement of a new order and magnitude with a powerful cumulative impact, as compared with strikes and lock-outs in earlier times, ^{meant that} any hostility or fear roused would by then ~~was~~ likely to be correspondingly intensive.

The story of the Dock Strike is well known. The permanent dockers received a regular weekly wage, but the casuals had to wait at the gates for jobs, and were paid 5d an hour - 4d at Tilbury - when they were employed by a company. There were also contractors, who were paid a sum of money by a company to do a piece of work. They would bargain with the men over wage rates. If the supply of labour was much higher than the demand, the wages received by the men could be as low as 3d an hour. Led by such men

as Ben Tillett, Tom Mann and John Burns, the dockers went on strike, demanding a minimum employment of four hours, the abolition of contract and piecework payments, and a minimum wage of 6d an hour, with 8d for overtime. The publicity given to the dockers helped their cause; subscriptions came from as far afield as Australia to keep the strike going, and the Roman Catholic Cardinal Manning intervened to help end the dispute, because 'I found things going from bad to worse, and how much misery was the result. At last, from positive information, I became certain that fresh efforts which were about to be made to bring labourers from a distance...would lead to violent resistance, probably to bloodshed. Finding that no other medium acceptable to the combatants appeared to be available, I resolved to offer my humble services with the endeavour to bring them to meet together'.

On 6 September 1889, the Committee of Conciliation met at Mansion House. Present were Cardinal Manning, the Bishop of London, the Lord Mayor of London, Sydney Buxton, Lord Brassey, Sir John Lubbock, Ben Tillett, and John Burns. The latter two agreed that the 6d an hour should be paid from 1 January 1890, and the Company agreed, but declined to make any extra overtime payment. The men's rejection of this caused the Bishop of London to withdraw, but Manning persuaded the Lord Mayor to remain, and then talked both sides into accepting the rise from 1 November 1889. Referring to the directors, he observed that 'I never in my life preached to so impenitent a congregation'. (1)

(1) E.S. Purcell, Life of Cardinal Manning (1896) pp. 665, 662

This strike was the first major stoppage that affected the public. The food supply of London was necessarily interrupted, as were those industries which relied upon imported materials. Nevertheless, popular opinion sided with the dockers, possibly because of the good publicity they received in the newspapers. The Manchester Guardian noted that 'a remarkable feature of this struggle is the very large amount of sympathy which has been shown among all classes with the claims of the men. Unquestionably there has been a widely prevailing desire for their success, founded not so much upon a deliberate consideration of the matters in dispute as questions of business, as on a commiseration for the hard lot of a multitude of people whose occupation is intermittent and precarious, and whose rate of payment, even with continuous employment, could not be considered liberal'.⁽²⁾ That was one side of the reaction. The other was well illustrated by the Times, which had begun by supporting the dockers, but, by 28 August, was not so convinced: 'While we continue to sympathise with the desire of the dock labourers to ameliorate their conditions, it is impossible not to feel some apprehension concerning the developments which the movement may take. The tendency of excited men in such circumstances is to get out of hand... Evidence is accumulating that intimidation is playing an appreciable, if not an important, part in this strike'. Three days later, the stoppage had become 'nothing less than a deliberate attack upon the social organisation of the metropolis', and by 2 September, it was insisting that if the

(2) Manchester Guardian, 2 September 1889, p. 5

inactivity continued, 'it must be conducted with a proper regard for personal freedom', by which the writer meant that strike breakers should not be interfered with. Indeed, 'the police have too often remained passive spectators of the rowdy violence offered to men who wished to be allowed to exercise their rights of working for whomever they pleased'. By Christmas, the Times was arguing that employers 'ought to take the lead in organising, disciplining, and encouraging men who wish to work. If picketing is legal, as seems to be the theory of the police, then it must also be legal to picket the pickets. If a union can lawfully beset all the roads to a manufactory with paid bullies, why cannot employers take a leaf out of their books'.⁽³⁾

Thus, two quite distinct views had emerged: what appears to have been a large section of the community, including such notables as Cardinal Manning, who were appalled at the low wages of the dockers, and hoped that they would be successful. It is significant, as Llewellyn Smith and Vaughan Nash point out, that 'the press was on the side of the men; the tide of public opinion was fast rising in their favour; subscriptions were beginning to pour in from all quarters'⁽⁴⁾ - and it was those subscriptions which maintained the strike. The authors imply that it was the line taken by the press that moulded public opinion, a debatable

(3) Times, 28 August 1889, p. 9; 31 August 1889, p. 9;

2 September 1889, p. 7; 24 December 1889, p. 9

(4) H.L. Smith and V. Nash, The Story of the Dockers' Strike

(1889) p. 68

contention, but they do indicate a large measure of support for the men. The opposite attitude was expressed by the Times, whose dislike of industrial militancy increased as the dispute continued, so that by the resumption of work, it was a bitter enemy of strikes. Many employers felt the same way, and began to organise their defences, in case of further attacks by the working classes.

As has already been noted, the owners joined together in the Shipping Federation in September 1890, and established registry offices in every port, which, in 1891, enforced the Federation Ticket, the possession of which gave preference in employment in return for an agreement to sail with non-unionists. Strikes against this were defeated by the Shipping Federation, which then intensified its efforts by encouraging free labour associations to break strikes. The most famous of these was William Collison's National Free Labour Association, which was founded in 1893. It had regional offices, and could provide strike breakers to any part of the country, though it lacked skilled members, and so was useful only in disputes of manual workers.

Another group of employers to become involved in a debate with their men, leading to a stoppage, were the coal owners. Prices were falling in 1893, and in consequence the owners announced a reduction in wages. By 1893, the men of South Wales, Northumberland, and Durham had submitted to this, and on 30 June, a reduction was demanded for the English colliers, and the employers gave notice to terminate contracts by the end of July. The miners refused to accept, so that 300,000 were locked out, but eventually the union

decided to permit all the men who did not face a reduction to return to work, on the payment on a levy of 1s a day to the union. This levy went to a fund to alleviate distress. The coffers were swollen by the actions of A.E. Fletcher, the editor of the Daily Chronicle, who published articles about the hardships suffered by the men and their families, and who opened a subscription list for contributions to help ease this misery.

This, unlike the other, was not a dispute without violence. The most serious example of this centred around the Ackton Hall Colliery in Yorkshire. There had been a disturbance, some wagons were overturned and the troops were called in. When the crowd had failed to disperse, the soldiers opened fire, killing two, and injuring sixteen more. This caused a considerable amount of bitterness, and made a settlement even more difficult than before. At the end of October, the President of the Board of Trade, A.J. Mundella, suggested a joint meeting, which took place on 3 and 4 November. The owners asked for a reduction, though less than previously, but the men insisted on a return at the old wages. Thus, there was deadlock, until, in the words of Page Arnot, 'a step was taken till then unprecedented in the history of the coal trade' - the Prime Minister, Gladstone, intervened, and in a letter dated 13 November 1893, asked the men to a meeting with Lord Rosebery, the Foreign Secretary, as Chairman. They met on 17 November, and agreed on an even smaller reduction than the revised demands of the owners, to begin on 1 February 1894, with the men resuming work at once on the old rates until then. A Conciliation Board

composed of an equal number of employers' and miners' representatives and an outside Chairman was to be established to determine the wages from 1 February 1894.

Page Arnot has pointed out that 'if it was not the first time that a trade dispute had become the concern of the whole country - the London Dock Strike of 1889 may hold this priority - it was certainly the first occasion on which it was realised that a lock-out of coal miners could have a slow, paralysing effect upon other industries and upon British trade. Hence the Government, however reluctantly, was in the end bound to intervene. It was also the first time for over a century that sympathy towards the pitmen was widely manifested beyond the ranks of trade unionism'.⁽⁵⁾

Certainly, there was some support for the action of the colliers. The Manchester Guardian, for example, felt that they were 'fully justified in resisting terms which would permanently depress mining labour below a reasonable standard of life'.⁽⁶⁾ On the other hand, opposition to the men was led, once again, by the Times, which condemned 'the obstinate vanity of disappointed leaders' who refused to accept the reductions, which were the 'inevitable consequences of the prevailing economic depression'. The efforts of Gladstone and Rosebery were not praised, but described as 'a doubtful step'.⁽⁷⁾ That is hardly surprising. The attitude of the Times

(5) R.P. Arnot, The Miners 1889-1910 (1949) pp. 249, 355

(6) Manchester Guardian, 10 October 1893, p. 7

(7) Times, 23 August 1893, p. 7; 8 August 1893, p. 9;

18 November 1893, p. 9

was in principle conservative, in that it did not want to see change unless it was absolutely necessary, and it did not believe that the role of a Government was to intervene in the free workings of the economy. Consequently, it was duty bound to be sceptical about the role of the Prime Minister and his colleagues during the dispute even when they had been successful in settling it.

Just as the Dock Strike had produced one group which sided with the men, and another which felt that the employers were in the right, so the coal lock-out of 1893 led to the crystallisation of two opposing points of view. The two distinct opinions that emerged were held by the same people on both occasions.

The next major industrial dispute produced a similar split in the community. After a dispute of engineering workers on the Clyde and in Belfast, the Federation of Employers' Associations was founded in 1896, thus uniting the various unions of owners in the engineering industry. By 26 May 1897, over a hundred London firms had conceded the forty-eight hour week, but ten days later, the Employers' Federation formed a London Branch, which the Amalgamated Society of Engineers refused to recognise. The union continued to press for the forty-eight hour week, and served notice on those firms that had not granted it to yield, or face a strike on 3 July 1897. The Employers' Federation decided that this was a national problem, and was not confined to London, and declared that if there was a strike, a national lock-out of 25% of all engineers would begin on 13 July. 17,000 union members walked out on hearing this threat, and by the beginning of

October, the lock-out had spread to 579 firms and affected 45,000 men, about half of whom belonged to the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. Voluntary subscriptions showed that a section of the public sympathised with the men: George Cadbury gave £800, and by November, about £116,000 had been received. Nevertheless, as that month drew to an end, with 702 firms, and 47,500 men involved, the costs were becoming prohibitive: the union was spending over £25,000 a week on benefits. It could not afford to maintain these payments, and by January 1898, the men were forced back to work.

This dispute did not arouse a great deal of comment, even though it had encompassed a large number of people, for they were away from the public eye. When the docks closed down, shortages occurred, and the consumers would observe that the strike was having an effect upon their lives, but a lock-out of engineering workers would take a long time before its effects were felt on the daily lives of ordinary citizens. Consequently, it attracted correspondingly less interest. The Times, it may be worth noting, continued its staunch support for the employers, an attitude from which it had not deviated since 1889.

A great victory for the anti-labour section of the community came in 1900. After a strike of the employees of the Taff Vale Railway Company, the owners sued the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants for damages alleged to have been caused by the loss of profits during the period of the strike. The case went as far as the House of Lords, which declared that the Union was liable for damages of £23,000. This decision virtually rendered the strike impossible,

as the unions would henceforth have to recompense the companies concerned for any losses caused by the strike, whereas the whole purpose of such a stoppage is normally to inflict such a loss on the company that it becomes obliged to surrender to the wishes of the employees. The Times was delighted that the unions would suffer in this way, and rejoiced that the decision 'deprives them of an immunity which has been often and grossly abused...We believe it will commend itself to the natural sense of justice of the British people'.

The Liberal Government decided to pass a Trades Disputes Act in 1906 to change the law so that the unions were not liable for damages caused in the course of a strike. The more conservative section of the community was outraged. The Times condemned the Bill's 'radically unjust provisions', while letters published in ~~the~~ that newspaper reflected the same attitude. A.V. Dicey, the authority on the British Constitution, pointed out that it 'confers a privilege on trade unions, and this privilege is in reality the power to commit wrongs without incurring the risk of having to pay compensation to the victim of wrong doing. Is it, I ask, the deliberate will of the nation that a privilege so opposed to every principle of justice should be conferred upon every trade union throughout the land?'. A month later, Dicey insisted that the effect of the Act 'menaces and authority of the State'. Godfrey Lushington argued that 'to grant immunity beforehand to a class to do what ex confesso is both unlawful and mischievous is a degrading proposal'.⁽⁸⁾

(8) Times, 23 July 1901, p. 9; 2 November 1906, p. 7; 29 October 1906, p. 8; 29 November 1906, p. 11; 4 December 1906, p. 4

Thus, the Times and others who shared similar views had made their opinions on the labour movement quite clear: they objected to strikes, to picketing, and to the power of trade unions. Every major incident had provoked the same type of comment from them. The unrest of the years 1911-14 was more likely to confirm such attitudes, rather than break them down, for the nation was faced with strikes on a magnitude never previously experienced, and the general public was becoming increasingly involved, precisely because the disputes affected the immediate well-being of the nation. This is an extremely important point. For the first time, the strikes were hurting the public at large, and were not merely contests between employer and employed. This altered the situation, in that the whole of the society was aware that the strikes were taking place, and were liable to suffer as a result. Consequently, most people were likely to have opinions about the unrest, apportioning blame on the men or the owners, according to their own feelings, status, and political persuasion. Thus opinion tends to be public, rather than being confined to the press.

The views of the newspapers, however, were extremely varied, just as were those in the country at large, and it is not surprising that the opinions expressed by individuals should be repeated in one part or another of the press. The public utterances of politicians were often repeated in the editorials of those journals with a similar outlook, while the private writings of individuals both prominent in public affairs and ordinary private citizens, often reappeared in a similar fashion. It would be difficult to maintain that public

opinion was shaping that of the press, but it would not be unreasonable to suggest that the newspapers were apt to repeat attitudes that had already been adopted, at least by one or another section of the community. Their reiteration in the columns of a newspaper could well have impressed themselves on the thoughts of the rest of the society in the troubled years of 1911-14, when everyone suffered to some extent from the working class militancy.

The Dean of St. Paul's, Dr. Inge argued that strikes had ceased to be contests between masters and men, and had instead become conspiracies against the whole community. As such, Dr. Inge considered that they should be regarded as acts of civil war, and repressed relentlessly by the Government.(9) He was by no means isolated in his opinions. As strikes followed each other in the period 1911-14, similar sentiments became remarkably widespread. Be it a stoppage of seamen, dockers, or miners, the men were decried for causing great suffering upon a large part of the nation, of trying to starve the community, and of conspiracy to attack the country. Anarchy was taking over, or civil war was just around the corner. Of course, in such cases, it was the employers who represented order, and the strikers who were trying to disrupt this. The owners were never accused of causing stoppages by their intransigent attitude. The enemies of the nation were the working men who organised such widespread disorder. Indeed, they were often compared with external enemies, whose attacks had to be repulsed with all the means available to the

(9) Manchester Guardian, 9 February 1914, p.

State, or, alternatively, they had to be dealt with as traitors who had organised a rebellion. Always, it was the workers who were the wrongdoers. This was not an uncommon view, and it is instructive. Those who maintained such a position did not hold its corollary, that to prevent people performing vital jobs from striking implies an obligation on the part of the community to ensure that such jobs were adequately paid. No such sentiments were expressed from these quarters, and those who wanted all strikes to be declared illegal, or at least all those strikes which would affect the community at large, did not feel that wages were too low. They did not want to investigate the causes of the unrest, and do something to prevent it, but merely to stamp it out, and maintain the existing structure of the society. When such sentiments were uttered by a clergyman, one is forced to conclude that blind prejudice was masquerading as Christian judiciousness.

Thus, the reaction of the traditionally conservative groups in the country towards industrial unrest had not changed for decades. They continued to condemn militancy and the effective cause of the breakdown, especially when the general public suffered, or when the nation was felt to be at risk.

It may be worth noting that such people did not want to abolish trade unions as such, but having accepted their existence, wanted their role to be closely circumscribed. The Conservative Party, in a series of pamphlets, outlined the position that it believed the trade unions should have in the industrial process. One assured its readers that 'the

Conservative Party, has, whether in or out of power, the interests of the workers always at heart', and in another article, pointed out that 'Unionists (i.e. Conservatives) wish to strengthen Trade Unions for their primary object, which is collective bargaining and obtaining better wages and conditions of labour -

'AND

'TO FREE TRADE UNIONISTS, whether Liberals or Unionists, from the Tyranny of Socialist caucuses, who are trying to grasp their wages in order to glorify themselves and promote their mad schemes of Socialism'. (10)

The official Conservative policy on trades unions was confirmed at the 1912 Conference, which attacked the agitators who had fermented the strikes, and who had no following among 'the respectable working class of the country'. Thus, the Tories are clear in their attitude. The unions should be divorced from politics, which is what they believed most of the members wanted anyway, and should concentrate on legitimate efforts to improve the lot of the worker. That section of the press which lent its support to traditional Conservatism, such as the Standard and the Spectator, argued this point on several occasions. This was totally illogical and self-contradictory. The Conservatives were claiming that they wanted the trade unions to improve the lot of the workers, yet they attacked the same unions whenever they

(10) Conservative Party, Social Reform: the Unionist Party and the Miner (1911) p. 16; The Truth about the Unionists and the Trades Union Bill (1912), p. 1.

employed the sanction of a strike of course, wages were often raised by peaceful negotiation, but such discussions were far more likely to be productive for the men when they could present the ultimate threat of a strike backed by a trade union. Yet it was the very use of this threat which was opposed. It would therefore, not be unreasonable to paraphrase this attitude by saying that the traditional Tories did not want trade unions at all, but as it was politically inexpedient to say so, it was necessary to limit the powers of the trade unions, so as to render them effectively impotent, while appearing reasonable and open-minded.

Certainly, trade unions were not expected to advocate any type of militancy. Lord Devonport, in his resolute refusal to even discuss the issues with the leaders of the trade unions during the 1912 Dock Strike found many supporters with a similar outlook, who believed that the role of the workers in industry was to do as they were told, and work for the benefit of the national economy - and the profit of the employer. Indeed, the unrest of the period 1911-14 revealed that when the employers went to the extreme of even refusing to meet the strikers, a group of the traditionalists - usually Conservative in political affiliation - would applaud the stand that the owners were taking. For such people, the working class were precisely that - the men and women who performed the menial tasks for the ruling and employing classes. Just as the workers should work, the employers should employ, and the rulers should rule. Of course, it was expected that the employers would be fair to their workers, and the rulers would rule in the

best interests of the whole nation. Lord Lansdowne was indignant at the suggestion that the House of Lords operated in its own class interest, against the working class: 'It is intolerable that this kind of fiction should be allowed to prevail and to get hold of the mind of the country'.⁽¹¹⁾

This was a perfectly reasonable reaction, for the traditional aristocratic families were convinced that they were acting in the best interests of the whole community. Their right to rule had not gone unchallenged in the past. It had been the main point of contention from the English to the French Revolutions, and during the Reform movement of 1830-32, but the workers did not begin to question this situation until the Chartists, and then the matter went dormant, especially after the skilled workers were enfranchised. Its re-emergence in a period of working class militancy indicates that attitudes were changing, and the unskilled worker, who, fifty years before had been unorganised and ignored, was now anxious to demand that for which he had previously not even asked. It must be remembered that previously, there had been no organised labour movement. Trade Unions were almost entirely confined to skilled workers, who were relatively better paid than in 1911, and the associations aimed to create an image of decency and respectability, so as to gain favour with the middle and upper classes. Thus, trade unionism tended to be divorced from politics, and there were no political parties aimed to represent the workers, who did not even have the vote until 1867 - and many were not

(11) House of Lords Debates, Vol. 7, Col. 23, 6 February 1911

best interests of the whole nation. Lord Lansdowne was indignant at the suggestion that the House of Lords operated in its own class interest, against the working class: 'It is intolerable that this kind of fiction should be allowed to prevail and to get hold of the mind of the country'.⁽¹¹⁾

This was a perfectly reasonable reaction, for the traditional aristocratic families were convinced that they were acting in the best interests of the whole community. Their right to rule had not gone unchallenged in the past. It had been the main point of contention from the English to the French Revolutions, and during the Reform movement of 1830-32, but the workers did not begin to question this situation until the Chartists, and then the matter went dormant, especially after the skilled workers were enfranchised. Its re-emergence in a period of working class militancy indicates that attitudes were changing, and the unskilled worker, who, fifty years before had been unorganised and ignored, was now anxious to demand that for which he had previously not even asked. It must be remembered that previously, there had been no organised labour movement. Trade Unions were almost entirely confined to skilled workers, who were relatively better paid than in 1911, and the associations aimed to create an image of decency and respectability, so as to gain favour with the middle and upper classes. Thus, trade unionism tended to be divorced from politics, and there were no political parties aimed to represent the workers, who did not even have the vote until 1867 - and many were not

(11) House of Lords Debates, Vol. 7, Col. 23, 6 February 1911

enfranchised until even later. The unskilled men were illiterate, poor, and fairly passive. However, from the mid 1880's, this began to change. Education was becoming more widespread, and the theory of Socialism was being expounded on street corners. Unions for unskilled workers began to be formed, and they were quickly associated with the newly formed political parties aimed to gain political representation for the workers.

In addition, the workers had enjoyed a rising standard of living from 1850 onwards, but from around 1900, this growth in prosperity ended. Prices rose, and wages did not keep pace, so that for many of the poorer paid, real incomes had fallen. This added to the discontent, and may have contributed to the growth of trade unions.

Certainly, mass unionism and Socialist parties had arrived in Britain, and the relationship of employers and employed, rulers and ruled, was to undergo a transformation. There was a very large section of the community which did not want to accept this change, and who wanted to retain the old, established relationships between the classes. Until such people could accept the changes in society brought about by these new forces, there would be unrest throughout the country. After all, the strikes were the result of the employers and the workmen failing to agree on terms, and they were not likely to see eye to eye if the employers wanted to retain the autocratic attitudes to labour which had prevailed half a century before, while the workers insisted on being accepted as people with rights, rather than just a subservient work force. Any disturbance of the existing relationship would

arouse the anger of the traditionalists, and they were not confined to the Tories. It must be remembered that the aristocratic Liberal and the aristocratic Conservative shared a similar upbringing and education, and held essentially similar assumptions. They were separated only by outward political differences, and were likely to think the same way when confronted with such basic issues as the class structure of the country, and the relationship of the classes. That assumes that such people would even feel it necessary to think about such things, which is unlikely, as crucial matters like those would not require thought: the correct, the only, attitudes had been inbred and firmly fixed in position by self-interest. Thus, in industrial matters, the traditionalists in both parties adhered to similar concepts. This was well illustrated by an article in the most influential Liberal paper, the Westminster Gazette, which warned against the destruction of trade unions, a notion that had been advocated. Such a proposal had to be resisted, because the defeat of organised labour would open the door for extremist agitators, who had to be opposed at all costs, because they wanted to alter the structure of the society. The Tories also insisted that all hard core militants should be excluded from the trade union movement, because it was they who encouraged unrest. It was thus the means used to achieve the same end which distinguished the different political parties.

The case of Driver Knox indicated that the two parties, and the various groups within the parties, could be unanimous on some issues. His convictions for drunkenness in a court

political parties were attempting to hide their real interests behind a propaganda attack on the dangers of working class militancy. It was merely the approach of the two groups which differed. The Conservatives tended to oppose trade unionism, or at least that type of trade unionism which could present a threat to the established order, while the Liberals were more inclined to give way on certain issues. A good example in the case of the recognition of trade unions by the employers. Membership was growing rapidly ~~1,111,000~~ ^{1,911,000} in 1900, compared with 4,135,000 in 1914 - and consequently, it was hardly surprising that the unions wanted to be able to negotiate directly with the employers. Moreover, as the strength of the men's associations grew, so they were able to achieve more for their members. If the advantages were concerned with working arrangements, everyone would benefit, whether they belonged to the organisation or not. The unions felt that this was unfair, and often urged the employers to grant a closed shop, where a condition of employment was to join an appropriate trade union. This was likely to be contested far more than the recognition of the union, but both demands were generally opposed, especially by the Unionists. This was well illustrated in the reaction to the Tillings dispute of September 1913, which began over the right of the men to wear trade union badges, and developed into a battle over trade union recognition, which some papers feared would spread into a demand for a closed shop.

Many Liberal journals had frequently advocated recognition, on the grounds that times had changed, and it was necessary for the employers to adapt to the new conditions,

and accept that the growth of trade unionism necessitated a different approach from earlier generations. Again, Liberals were more likely to accept the arguments of the men in labour disputes, and lend their support to the strikers. They were far more prepared to criticise poor working conditions, low pay, long hours, inadequate housing - indeed, the whole life of the poorly paid - and to use these factors to explain and perhaps even justify the unrest.

Thus, many of the events of the period 1911-14 appear to be related in two quite distinct ways, according to the political persuasion of the speaker or the writer. However, the matter was not so simple, nor would it be correct to assert that all these people wished to preserve the basic economic and social system, but the Liberals were more prepared to accept minor readjustments in the position of the working class to ensure this end than the Tories. There was in fact no such thing as a single Conservative or a single Liberal stance on any of these issues. While many newspapers remained loyal to their political party on every event others did not. Moreover, the intensity of feeling often varied from event to event. It is possible to devise a table to indicate the consistency of each paper in its reaction to every strike. Such a table can be seen overleaf.

This can only be regarded as a crude visual measure of the reliability and predictability of the papers' attitudes. Nevertheless, it does indicate that within the Unionists, there was a group who were likely to support the employers against their men in almost every possible event. Newspapers falling into this category would include the Standard, which

	Seamen	Docks	Liverpool	Railways	1911 in general	Dispute Cotton	Coal	1912 Docks	Knox	Richardson	1913-14 in general
<u>Liberal Papers</u>											
Daily News	A		B	B	B	E	A	A	D	A	B
Morning Leader	B			B	C	C	B				
Daily Chronicle		C		D	C	C	B	D	C	B	C
Westminster Gazette					C		B	D	D	D	C
Manchester Guardian	B	D	C	C	D	C	B	C	D	A	C
Nation					A		B	B	D	A	B
Reynolds's Newspaper	B	B			D		A	B	A	A	B
<u>Conservative Papers</u>											
Standard	D	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
Morning Post	D	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
Daily Telegraph	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	B	E
Times	D	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	C	E
Daily Graphic	D	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
Daily Express		E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	A	D
Daily Mail		E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	A	C
Financial Times	D	E	E	E	E		E	E	E	D	D
Economist	D	E	E	E	E	E	E	D	E	E	E
Observer					E		E	E			E
Spectator			E	E	E	E	E	E	E		E
Sunday Times	E	E	E	E	E		E	E			E
Referee	E				E		E	E			D
Weekly Dispatch	E			E	E	E	E	E	E	A	D
News of the World					B		C	C	B	B	C
People					C	D	D	D			C

KEY: A: extreme support for men; B: moderate support for men; C: comments both supporting and opposing the men
D: moderate support for employers; E: extreme support for employers. Blanks have been left where the statements were insufficient to provide any clear editorial view.

believed that an employer had an absolute right of action over his workers; the Times, whose studied moderation almost inevitably decided against the employees; the Daily Telegraph, which gave its support to the autocratic methods of the past with regularity; and the Morning Post, which, even in affairs like those of Driver Knox, Guard Richardson, and the Tilling Company, could not believe that the trade unions had a case. There was another section of the Tory press, including the Daily Graphic, Daily Mail, and Daily Express, which were just as afraid of the introduction of Socialism into the country, and were likely to side with the employers, especially in major disputes, but which could lend their support to the men on occasions. A centre group, which were usually described in the press directories of the time as Conservative in policy, such as the People and the News of the World, could not be predicted with accuracy. They would arrive at an opinion based on the evidence available, and it could support either men or management.

In the same way, the Tory politicians were extremely varied in their reaction to the labour unrest. Within the group of Members of Parliament who belonged to the Conservative Party there was no cohesive policy. There were those with traditional outlooks, and those who stated publicly that some people were paid too little. The Unionist Unofficial Reform Committee was particularly active in attempting to modify the party's policy on social matters. Members of this group had a far more liberal approach than, for example, the former Liberal Member of Parliament, Lord Devonport, whose actions during the 1912 Dock Strike quite

clearly established his position as a hard-line traditionalist. Thus, the Conservative Party had a whole host of differing attitudes to any situation, though it would be reasonable to assert that its members were quite likely to be traditionalists - certainly more likely than Liberals.

That should not, however, be taken to mean that the Liberal Party was homogeneous in its outlook. Just as the Tory press contained a variety of papers, which would take rather different lines when confronted with similar acts, so would parts of the Liberal press. Thus, the Daily News, and the Morning Leader - and after they had amalgamated, the resultant Daily News and Leader - the Nation and Reynolds's Newspaper were the most sympathetic to labour, but they could not be relied on to support the labour cause in every situation. The Knox case, the Leeds Corporation Strike, the London builders' lock out, and the stoppage at the Woolwich Arsenal all provided instances of these papers denouncing the activities of the unions. The Westminster Gazette, the only quality national paper of Liberal persuasion, tended towards moderation. It was unwilling to attack either side with a great deal of venom, perhaps because it did not want to jeopardise its position. The Manchester Guardian also did not like strikes, though, equally, it had little time for unreasonable employers, so that its views tended towards the sterile. The Daily Chronicle was similarly opposed to stoppages of work, and tried to encourage mediation. The opinions within the Liberal Party were even more varied than those exhibited by the Liberal press, and even within the Cabinet there was no unanimity. Lloyd George was

generally in harmony with the aspirations of the working classes, and he almost invariably advocated helping them, as long as this did not threaten his political position. He liked to be regarded as a radical and wished to preserve this image. Indeed, on these issues, he undoubtedly sympathised with the men, but at the same time he was sufficiently opportunistic to use his prestige with the workers to advance his standing within the Liberal Party. The letters of Herbert Samuel indicate that he, too, gave what assistance he could to the men, while Viscount Haldane held that the Government ought to intervene to end strikes, as a matter of political expediency. Others were not so favourably inclined towards this section of the community. Winston Churchill had achieved a reputation as a politician with views similar to those of Lloyd George, but his radicalism was waning within this period, and when he was Home Secretary, he frequently argued that firm measures ought to be taken against strikers. Asquith himself was known to have been very harsh in his criticism of the railwaymen in 1911. The leader of the South Wales Coalowners in 1912 - and this was the group which opposed the miners hardest of all - had been a Liberal M.P. for twenty-two years, before relinquishing his seat in 1910, while Lord Devenport, another vigorous opponent of strikes, had also been a Liberal Member of Parliament. On the other hand, there were Liberal politicians such as Chiozza Money, who were famous for their radical stances on social matters, and others, like Sir Arthur Markham, whose knowledge of coal mining and the collier meant that he would support the Miners' Federation in its demands for a

minimum wage although he was a coal owner himself

The Liberal Party was in no way a single, coherent body. It was divided on its attitude to social reform in general, and this very issue was to split the Party but a few years later. The reaction to labour unrest was a manifestation of these divergent views, for it was clear that the Liberal Party embraced an enormously diverse range of attitudes to working class organisations and to industrial unrest. Some were just as traditionalist as the most orthodox Tory, while others were almost as sympathetic to the cause of labour as the Labour Party. Consequently, it would be wrong to try to consider a single Liberal attitude, but it would be fair to say that most Liberals came somewhere between the traditional Tory and the Socialist on these issues.

Outside of the formal structure of political parties were writers such as Rowntree, Booth, and Cadbury, who investigated the conditions of the poor. Booth, for example, began his work to disprove allegations of poverty among the London poor, and became increasingly shocked with the conditions that he uncovered. On the basis of their studies, these men wrote with great sympathy of the plight of such people, and urged that something be done to improve their lot. These writers might not actually support the unrest, but they would increasingly understand its causes, and frequently did so very fully. Another group who could examine the motivation behind the disputes were the Fabians. Authors such as Mrs. Pezber Reeves denounced the living conditions of the lowly paid at least as loudly as the socially concerned industrialists. Both of these groups were essentially middle

class, but their attitudes provided a stark contrast with the typical middle-class reader of the Standard, and reinforced the picture of a society with a whole host of differing views on the structure of the society.

There were also some middle-class Socialists, but since the social composition of the Labour and Independent Labour Parties has not been investigated, so it is not possible to say how many. However, these groups, and their supporters who were not actually members, could be relied upon to give whatever encouragement they could to those who opposed capitalism by direct action. At the same time there was a wide variety of opinions, even within these parties.

Thus, to sum up, it would have been impossible to predict with absolute confidence the reaction of anyone merely by looking at his affiliation with one of the two main political groupings, and the emerging force of the Labour Party. Among them the most united group was the Conservatives. Basically, they concurred that the workers' actions in generating unrest were wrong, and should be prevented. Even the moderate Unionist Unofficial Reform Committee was working for that end, and was advocating compulsory arbitration in trade disputes. The Liberals were split, ranging from traditional Tory to neo-Socialist in their opinions on the militancy of the period. Possibly, the difference was in part based on the fact that the Liberals were in office, so it is possible to see the cohesiveness of the Unionists as a means of attacking the existing Government. After all, it had intervened in a large number of disputes and its actions were therefore a

legitimate party political matter. -

Of course, it had not been unknown even before 1906 for a Government to attempt to mediate during strikes - the Liberals had, for instance, done so during the coal lock-out of 1893 - though this was not something that had occurred very often. But in the period 1911-14, the Government regularly involved itself in such matters. George Askwith was appointed Chief Industrial Commissioner, and was expected to try to mediate in disputes. Lloyd George brought both sides together to end the rail strike of 1911; frequent negotiations involving the union, employers, and the Government failed to solve the threatened coal strike in 1912, so a Bill was passed by Parliament, giving the men at least part of what they wanted - the first time in over a century that the Government had done anything towards the fixing of men's wages. There was no direct intervention in the London Dock Strike of 1912, but there was activity behind the scenes, trying to apply pressure to persuade Lord Devonport to adopt a less stern attitude. In the case of Driver Knox, the Home Secretary actually sent a Commissioner to investigate a case that had already been tried in the courts. The Prime Minister intervened personally to end the strike at the Woolwich Arsenal, and ordered a Court of Inquiry. The Government even established the Industrial Tribunal, which could arbitrate between the employers and the employed, and render stoppages unnecessary. That it was ignored was in part a fault of the Government, but nevertheless, it is indicative of the direct approach which was being adopted. The Liberals were taking a close interest in

industrial matters, and Askwith was involved throughout the period in trying to settle disputes, whereas, in the past, there had been only a very occasional venture into the world of labour disorder.

Clearly, this degree of involvement was not always popular, and any help that was given to the strikers brought about severe attacks by its political opponents on the Government for failing in its duty. For example, Sir John Rees, a former Indian Civil Servant, and an M.P. from 1906 to 1910, in his election address for the Parliamentary by-election at Kilmarnock, written on 14 September 1911, insisted that the Government's 'one consistent principle is surrender to agitation'.⁽¹¹⁾ H. Gwynne, the editor of the Morning Post, made a similar attack in a letter to Lord Robert Cecil. The Liberals 'have called themselves the people's party, and have climbed into power really as a result of a class war, preached first by the Labour Socialists before 1906 and secondly by Lloyd George in 1909. But I claim that no political party in England has ever, within such a short period as they have been in office, deceived the people so thoroughly and persistently as has the present Liberal party'.⁽¹²⁾ Other politicians, such as Austen Chamberlain, joined with newspapers such as the Standard, in commenting on the activities of the Liberals. It was generally agreed that Liberals had done very little

(11) Sir J.D. Rees, Election Address (Kilmarnock 1911) p. 3

(12) Cecil Papers B.M. Add. Ms. 51161, ff. 22. Letter from

Gwynne to Cecil, 8 September 1913.

to discourage the unrest, and some individuals, such as Lloyd George had actually encouraged it. Moreover, to grant a minimum wage to miners succeeded only in showing the working class that if they resorted to militant action, then they would achieve their aims. The Conservatives were especially severe on Lloyd George, and attacked him whenever possible, both in limited circulation journals, and in the mass media. Holcombe Ingleby, a Tory Member of Parliament, writing in the Conservative Clubs Gazette, expressed his condemnation by saying that 'there is nothing quite so base in the higher circles of political life as to appeal to the masses against the classes, the letting loose of all the worst instincts of a man's nature, the open and callous preaching of the doctrine of plunder, and the flagrant disregard of the Eighth Commandment'. Lloyd George was guilty of all of these.⁽¹³⁾ The Conservative Party Conference of 1911 blamed him for his contribution to the unrest of that year, and in particular, his speeches comparing the incomes of the rich and the poor.

Thus, the Government in general, and Lloyd George in particular, was blamed for failing to act in the best way to secure an end to the strikes, for doing the wrong things when they did secure settlements, and for acting in such a way as to encourage men to leave work and demand higher wages. It is possible to interpret these comments in several ways. They could genuinely reflect the attitude of the Tories towards the ruling party's efforts to secure industrial peace;

(13) Conservative Clubs Gazette, August 1911, p. 158

or they could be a part of the Opposition's normal criticisms of the Government. After all, it is the role of the Opposition to oppose. Certainly, some of the attacks were violent - Lloyd George came in for a great deal of adverse comment, and, of course, he had been unpopular with the Conservatives, at least since he had expressed his disapproval of the Boer War, so it could well be that he was receiving no more than his customary dose of condemnation from his political rivals, who did really regard him as a dangerous radical. Some of the other remarks seem to be rather exaggerated. The Liberals were more moderate than the Conservatives, and were more sympathetic towards the underdog, and their activities when they were in power would reflect this. To suggest that they did not represent the whole country would be unfair - unless, perhaps, the accusation came from a member of the working class. The Liberals were essentially a party of the middle and upper classes, and their Cabinet reflected this. They were acting as they thought best for the country, not exactly as the Unionists would, of course, but they were responding as their social, economic, and political backgrounds demanded. The Tories would not approve of this, because they would have dealt with the problems in different ways. Consequently, they would denounce the efforts of any Government which behaved in any way contrary to their wishes. That is politics. It would be unreasonable to expect that the Opposition should not object when the Government acted in a way which they thought was wrong, especially when it did not achieve the desired result. This would be seen as proof that the policies of the ruling party were incorrect. Thus, some

of the criticism of the Government must be seen as the usual political game played by all parties while out of power, but underneath the exaggeration was a very hard core of doubt about the wisdom of the Government. The Conservatives had genuine alternative policies, and were not merely making a noise for the sake of it. Perhaps these solutions would have been equally unsuccessful, but at least they did exist. There was no single, official Tory line to be taken - many people had answers to the industrial unrest, but they all differed. Thus, each newspaper, and a whole host of individuals in public positions, were advocating their own ideas, and had developed theories about the best way to solve the problems presented by a militant working class.

Many of the answers, and certainly the least hostile, centred around legislation to enforce compulsory arbitration. The practicability of such a scheme was doubted, because there was no way of ensuring that the men adhered to the decisions. It was never even considered that the employers might refuse to obey a ruling, because the middle and upper classes often found it difficult to accept that their own classes could do wrong. A more commonly advocated scheme was to prevent strikes by making them difficult, or even impossible. One of the easiest ways of doing this was to change the law concerning picketing, for it was often argued that a large number of strikers could - and often did - intimidate those who wished to continue working. Thus, a restriction on picketing, or even its abolition, would ensure that a far larger number of men reported for duty, and the strike would

be ineffective. The anger at the way in which the 1906 Act was interpreted was well illustrated by Punch. There had been a general strike of peers against the Parliament Bill: 'Lord Willoughby de Broke broke his windows, and shouted "Kill the blackleg". On appeal to the police inspector in charge, Lord Heneage was informed that it was impossible to interfere with peaceful picketing'.⁽¹⁴⁾ Clearly, there was a very genuine feeling that the law should be changed to prevent picketing in its existing form, and this would be sufficient to end the serious wave of industrial disturbances.

Others did not regard this as adequate, and maintained that strikes which disrupted industry - and of necessity, this would happen with virtually every stoppage - should be treated as a criminal conspiracy against the State, and the organisers dealt with as criminals. Virtually every Conservative paper made this sort of a suggestion at some point during the four years of unrest, though some did want to limit the groups of workers who had to be dealt with in that way. A common warning was that if the men were not shown that their tactics could not succeed, then the country would be permanently threatened by stoppages.

Legislative methods were not the only answers to the disturbances. The more traditionalist press, such as the Standard and the Sunday Times wanted to restrain the agitators or even to arm and train an army drawn from the respectable classes, which would be ready for any eventuality.

(14) Punch, 30 August 1911, p. 152

Thus, the solutions advocated by the Conservatives were varied, but they all carried the same message - something had to be done to end the unrest, which was serious in its proportions, and if this meant that the law had to be changed, then so be it: the labour disputes represented a threat to the very existence of the State. The Tories were prepared to fight in order to maintain the society which they knew, and the social order which they felt ought to be preserved. Of course, the Liberals did attempt to tackle the problems, but without success, so that the unrest of 1911-14 continued without any real abatement.

The reaction to the strikes, and the measures advocated by the Tories, reflects the anxiety felt by at least a part of the community. Most trade unionists, and a large section of the working class that had not joined unions, but was involved in the stoppages, were anything but afraid: they were a part of the country, yet it was they who imposed their will upon the rest of the society. Many of their opponents did not regard them as fellow countrymen, and when estimating the attitude to an event, argued that the whole country believed that the men were in the wrong. This could hardly be correct. Certainly, many Tories were afraid that a revolution was imminent, and around the time of the general strike in Liverpool, this belief was repeated in various newspapers. The story of Sir Ernest Jardine discovering that a gunsmith had sold out during the coal dispute may indicate nothing more than a small group of stupid but powerful men preparing for every eventuality, but even then, men such as Jardine held important positions in the

society, and their fear could have roused concern in others. At least they thought that the unions were acting wrongly, and they feared the Socialist influence that was fanning the unrest. The determination and the militancy of the men convinced many that the economic and social structure of the country was in danger. Consequently, those who were dismayed at the prospects for the future and wanted to preserve everything in its existing form were likely to demand extreme measures. It was quite logical for them to do so. The Liberals were less likely to oppose every change, but only because they believed that the growth of a labour movement meant that there had to be some minor adjustments to the organisation of society.

The war removed all dangers of internal conflict for the time being, as the working class proved to be intensely loyal and patriotic, at least in the first phase, and those who had been locked in conflict with their capitalist employers in the years 1911-14 rushed to enlist, or surrendered hard won trade union rights in order to increase production, and so help the war effort. The press applauded these actions, and insisted that they had known all along that the workers were British and patriotic at heart. The labour movement in general participated in the war at all levels, from the Cabinet after 1916, to the common soldier, and received the praise of the nation for so doing, but this did little to alter the traditional Conservative views on working class militancy. The seizure of power by Lenin's Bolsheviks in Russia had demonstrated to the British ruling class that a well organised and militant body could gain control of a

country. Thus, in 1919, when the shipbuilding and engineering workers went on strike, the Times pointed out that 'it must be fought out without flinching. There will be some violence - that is part of the programme. It is intended to terrorise the public, the local authorities, and the Government; and perhaps to develop into serious conflicts like those which have been distracting Germany. It will not do so if it is handled firmly at the onset, for our conspirators have no stomach for a civil war. But, if treated weakly and allowed to go on, the class war will become a civil war. The example of Russia is before us'. When the railwaymen went on strike against a proposed wage reduction, in the autumn of 1919, the Times described it as 'an attack on the community, an attempt to starve them into surrender. People perceive at once that such an attack must be resisted to the utmost, for obviously if it succeeded there is no burden whatever that might not be put on the community by the use of the same means'. (15)

Thus, the fear of revolution was just as real as it had been before the war. The expectation of violence emerged once more into the open during the General Strike of 1926. William Joynson-Hicks was the Home Secretary at the time. He moved the troops whenever disturbances seemed possible, because he 'knew that the moment the situation got out of hand, the country would be subjected to mob rule, and the forces of the Crown would have to fight the mobs for the restoration of law and order'. (16) Attitudes had not changed

(15) Times, 1 February 1919, p. 9; 29 September 1919, p. 9

(16) H. A. Taylor Jix, Viscount Brentford (1933) p.196

greatly during the coal dispute of 1973-74, or at least, the same range of attitudes could be found, as sixty years earlier. Sir William McEwan Younger noted that some members of the community had suggested that it would be cheaper to pay the miners than to fight them, but 'a similar argument would have shown conclusively that the cost of paying Donegeld was substantially less than the cost of resisting a Danish invasion'. The Conservative Member of Parliament, William Shelton, argued that 'the present challenge is not only to the Conservative Government, but also to our institutions and even to our democratic system. That is why the Government must stand firm'. (17)

These, as we have seen, were the attitudes which had existed before the First World War. The traditional Tory views had remained unaltered by the co-operation of the labour movement during two sets of hostilities. This group had reacted in the same way since 1889. Nevertheless, the period 1911-14 is particularly useful in estimating the varying opinions to labour unrest, because in those four years, there occurred the first national strikes, and the greatest wave of unrest that the country had experience to date. The general public were regularly inconvenienced, whereas previously, disputes had almost invariably been a battle between employers and employed, and only very seldom included the rest of the community. The response was in no way uniform. Everyone, except Socialists, wanted to retain the capitalist system. Most, except for radicals, wanted to

(17) Times, 7 January 1974, p. 5.

maintain the economic and social system that existed at the time. Thus, for the majority of the upper and middle classes, the best policy was either to make concessions, so as to appease the militants, or to take a firm stand, resist all pressures, and crush the growing power of the unions. There were those who came in between, but the solution was effectively one of political adherence: Conservatives wanted a far harder line than Liberals, and were less likely to have noticed changes in the conditions of life of the working class which had fanned the unrest.

Having used all the available material to arrive at the varying reactions to labour unrest does not mean that all the differing shades of public opinion have necessarily been uncovered in the end, because the public in general were not questioned, there can be no real definition of public opinion on this topic. Letters to the editors of the newspapers, when published, generally agreed with editorial policy, but that does not add greatly to the picture, for they could have been selected simply because they supported the tone of the paper. Anyway, they were written by a small number of people, who felt deeply on a particular matter. Nevertheless, the press was the main disseminator of information, so many people learnt of events from the papers. It could be that their reaction to this caused papers and politicians to adopt certain viewpoints, or it could be that the latter expressed their opinions, and these were adopted by the public. J.L. Woodward has suggested that this could be decided by careful analysis. It would be necessary to create two time series: one for newspaper opinion, the other for

readers' attitudes; one an index of press opinion, the other an index of public opinion, and correlate the two. Any lead or lag would show a causal relation between the two. (18)

Unfortunately, it is not possible to make such calculations on the problem of the reaction to labour unrest before World War I, but it is possible to examine press opinion and the private views of those who kept diaries or wrote letters. There are insufficient data to do this in an acceptable statistical way, but the evidence that exists indicates that the time lag was very short, if it existed at all. For example, before the 1912 coal strike had begun, the Tory press was prophesying doom and despair, while at the same time, Conservative politicians were saying the same sort of thing in private, and the Home Office was receiving requests from Chief Constables in mining areas for troops should the violence they anticipated occur. Of course, editors and politicians might be friends who exchanged opinions and ideas, and this could influence their views. However, they were making statements which could influence the general public. Some speeches and writings were intended to do just that, and could be described as propaganda, in that they contained an appeal to the emotions, exaggeration, selection, repetition, and avoidance of argument. This could apply to the most orthodox Tories as well as the rigid Socialists.

(18) J.L. Woodward, 'Quantitative Newspaper Analysis as a Technique of Opinion Research, Social Forces (1934) pp. 526-537.

Jarvis and Feshbach have worked on the effect of propaganda on public opinion. Their experiments concerned three different lectures given to three groups of students on dental hygiene, all given by the same speaker. The first one contained a strong fear appeal, pointing out the dangers of dental decay. The second lecture involved a more moderate appeal, with the problems put in a milder form, and in the final form most of the fear-arousing material was replaced by relatively neutral information dealing with the growth and functions of the teeth. The fear appeals were designed to represent typical characteristics of mass communications which attempt to stimulate emotional reactions in order to motivate the audience to conform to a set of recommendations. The immediate result was that those who had heard the first lecture were more concerned about their teeth than the second group, who, in turn, were more worried than the third group, but tests revealed that all three had assimilated the same information. A week later, further tests showed that the group which had received the strongest warnings had done the least to counteract the dangers of tooth decay. The middle group had done more, while those who had heard the most moderate lecture had taken more precautions than the others.⁽¹⁹⁾ This does not imply that under certain conditions, fear appeals would not be the most successful, but it is instructive to compare this experiment with the press reaction to labour unrest in the years 1911-14. There can be little doubt that many editors

(19) I.L. Jarvis and S. Feshbach 'Effects of Fear-arousing communications' in D. Katz, S. Eldersveld and A.M.

were wholly sincere. For example, the most strongly Conservative did not believe that the working class had the right to complain about their conditions let alone strike about them and genuinely held that the social order and public welfare were threatened by such behaviour. Yet, more than sixty years later, their views appear sufficiently biased to be described as propaganda, and this, in turn, did not have any lasting impact on the community. It was often suggested that revolution was just around the corner, but as soon as a major strike had ended, virtually everyone forgot about the dangers until another dispute erupted, just as those who had received the sternest lecture on dental hygiene had done the least to remedy the situation.

This would imply that the strongest propaganda is often the least effective, yet in Edwardian England, the newspapers tried to persuade their readers to interpret the news by just such methods. Of course, it could be that the papers merely reflected the views of their readers, and so did not have to attempt any persuasion. Whether this was so or not, this cannot be resolved by the work done here. It seems unlikely that a Socialist would read, for example, the Standard, except, perhaps, for ammunition to use against the orthodox views. Yet, despite the logical argument that people pick papers to suit their outlook, the labour press did not boom in the period of increased militancy. Certainly, the Daily Herald and the Daily Citizen survived even the outbreak of war, and the consequent upsurge of patriotism, but neither really prospered. Some workers must have continued to read journals in which as trade unionists they were occasionally -

or even regularly - abused. On the other hand, many of the upper and middle classes must have taken papers in which their elitist attitudes were given strength at regular intervals. It is not possible to estimate accurately the political affiliation of the readers of the various newspapers, ⁽²⁰⁾ which complicates even further an analysis of public opinion.

Thus, no precise measurement of the public reaction to working class unrest in the years 1911-14 is possible, simply because the whole of the public did not record its varying opinions. The private papers of many of the period's leading figures, similarly, contain little of relevance, so that it has been necessary to rely on the press, with all the difficulties and potential unreliability that this creates. Nevertheless, it is clear that there did exist a variety of opinions ranging from complete support for the working class activity to total opposition. Newspapers provided information and comment, and some of the views must have been

(20) I tried to do this by unearthing local newspaper wholesalers who were in business in the period 1911-14, so as to discover which papers predominated in certain areas. Sheffield is a city in which the classes lived in distinct districts in those days, so that a crude correlation of class, political persuasion and newspaper readership might have been possible. This attempt was frustrated by sheer lack of information. Wholesalers either no longer existed, or had failed to retain the records.

adopted by the public, which was often unable to accept the changes in the country's social structure which had been brought about by increased education, expanding trade unionism, and the growth of Socialism. It is evident that many of the opinions in the years 1911-14 had existed twenty years before: a few have survived to the present day.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Contemporary Material

(A) Private Papers

- H.H. Asquith (Bodleian Library, Oxford)
A.J. Balfour (British Library, London)
Lord Beaverbrook (Beaverbrook Library, London)
R. Blatchford (Manchester Public Library)
R.D. Blumenfeld (Beaverbrook Library, London)
A. Bonar-Law (Beaverbrook Library, London)
J. Burns (British Library, London)
S. Duxton (Mrs. E. Clay, Newtimber Place, Hassocks, Sussex)
Viscount Bryce (Bodleian Library, Oxford)
Lord R. Cecil (British Library, London)
Lord Crewe (Cambridge University Library)
Lord Curzon (India Office Library, London)
D.R. Daniel (National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth)
Murray of Elibank (National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh)
E.J. Ellis-Griffith (National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth)
E. Grey (Public Record Office, London)
Viscount Haldane (National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh)
Lord Harcourt (Bodleian Library, Oxford)
W.A.S. Hewins (Sheffield University Library)
E.T. John (National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth)
Earl Kitchener (Public Record Office, London)
J.H. Lewis (National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth)

D. Lloyd-George (Beaverbrook Library, London and the National Library of Wales. References to material obtained at the National Library of Wales are preceded by the letters N.L.W)

R. McKenna (Churchill College, Cambridge)

Viscount Milner (Bodleian Library, Oxford)

Lord Roberts (National Army Museum, London)

D.R. Roberts (National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth)

Lord Rosebury (National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh)

Viscount Samuel (House of Lords Record Office, London)

R. Sanders (Conservative Party Library, London)

C.P. Scott (British Library, London)

J.A. Spender (British Library, London)

J. St. L. Strachey (Beaverbrook Library, London)

Lord Sydenham (British Library, London)

D.A. Thomas, Viscount Rhondda (National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth)

H.J. Wilson (Sheffield City Library).

(B) Government Departments

Board of Trade

Cabinet

Foreign Office

Home Office

War Office

(C) Political Records

Conservative Party:

Minutes of the London Unionist M.P.'S

Labour Party:

Minutes of the Joint Board

Minutes of the National Executive Committee

(D) War Emergency National Committee

Minutes

Employers' Associations

Ashton and District Employers' Association

Minutes

Manchester Cotton Owners' Association

Annual Reports

Journal

Minutes of the Board

Minutes of the Committee

Oldham Master Cotton Spinners' Association

Annual Reports

(E) Records of Proceedings

Hansard:

Debates of the House of Commons

Debates of the House of Lords

Reports of the Annual Conferences of the:

British Socialist Party

Conservative and Unionist Party

Independent Labour Party

Labour Party

Trades Union Congress

(F) Newspapers and Periodicals

(i) Daily

Daily Chronicle

Daily Citizen (Manchester, founded 8 October, 1912)

Daily Dispatch (Manchester)

Daily Express

Daily Graphic

Daily Herald (appeared regularly from 15 April, 1912)

Daily Mirror

Daily News (appeared as Daily News and Leader after
merging with the Morning Leader, 11 May, 1912)

Daily Sketch

Daily Telegraph

Financial News

Financial Times

Manchester Guardian (Manchester)

Morning Leader

Morning Post

Standard

Times

Westminster Gazette (evening paper)

(ii) Weekly

Economist

Illustrated London News

Nation

New Statesman (First edition appeared 12 April, 1913)

News of the World

Observer

People

Referee

Reynolds's Newspaper

Spectator

Sunday Chronicle (Manchester)

Sunday Times

Umpire (Manchester)

Weekly Dispatch

(iii) Monthly, Quarterly, etc.

Conservative Agents' Journal

Conservative Club's Gazette

Contemporary Review

Economic Journal

English Review

Fortnightly Review

Nineteenth Century and After

Quarterly Review

(G) Government Publications

Census of England and Wales vol. xi Occupations and

Industries cd. 7018 (1914); vol. viii Tenements

cd. 6910 (1913)

Fifty-fifth Report of the Commissioners of His Majesty's

Inland Revenue for the Year ending 31st March 1912

cd. 6344 (1912)

Fulfilment of Industrial Agreements cd. 6952 (1913)

Evidence cd. 6953 (1913)

Report of an Enquiry into the Earnings and Hours of Labour of
Workpeople of the United Kingdom in 1907. V. Agriculture
cd. 5460 (1910)

Report of an Enquiry into Working-Class Rents and Retail
Prices Together with the Rates of Wages in Certain
Occupations in Industrial Towns of the United Kingdom in
1912, cd. 6955 (1913)

Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Physical
Deterioration

I Report and Appendix, cd. 2175 (1904)

II Minutes of Evidence, cd. 2210 (1904)

Report of the Royal Commission into the Working of the Railway
Conciliation Scheme of 1907, cd. 5922 (1911)

Evidence, cd. 6014 (1912-13)

Report on Changes in Rates of Wages and Hours of Labour in
the United Kingdom in 1911, cd. 6471 (1912)

Report on Public Health and Social Conditions, cd. 4671 (1909)

Report on Strikes and Lock-Outs and on Conciliation and
Arbitration Boards for 1911, cd. 6472 (1912-13)

for 1912, cd. 7089 (1914)

for 1913, cd. 7658 (1914-16)

Report upon the Present Disputes Affecting Transport Workers
in the Port of London and on the Medway, cd. 6229 (1912)

(H) Reference Books

Cotton Year Book 1911-14

Daily Mail Year Book 1911-14

Dictionary of National Biography

Dictionary of Labour Biography, vols. 1 and 2

Dod's Parliamentary Companion 1911-14

Newspaper Press Directory 1910-14

Sell's Dictionary of the World's Press 1910-14

T.B. Browne's Advertisers' ABC of Scales and Charges 1910-14

Who Was Who

Willing's Press Guide 1910-14

J. Vincent and M. Stenton, McCalmont's Parliamentary Poll

Book. British Election Results 1832-1918 (1971)

(I) Books

(i) Non-Fiction

M. Alden, Child Life and Labour (1913)

C.A. Alington, A Schoolmaster's Apology (1914)

Anti-Socialist Union, Socialism Exposed (1914)

S.A. Barnett, Towards Social Reform (1909)

Mrs. Beeton, The Book of Household Management (1892 ed.)

Lady Bell, At the Works (1911 ed.)

H. Belloc, The Servile State (1912)

A. Bennett, Liberty. A Statement of the British Case
(1914)

Birmingham City Council, Report of the Medical Officer
of Health for the Year 1911 (Birmingham 1912)

C. Booth, Industrial Unrest and Trade Union Policy (1913)

Life and Labour of the People of London

(17 vols. 1902-3 ed.)

Pauperism (1892)

W. Booth, In Darkest England and the Way Out (1890)

- H. Bosanquet, (ed.) Rich and Poor (1908)
(ed.) Social Conditions in Industrial
Towns (1912)
The Poor Law Report of 1909 (1911)
The Standard of Life (1906 ed.)
- A.L. Bowley and A.R. Burnett-Hurst, Livelihood and
Poverty (1915)
- R.A. Bray, Labour and the Churches (1912)
The Town Child (1907)
- Bureau of Railway Economics, A Comparative Study of
Railway Wages and the Cost of Living in the United
Kingdom and the Principal Countries of Continental
Europe (Washington, D.C. 1912)
- E. Cadbury, C. Matheson and G. Shann, Women's Work and
Wages (1908 ed.)
- in book* X and G. Shann, Sweating (1907)
- E. Carpenter, Chants of Labour (1905 ed.)
Sketches from Life in Town and Country (1908)
- H. Carter, Destitution. Can we end it? (1911)
- H. Cecil, Conservatism (1912)
- A. Clark, The Effects of the Factory System (1913)
- A. Clay, Syndicalism and Labour (1911)
- G.D.H. Cole, The World of Labour (1913)
- W. Cunningham, Christianity and Social Questions (1910)
- Daily Mail, What the Workers Want (1913)
- M.F. Davies, Life in an English Village (1909)
- P. Dearmer (ed.) Sermons on Social Subjects (1911)
- G.B. Dibblee, The Newspaper (1913)
- R.E. Dolling, Ten Years in a Portsmouth Slum (1896)

- G. Drage, The State and the Poor (1914)
- W.M. Ede, The Attitude of the Church to some of the Social Problems of Town Life (Cambridge 1896)
- Viscount Esher, Today and Tomorrow (1910)
- D. Evans, Labour Strife in the South Wales Coalfield 1910-11 (Cardiff 1911)
- L.W. Evans, The National Insurance Act 1911 (1912)
- L. Gardner (ed.) Land and Labour (n.d. 1914?)
- I.G. Gibbon, Unemployment Insurance (1911)
- S. Gompers, Labor in Europe and America (New York 1910)
- F.E. Green, The Awakening of England (n.d.)
The Tyranny of the Countryside (1913)
- A. Griffiths, Clubs and Clubmen (1907)
- G. Haw (ed.) Christianity and the Working Classes
- C.B. Hawkins, Norwich. A Social Study (1910)
- F. Henderson, The Labour Unrest (1912)
- L.T. Hobhouse, Liberalism (n.d. 1911?)
- E. Holmes, What is and What Might Be (1911)
- E.G. Howath and M. Wilson, West Ham. A Study in Industrial and Social Problems (1907)
- A.O. Jay, A Story of Shoreditch (1896)
- Lady Jeune, Lesser Questions (1894)
- H.S. Jevons, The British Coal Trade (1915)
- S.E. Keeble, Industrial Daydream (1907)
- R. Kenney, Men and Rails (1913)
- G. Lansbury, Your Part in Poverty (1916)
- H.W. Lee, The Great Strike Movement of 1911 and its Lessons (1911)

A.D. Lewis, Syndicalism and the General Strike (1912)

Liverpool Joint Research Committee, How the Casual
Labourer Lives (Liverpool 1909)

M. Loane, From Their Point of View (1908)

Neighbours and Friends (1910)

The Common Growth (1911)

The Next Street But One (1907)

The Queen's Poor (1905)

C.S. Loch, The National Insurance Bill (1911)

XK24410/16 J. London, The People of the Abyss (1903)

London County Council, Housing of the Working Classes in
London 1855-1912 (1913)

London Municipal Society, The Case Against Socialism (1908)

J.R. MacDonald, The Social Unrest (1913)

The Socialist Movement (1911)

T. Mackay, The Dangers of Democracy (1913)

T.R. Marr, Housing Conditions in Manchester and Salford
(1904)

C.F.G. Masterman, The Condition of England (1909)

et. al. The Heart of the Empire (1907)

L.G.C. Money, Riches and Poverty (1905)

G. Newman, Infant Mortality (1906)

The Health of the State (1907)

One Who Resents It, The Tyranny of Trade Unions (1912)

A. Paterson, Across the Bridges (1911)

W.V. Osborne, Sane Trade Unionism (n.d. 1913?)

C.S. Peel, How to Keep House (1902)

G. Peel, The Future of England (1911)

- A.C. Pigou, Wealth and Welfare (1912)
- A. Ponsonby, The Camel and the Needle's Eye (1909)
- E.A. Pratt, The Licensed Trade (1907)
- X Mrs. P. Reeves, Round About a Pound a Week (1913)
- J. Rey, The Whole Art of Dining (1901)
- S. Reynolds, B. and T. Woolley, Seems So! A Working
Class View of Politics (1913 ed.)
- J.C. Rickett, The Church and Labour (1907)
- B.S. Rowntree, Poverty (1910 ed.)
(ed.) Betting and Gambling. A National Evil
(1905)
- and M. Kendall, How the Labourer Lives (1913)
- and B. Lasker, Unemployment (1911)
- and A.C. Pigou, Lectures on Housing (Manchester 1914)
- St. Pancras School for Mothers, The Fudding Lady (1910)
- R.A. Scott-James, The Influence of the Press (1913)
- A. Shadwell, Drink, Temperance and Legislation (1902)
Industrial Efficiency (1909 ed.)
- J.A. Simon, The Press and its Story (1914)
- P. Snowden, The Living Wage (1912)
- J.C. Stamp, British Incomes and Property (1916)
- W. Temple (ed.) The Industrial Unrest and the Living
Wage (1913)
- B. Tillett, History of the London Transport Workers'
Strike 1911 (1912)
- Unionist Party, Central Council, The Campaign Guide
(Edinburg 1909) (1914 ed.)
- E. Wallace, Heroes All (1914)

- B.T. Washington, The Man Furthest Down (1912)
- C. Watney and J.A. Little, Industrial Warfare (1912)
- F. Ware, The Worker and his Country (1912)
- S. and B. Webb, The Prevention of Destitution (1911)
- A. Williams, A Wiltshire Village (1912)
- Life in a Railway Factory (1915)
- W.L. Wilson, The Menace of Socialism (1909)
- A.E. Wright, The Unexpurgated Case Against Woman Suffrage (1913)

(ii) The Literature

- J.M. Barrie, The Admirable Crichton (1914)
- P.S.W. Bell, Company for George (1911)
- G. Bendall, The Progress of Mrs. Cripps-Middlemore (1912)
- A. Bennett, Anna of the Five Towns (1902)
- Clayhanger (1910)
- Hilda Lessways (1911)
- The Glimpse (1912)
- The Great Adventure (1913)
- The Regent (1913)
- J.D. Beresford, A Candidate for Truth (1912)
- Goslings (1913)
- The Early History of Jacob Stahl (n.d.)
- The Hampdenshire Wonder (1948 ed.)
- The House in Demetrius Road (1914)
- R.A. Brandon and G. Bull, By Mutual Agreement (1911)

- H. Brighthouse, Garside's Career (1914)
Graft (1913)
Lonesome Like (Glasgow, 1914)
Odd Men Out (1912)
The Oak Settle (1911)
The Scaring Off of Terry Dawson (1911)
- J. Buchan, Prester John (1910)
- W.H. Davies, The Adventures of Johnny Walker, Tramp (1926)
- E.M. Dell, Her Compensation (1914)
The Desire of his Life (n.d., 1914?)
The Knave of Diamonds (1912)
- W. Deeping, Fox Farm (1911)
Sincerity (1912)
The White Gate (1913)
- J. Farnol, The Amateur Gentleman (n.d., 1913?)
The Broad Highway (1910)
- J. Galsworthy, The Forsyte Saga (1967 ed.)
- D. Garrow, Patty Packs a Bag (1911)
What Charity Covers (1911)
- G. Gissing, The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft (1903)
- H. Graham, Lord Bellinger (1911)
- G. Hamilton, Jack and Jill and a Friend (1911)
- L.A. Harker, The Ffolliots of Redmarley (1913)
- B.M. Hastings, The New Sin (1912)
The Tide (1913)
- E.A. Herring, Lady Flora's Namesake (1911)
- S. Hilliard, A Storm in a Tea Shop (1911)
- A. Hope, Mrs. Maxon Protests (1911)
Second String (1910)

- E.W. Hornung, Fathers of Men (1912)
- W.S. Houghton, The Works of Stanley Houghton (1914)
- R. Kipling, Actions and Reactions (1909)
- W.J. Locke, Septimus (1909),
Simon the Jester (1910)
Stella Maris (1913)
The Beloved Vagabond (1907)
The Fortunate Youth (1914)
The Glory of Clementia Wing (1911)
- C. MacKenzie, Carnival (1912)
Kensington Rhymes (1912)
Sinister Street (1923 ed.)
- N. McKinnel, Dick's Sister (1911)
- J.S. Martin, Cupid and the Styx (1912)
- J. Masfield, Salt Water Ballads (1913 ed.)
- W.B. Maxwell, The Devil's Garden (n.d., 1913?)
- A. Monkhouse, Four Tragedies (1913)
Mary Broome (1911)
The Education of Mr. Surrage (1913)
- A. Morrison, A Child of the Jago (1896)
The Hole in the Wall (1902)
- M. Morton, My Wife (1912)
- H. Mytton, The First Locust (1911)
- O. Onions, In Accordance with the Evidence (1912)
The Debit Account (1913)
The Story of Louie (1913)
- G. Paston, Stuffing (1912)
- G. Penn and R. Fitzjohn, A Plume of Feathers (1912)
- V. Sackville-West, The Edwardians (1930)

- G. Sowerby, Rutherford and Son (1912)
- A. Sutro, The Man in the Stalls (1911)
- H. Swears, Granny's Juliet (1911)
- Hero and Heroine (1911)
- R. Tressell, The Ragged Trousered Philanthropist (1955 ed.)
- H.M. Waldbrook, The Touch of Truth (1911)
- E. Wallace, Angel Esquire (1908)
- Private Selby (1912)
- Sanders of the River (1911)
- The Admirable Carfew (1914)
- The Duke in the Suburbs (1909)
- The Four Just Men (1905)
- The People of the River (1912)
- H. Walpole, Fortitude (1913)
- Maradick at Forty (1917 ed.)
- Mr. Perrin and Mr. Traill (1911)
- The Duchess of Wrexæ (1914)
- The Prelude to Adventure (1912)
- The Wooden Horse (1912)
- H.G. Wells, Ann Veronica (1909)
- Bealby (1915)
- Kipps (1925 ed.)
- Love and Mr. Lewisham (1900)
- Mr. Britling Sees it Through (1925 ed.)
- The History of Mr. Polly (1909)
- The New Machiavelli (1911)
- Tono-Bungay (1909)

P.G. Wodehouse, A Gentleman of Leisure (1935 ed.)
Love Among the Chickens (1920)
Something Fresh (1915)
The Little Nugget (1934 ed.)
The Man Upstairs and Other Stories (1935 ed.)
The Pothunters (1933 ed.)
The Prince and Betty (n.d.)

(J) Pamphlets

W.C. Anderson, What Means This Labour Unrest (Manchester
n.d.)

Anti-Socialist Union, Success Without Socialism Nos. 1-8
(1910)

What the Workers Would Lose by
Socialism (1910)

What Socialism Means (1910)

J.H. Balfour-Brown, The Economics of Socialism (1909)

H. Bosanquet, The "Poverty Line" (1906 ed.)

H.J. Boyd, Christianity and Socialism (1910)

J. Burns, The Liberal Government and the Condition of
the People (1912)

J. Clifford, The War and the Churches (1919)

G.D.H. Cole and R.P. Arnot, Trade Unionism on the
Railways (1917)

W. Crooks, A Living Wage for All (Manchester, 1911)

S. Graham, Socialism. An Actual Experiment (1910)

J.K. Hardie, Can a Man be a Christian on a Pound a Week?
(Manchester, n.d.)

Killing No Murder (Manchester, 1912)

The Common Good (Manchester, n.d.)

- H.H. Hyndman, The Murdering of British Seamen (1913)
Independent Labour Party, The Abolition of Destitution
and Unemployment (Manchester,
1910)
- S. Lansbury, Smash Up the Workhouses (Manchester, n.d.)
Liberal Party, The Government's Record 1906-1913 (1913)
National Anti-Sweating League, Report on a Conference on
a Minimum Wage (probably
Manchester, 1907)
- B.S. Rowntree, The Labourer and the Land (1914)
The "Poverty Line". A Reply (1903)
- S. Storey, Thoughts on Socialism (1910)
Unionist Party, Papers on Unrest Among the Working Classes
(printed for private circulation, 1911)
- Unionist Social Reform Committee, Industrial Unrest: a
Practical Solution (1914)
- Unofficial Reform Committee, The Miners' Next Step
(Tonypandy, 1912)
- B. Webb, The New Crusade Against Destitution (Manchester,
1910)
- E.W. Williams, Socialism and the Family (1910)
- J. Willis, The Case for Amalgamation (n.d.)

(K) Articles

A.S. Arkle 'Child Life in Liverpool Schools' Liverpool
Medico-Chirurgical Journal, July 1907

F.G.D. D'Aeth 'Present Tendencies of Class Differentiation'
Sociological Review, 1910

T. Gregory 'Labour Copartnership and Labour Unrest'
Journal of the Manchester Statistical Society,
1913

C.W. Macara 'Proposed Industrial Court for the Settlement
of Labour Disputes' Financial Review of Reviews,
October 1911

Non-Contemporary Material

(A) Biography and Autobiography

Viscount Addison, Four and a Half Years (1934)

Politics from Within 1911-1918 (2 vols.
1924)

B.M. Allen, Sir Robert Morant (1934)

Almost Anybody, About Nothing Whatever (1936)

L.S. Amery, My Political Life, Vol. I, 1896-1914 (1953)

A.M. Anderson, Women in the Factory (1922)

M. Anderson, Noel Buxton (1952)

N. Angell, After All (1951)

Lady Asquith, Autobiography (1922)

More Memories (1933)

Off the Record (1943)

Lord Asquith, Fifty Years of Parliament (2 vols. 1926)

Memories and Reflections (2 vols. 1928)

H. Asquith, Moments of Memory (1937)

J.H. Badley, Memories and Reflections (1955)

G. Baker, Soul of a Skunk (1930)

A.J. Balfour, Chapters of Autobiography (1930)

F.C. Ball, Tressell of Mugsborough (1951)

T. Barclay, Memoirs and Medleys 1851-1933 (1934)

G.N. Barnes, From Workshop to War Cabinet (1924)

H.O. Barnett, Canon Barnett (1921 ed.)

M. Beckwith, When I Remember (1936)

G.K.A. Bell, Randall Davidson, Archbishop of Canterbury
(Oxford, 1938)

E.J.P. Benn, Confessions of a Capitalist (1925)

Happier Days (1949)

- N. Bentinck, My Wanderings and Memories (1924)
- Lord Beveridge, Power and Influence (1953)
- Earl of Birkenhead, F.E. (1966)
- Frederick Edwin, Earl of Birkenhead
(1933)
- A. Birwell, Things Past Redress (1937)
- R. Blake, The Unknown Prime Minister (1955)
- R. Blatchford, My Eighty Years (1931)
- G. Blaxland, J.H. Thomas. A Life for Unity (1964)
- R.D. Blumenfeld, R.D.B.'s Diary 1887-1914 (1930)
- W.S. Blunt, My Diaries (1932 ed.)
- M. Bondfield, A Life's Work (n.d. 1948?)
- M. Booth, Charles Booth (1918)
1871
- A. Briggs, Seeborn Rowntree 1917-1954 (1961)
- V. Brittain, Pethwick Lawrence. A Portrait (1963)
- F. Brockway, Bermondsey Story. The Life of Alfred Salter
(1949)
- Inside the Left (1942)
- Socialism over Sixty Years. The Life of
Jowett of Bradford (1946)
- A. Bullock, The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin. Vol. I.
Trade Union Leader 1881-1940 (1966)
- S.F. Bullock, Robert Thorne. The Story of a London Clerk
(1907)
- H.N. Bunbury (ed.) Lloyd-George's Ambulance Wagon. Being
the Memoirs of William J.
Braithwaite 1911-1912 (1957)
- M. St. C. Byrne, Common or Garden Child (1942)

- E. Cadogan, Before the Deluge. Memoirs and Reflections
1880-1914 (1961)
- N. Cardus, Autobiography (1947 ed.)
- J.D. Carmichael and H.S. Goodwin, William Temple's Political
Legacy (1963)
- V.B. Carter, Winston Churchill As I Knew Him (1963)
- J. Carpenter, Gore (1960)
- Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, All the Way (1949)
- D. Cecil, The Cecils (1973)
- A. Chamberlain, Down the Years (1935)
Politics from Inside (1936)
- C. Chaplin, My Autobiography (1964)
- G.K. Chesterton, Autobiography (1936)
- R.S. Churchill, Lord Derby, "King of Lancashire" (1959)
Winston S. Churchill, Vol. II. Young
Statesman 1901-1914 (1967)
Companion (1969)
- J.R. Clynes, Memoirs 1869-1924 (1937)
- G.D.H. Cole, John Burns (1943)
- M.I. Cole, Growing Up Into Revolution (1949)
(ed.) Beatrice Webb's Diaries 1912-1924 (1952)
- W. Collison, The Apostle of Free Labour (1913)
- V. Cowles, Edward VII and his Circle (1956)
- R. Craig, Social Concern in the Thoughts of William
Temple (1963)
- D. Crow, A Man of Push and Go (1965)
- W.H. Davies, The Autobiography of a Super-Tramp (1908)
- Viscount Devonport, The Travelled Road (Rochester,
private circulation, n.d., 1935?)

- F. Dilnot, The Adventures of a Newspaper Man (1913)
- B.E.C. Dugdale, Arthur James Balfour (1936)
- C. Eade (ed.) Churchill by his Contemporaries (1953)
- G. Edwards, From Crow Scaring to Westminster (1922)
- W.J. Edwards, From the Valley I Came (1956)
- Lord Ernle, Whippingham to Westminster (1938)
- M.G. Fawcett, What I Remember (1924)
- A. Fitzroy, Memoirs (2 vols., n.d.)
- N. Flower (ed.) The Journals of Arnold Bennett (1932)
- R.M. Fox, Smokey Crusade (1938)
- P. Fraser, Lord Esher (1973)
- B. Fuller, The Life Story of the Rt. Hon. J.H. Thomas
(n.d., 1933?)
- H.S. Furniss, Charles Sydney Buxton. A Memoir (1914)
- A.G. Gardiner, Life of George Cadbury (1923)
Pillars of Society (1916)
- P. Gibbs, Adventures in Journalism (1923)
Crowded Company (1949)
The Pageant of the Years (1946)
- A.M. Gollin, Balfour's Burden (1965)
Proconsul in Politics. A Study of Lord
Milne (1964)
The Observer and J.L. Garvin 1908-1914
(Oxford 1960)
- H. Gosling, Up and Down Stream (1927)
- G.P. Gooch, Under Six Reigns (1958)
- E.W. Gosse, Father and Son (1907)
- F.J. Gould, Hyndman, Prophet of Socialism (1928)
- H. Gough, Soldiering On (1954)

- E. Grey, Twenty-Five Years 1892-1916 (2 vols., 1925)
- P. Guedalla, Mr. Churchill. A Portrait (1941)
- R.B. Haldane, An Autobiography (1929)
- D.A. Hamer, John Morley (Oxford, 1968)
- F.E. Hamer (ed.) The Personal Papers of Lord Rendel (1931)
- M.A. Hamilton, Arthur Henderson (1938)
- Mary Hamilton (1925)
- Mary MacArthur (1925)
- Sidney and Beatrice Webb (1932)
- The Man of Tomorrow. J. Ramsay MacDonald (1924)
- J.L. Hammond, C.F. Scott of the Manchester Guardian (1934)
- R.F. Harrod, The Life of John Maynard Keynes (1963)
- P. Harris, Forty Years in and out of Parliament (1947)
- J. Hepburn (ed.) Letters of Arnold Bennett. Vol. II
1889-1915 (Oxford, 1968)
- J.A. Hobson, Confessions of an Economic Heretic (1938)
- S.G. Hobson, Pilgrim to the Left (1938)
- J. Hodge, Workman's Cottage to Windsor Castle (n.d., 1931?)
- F. Hodges, My Adventures as a Labour Leader (n.d.)
- A. Horner, Incorrigible Rebel (1960)
- R.F. Horton, An Autobiography (1917)
- E. Hughes, Keir Hardie (1956)
- E. Hume-Williams, The World, the House and the Bar (1930)
- H.M. Hyde, Baldwin (1973)
- H.M. Hyndman, Further Reminiscences (1912)
- F.A. Iremonger, William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury
(Oxford, 1968)

- R.R. James, Churchill. A Study in Failure 1900-1939
(1970)
- Memoirs of a Conservative. J.C.C. Davidson's
Memoirs and Papers 1910-1937 (1969)
- R. Jenkins, Asquith (1967 ed.)
- L. Jermy, The Memories of a Working Woman (1934)
- J. Jones, My Lively Life (1928)
- Unfinished Journey (Oxford, 1937)
- L.E. Jones, An Edwardian Youth (1956)
- T. Jones, Lloyd George (Oxford, 1951)
- W. Kent, John Burns (1950)
- Lord Kilbracken, Reminiscences (1931)
- D. Kirkwood, My Life of Revolt (1935)
- E.A. Knox, Reminiscences of an Octogenarian (n.d., 1935?)
- S.E. Koss, Lord Haldane (New York, 1969)
- E. Larkin, James Larkin (1965)
- J. Lawson, The Man in the Cloth Cap. The Life of
Herbert Smith (1941)
- S. Leslie, Henry Edward Manning (1921)
- Viscount Long, Memories (1923)
- J.W. Lowther, A Speaker's Commentaries (2 vols. 1925)
- H. Lucy, Sixty Years in the Wilderness, Vol. 3 (1916)
- The Diary of a Journalist 1910-1916 (1923)
- E. Lyttleton, Alfred Lyttleton (1917)
- G. McAllister, James Maxton. The Portrait of a Rebel (1935)
- C.S. Macara, Recollections (1921)
- R.B. McCallum, Asquith (1936)
- V.A. McClelland, Cardinal Manning (Oxford, 1962)
- D. McCormick, The Mask of Merlin (1963)

- J. McGovern, Neither Fear Nor Favour (1960)
- S. McKenna, Reginals McKenna 1863-1943 (1948)
- Stephen McKenna, While I Remember (1921)
- E.D. MacKerness (ed.) The Journals of George Sturt 1890-1927 (Cambridge, 1967)
- M.H. Mackworth, D.A. Thomas, Viscount Rhondda (1921)
- J. McNair, James Maxton. The Beloved Rebel (1955)
- N. Macready, Annals of an Active Life, Vol. I. (1924)
- T. Mann, Memoirs (1967 ed.)
- A.J. Marder (ed.) Fear God and Dread Nought (1956)
- V. Markham, Friendship's Harvest (1956)
- Return Passage (Oxford, 1953)
- A. Marwick, Clifford Allen. The Open Conspirator (1964)
- H.J. Massingham (ed.) H.W.M.' A Selection from the Writings of H.W. Massingham (1925)
- L. Masterman, C.F.G. Masterman (1968 ed.)
- J.S. Mills, Sir Edward Cook (1921)
- W.H. Mills, Sir Charles W. Macara, Bart (Manchester 1917)
- K.O. Morgan, The Age of Lloyd George (1971)
- Lord Morley, Recollections (1917)
- S.A. Moseley, The Truth About a Journalist (1935)
- Lord Newton, Lord Lansdowne (1929)
- Retrospection (1941)
- H. Nicolson, King George (1952)
- S.L. Ollard (ed.) A Forty Year Friendship. Letters from the late Henry Scott Holland to Mrs. Drew (1919)

- S. Orwell and I. Angus (eds.) The Collected Essays,
Journalism and Letters of
George Orwell, Vol. I (1968)
- S. Pankhurst, The Home Front (1932)
- Lord Parmoor, A Retrospect (1936)
- C.S. Peel, Life's Enchanted Cup (1933)
- F.W. Pethwick-Lawrence, Fate has been Kind (1942)
- C. Petrie, Chapters of Life (1950)
- The Life and Letters of the Rt. Hon. Sir
Austen Chamberlain, Vol. I (1939)
- Walter Long and his Times (1936)
- E.R. Pike, Britain's Prime Ministers (1968)
- H. Pollitt, Serving My Time (1940)
- F. Ponsonby, Recollections of Three Reigns (1951)
- R. Postgate, The Life of George Lansbury (1951)
- R. Pound and G. Hamsworth, Northcliffe (1959)
- G.L. Prestige, The Life of Charles Gore (1935)
- D.N. Pritt, From Right to Left (1965)
- E.S. Purcell, Life of Cardinal Manning (1896)
- W. Purcell, Woodbine Willie (1962)
- Marquess of Reading, Rufus Isaacs (1942)
- R.A.S. Redmayne, Men, Miners and Memories (1942)
- J.H. Richardson, From the City to Fleet Street (1927)
- M. Richter, The Politics of Conscience. T.H. Green and
his Age (1964)
- Lord Riddell, More Pages from My Diary (1934)
- J.M. Robertson, Mr. Lloyd George and Liberalism (1923)
- F. Rogers, Labour, Life and Literature (1973 ed.)
- C.H. Rolph, Kingsley (1973)

- Earl of Ronaldshay, The Life of Lord Curzon, Vol. 3 (1928)
- W. Runciman, Before the Mast - and After (1924)
- Lord Salter, Memoirs of a Public Servant (1961)
- S. Salvidge, Salvidge of Liverpool (1934)
- Viscount Samuel, Memoirs (1945)
- J.E.B. Seely, Adventure (1930)
- W.B. Selbie, The Life of Charles Sylvester Horne (1920)
- J. Saxton, Agitator. The Life of the Dockers' M.P. (1936)
- E. Shinwell, I've Lived Through it All (1973)
- T.S. and M.B. Simey, Charles Booth, Social Scientist
(Oxford, 1960)
- Viscount Simon, Retrospect (1952)
- O. Sitwell, Left Hand Right Hand (1946 ed.)
- G. Slocombe, The Tumult and the Shouting (1936)
- R. Smillie, My Life for Labour (1924)
- J. Smithers, The Early Life and Vicissitudes (1939)
- P. Snowden, An Autobiography (1934)
- F.W. Soutter, Fights for Freedom (1925)
Recollections of a Labour Pioneer (1923)
- R. Speight, The Life of Hilaire Belloc (1957)
- J.A. Spender, Life, Journalism and Politics (2 vols. 1927)
Asquith (2 vols. 1932)
- and C. Asquith, Life of Herbert Henry Asquith, Lord
Oxford . . .
- R. Stannard, With the Dictators of Fleet Street (1934)
- H.W. Steed, Through Thirty Years 1892-1922 (1924)
- W. Stewart, J. Keir Hardie (1921)
- A. Strachey, St. Loe Strachey, his Life and his Paper (1930)

- J. St. L. Strachey, The Adventure of Living (1922)
- G. Sturt, The Wheelwright's Shop (Cambridge, 1934 ed.)
- Lord Sydenham, My Working Life (1927)
- C. Sykes, Nancy. The Life of Lady Astor (1972)
- J. Symons, Horatio Bottomley (1955)
- A.J.P. Taylor, Beaverbrook (1972)
- H.A. Taylor, Jix. Viscount Brentford (1933)
- M. Thomson, David Lloyd George (n.d., 1945?)
- W. Thorne, My Life's Battles (n.a., 1925?)
- B. Tillett, Memories and Reflections (1931)
- G.A.W. Tomlinson, Coal Miner (1937)
- C. Trevelyan, From Liberalism to Labour (1921)
- C. Tsuzuki, H.M. Hyndman and British Socialism (Oxford
(1961)
- E. Tupper, Seamen's Torch (1938)
- B. Turner, About Myself 1863-1930 (1930)
- G.R. Tweedie, Yesterday (1932)
- Various Authors, C.P. Scott 1846-1932. The Making of the
Manchester Guardian (1946)
- J.C. Wedgwood, Essays and Adventures of a Labour M.P.
(1924)
Memoirs of a Fighting Life (1941)
- H.G. Wells, Experiment in Autobiography (2 vols., 1934)
- T. Wilson, The Political Diaries of C.P. Scott 1911-1928
(1970)
- Duke of Windsor, King George V (1952)
- J.M. Winter and D.M. Joslin (eds.) R.H. Tawney's Commonplace
Book (Cambridge
1972)

Earl Winterton, Fifty Tumultuous Years (1953)

Orders of the Day (1953)

L. Woolf, Beginning Again. An Autobiography of the Years
1911-1918 (1964)

R.T. Wood, Theo Wood (1931)

E.L. Woodward, Short Journey (1942)

J.E. Wrench, Geoffrey Dawson and Our Times (1955)

K. Young, Arthur James Balfour (1963)

S.H. Zenner, Balfour (New York, 1973)

(B) Other Works

M. Abrams, The Condition of the British People 1911-1945
(1945)

A. Adburgham, Shops and Shopping (1964)

K.W.W. Aikin, The Last Years of Liberal England 1900-1914
(1972)

G.W. Alcock, Fifty Years of Railway Trade Unionism (1922)

P. Ambrose, The Quiet Revolution (1974)

G. Armstrong (ed.) London's Struggle for Socialism
1848-1948 (1948)

R.P. Arnot, A History of the Scottish Miners (1955)

South Wales Miners (1967)

The Miners 1889-1910 (1949)

The Miners: Years of Struggle (1953)

T. Ashton, Three Big Strikes in the Coal Industry
(3 vols., Manchester, n.d.)

T.S. Ashton, Economic and Social Investigations in
Manchester 1833-1933 (1934)

W. Ashworth, An Economic History of England 1870-1939
(1960)

- G. Askwith, Industrial Problems and Disputes (1920)
- P.S. Bagwell, The Railwaymen (1963)
- J.A. Banks, Prosperity and Parenthood (1954)
- The Sociology of Social Movements (1972)
- T.L. Barker, J.C. McKenzie and J. Yudkin (eds.)
Our Changing Fare (1966)
- G. Battiscombe, English Picnics (1949)
- Z. Bauman, Between Class and Elite (Manchester, 1972)
- G.A. Beck (ed.) The English Catholics 1850-1950 (1950)
- R. Bendix and S.M. Lipset, Class, Status and Power (1967)
- W.H. Beveridge, Unemployment. A Problem of Industry
(1930 ed.)
- G.C. Binyon, The Christian Socialist Movement in England
(1931)
- G. Blake, The Conservative Party from Peel to Churchill
(1970)
- R.D. Blumenfeld, The Press in My Time (1933)
- J. Boon, Victorians, Edwardians, and Georgians (2 vols.
1928)
- S. Bowes, The Police and Civil Liberties (1966)
- A.L. Bowley, The Division of the Product of Industry
(Oxford, 1919)
- The Change in the Distribution of the
National Income 1880-1913 (Oxford 1920)
- Wages and Income in the United Kingdom
Since 1860 (Cambridge, 1937)
- A. Briggs and J. Saville (eds.) Essays in Labour History
Vol. 1 (1960)
Vol. 2 (1971)

- A. Brown, The Fate of the Middle Classes (1936) --
- L.D. Brown (Ed.) Essays in Anti-Labour History (1974)
- E.H.P. Brown, The Growth of British Industrial Relations
(1965)
- K.D. Brown, Labour and Unemployment 1900-1914 (Newton
Abbot, 1971)
- M. Bruce (ed.) The Rise of the Welfare State (1973)
- J. Buchan, The King's Grace 1910-1935 (1935)
- A. Bullock and M. Shock, The Liberal Tradition (1956)
- C.J. Bundock, The Story of the National Union of Printing
Bookbinders and Paper Workers (Oxford
1959)
- J. Burnett, A History of the Cost of Living (1969)
Plenty and Want (1966)
- Lord Burnham, Peterborough Court. The Story of the
Daily Telegraph (1955)
- D. Butler and J. Freeman, British Political Facts 1900-
1967 (1968)
- D.C. Calthop, Music Hall Nights (1925)
- A.M. Carr-Saunders and D.C. Jones, A Survey of the Social
Structure of England
and Wales (Oxford 1927)
- and P.A. Wilson, The Professions
(Oxford, 1933)
- R. Cecil, Life in Edwardian England (1969)
- S.D. Chapman (ed.) The History of Working Class Housing
(Newton Abbot, 1971)
- R. Charles, The Redevelopment of Industrial Relations in
Britain 1911-1939 (1973)

- O.F. Christie, The Transition to Democracy 1867-1914
(1934)
- W.S. Churchill, The World Crisis 1911-1914 (1923)
- J. Clapham, An Economic History of Modern Britain.
Machines and National Rivalries
(Cambridge, 1963 ed.)
- F. Clarke, Education and Social Change (1940)
- J. Clayton, The Rise and Decline of Socialism in Great
Britain 1884-1924 (1926)
Trade Unions (n.d.)
- H.A. Clegg, General Unionism (Oxford, 1954)
- G.D.H. Cole, A History of the Labour Party from 1914
(1969 ed.)
A Short History of the British Working Class
Movement 1789-1927. Vol. 2. 1900-27
(1927)
British Working Class Politics 1832-1914
(1941)
Studies in Class Structure (1955)
The Second International 1889-1914 (1956)
- and R. Postgate, The Common People (1938)
- T.J. Connelly, The Woodworkers 1860-1960 (1960)
- T.A. Critchley, A History of Police in England and Wales
(1967)
- W.H. Crook, The General Strike (Chapel Hill, N. Carolina,
(1931)
- C. Cross, The Liberals in Power (1963)
- G. Dangerfield, The Strange Death of Liberal England
(New York, 1961 ed.)

- B. Darwin, The English Public School (1929) --
- L. Davidoff, The Best Circles (1973)
- F. Dawes, Not In Front of the Servants (1973)
- N. Dennis, F. Henriques and C. Slaughter, Cool is our Life
(1956)
- G. Dilnot, The Story of Scotland Yard (1926)
- M.W. Disher, Winkles and Champagne (1938)
- R. Douglas, The History of the Liberal Party 1895-1970
(1971)
- R.E. Dowse, Left in the Centre - the I.L.P. 1893-1940 (1966)
- J.C. Drummond and A. Wilbraham, The Englishman's Food
(1957 ed.)
- R. Ellman (ed.) Edwardians and Late Victorians (New York
(1960)
- G. Elton, England Arise (1939)
- H.V. Emy, Liberals, Radicals and Social Politics 1892-
1914 (Cambridge 1973)
- R.C.K. Ensor, England 1870-1914 (Oxford 1936)
- E.W. Evans, The Miners of South Wales (Cardiff 1961)
- C.R. Fay, Life and Labour in the Nineteenth Century
(Cambridge 1920)
- M. Ferro, The Great War 1914-1918 (1973)
- D. Fraser, The Evolution of the British Welfare State
(1973)
- J.O. French, Plumbers in Unity (Manchester, 1965)
- A. Fried and R.M. Elman, Charles Booth's London (1969)
- R. and R. Frow and M. Katanga, Strikes, A Documentary
History (1971)

- H.J. Fyrth and H. Collins, The Foundry Workers (Manchester
1959)
- P. Garmond, Your Own, Your Very Own (1971)
- J. Gathorne-Hardy, The Rise and Fall of the British
Nanny (1972)
- B.B. Gilbert, The Evolution of National Insurance in
Great Britain (1966)
- D.V. Glass, Social Mobility in Britain (1954)
- J.W. Grant, Free Churchmanship in England 1870-1940
(n.d., 1955?)
- R.H. Gretton, A Modern History of the English People
1880-1922 (1930 ed.)
The English Middle Class (1917)
- A.R. Griffin, The Miners of Nottinghamshire, Vol. 1
1881-1914 (Nottingham, 1955)
- J.R. Gusfield, Protest, Reform and Revolt (New York, 1970)
- E. Halevy, The Rule of Democracy 1905-1914 (1961 ed.)
- W.S. Hall, A Historical Survey of the Durham Colliery
Mechanics' Association 1879-1929 (Durham
1929)
- F.M. Handover, A History of the London Gazette 1665-1965
(1965)
- J. Harris, Government Patronage of the Arts in Great
Britain (Chicago, 1970)
The Edwardian Turn of Mind (Princeton, 1968)
Unemployment and Politics (Oxford, 1972)
- J.F.C. Harrison, A History of the Working Men's College
1854-1954 (1954)
- C. Hazlehurst, Politicians at War (1971)

- J.F.C. Hearnshaw, Democracy at the Crossroads (1919)
- H. Herd, The March of Journalism (1952)
- S. Higenbotton, Our Society's History - the Amalgamated
Society of Woodworkers (Manchester
1939)
- H.R. Hikins (ed.), Building the Union (Liverpool, 1973)
- W.S. Hilton, Foes to Tyranny. A History of the
Amalgamated Union of Building Trade
Workers (1963)
- J. Hinton, The First Shop Stewards' Movement (1973)
- E.J. Hobsbawm, Labouring Men (1964)
- R. Hoggart, The Uses of Literacy (1963 ed.)
- L. Holcombe, Victorian Ladies at Work (Newton Abbot, 1973)
- E. Hopwood, A History of the Lancashire Cotton Industry
and the Amalgamated Weavers' Association
(Manchester, 1969)
- E. Howe and H.E. Waite, The London Society of Compositors
(1948)
- A. Hutt, British Trade Unionism (1962)
The Changing Newspaper (1973)
- E. Hyams, The New Statesman (1963)
- H.M. Hyde, A History of Pornography (1964)
The Other Love (1970)
- S. Hynes, Edwardian Occasions (1972)
- B. Jackson and D. Marsden, Education and the Working
Class (1962)
- J.B. Jeffreys, The Story of the Engineers (1945)
- G.S. Jones, Outcast London (Oxford, 1971)
- K. Jones, Fleet Street and Downing Street (1919)

- P. d'A. Jones, The Christian Socialist Revival 1877-1914 (Princeton, 1968)
- N. Kaldor and R. Silverman, A Statistical Analysis of Advertising Expenditure and the Revenue of the Press (Cambridge, 1948)
- W. Kendall, The Revolutionary Movement in Britain 1900-21 (1969)
- M. Kinnear, The British Voter. An Atlas and Survey since 1885 (1968)
- W. Kornhauser, The Politics of Mass Society (1950)
- W.T. Layton, An Introduction to the Study of Prices (1920 ed.)
- The Relations of Capital and Labour (n.d.)
- C.H. Lee, Regional Economic Growth in the United Kingdom since the 1880's (1971)
- R.A. Leeson, Strike (1973)
- V.I. Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 18 (Moscow, 1963 ed.)
- On Britain (Moscow, n.d.)
- A.L. Levine, Industrial Retardation in Britain 1880-1914 (1967)
- H. Levy, Drink. An Economic and Social Study (1951)
- R. Lewis and A. Maude, The English Middle Classes (1949)
- W. Lippman, Public Opinion (New York, 1950)
- R. Lloyd, The Church of England in the Twentieth Century (1946)
- D. Lockwood, The Blackcoated Worker (1958)
- D. Loth, The Erotic in Literature (1962)
- J. Lovell, Stevedores and Dockers (1969)

- G.A.N. Lowndes, The Silent Social Revolution (Oxford, 1937)
- C.W. Macara, In Search of a Peaceful World (Manchester, 1921)
- A.M. McBriar, Fabian Socialism and English Politics 1884-1918 (Cambridge, 1962)
- S. Maccoby, English Radicalism. The End (1961)
- R.B. McDowell, British Conservatism 1832-1914 (1959)
- C. Macinnes, Sweet Saturday Night (1967)
- N. McKillop, The Lighted Flame. A History of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (1950)
- B. McLaughlin (ed.) Studies in Social Movements (New York, 1969)
- W. MacQueen-Pope, Twenty Shillings in the Pound (1948)
- F.J. Mansfield, "Gentlemen, the Press!" (1943)
- K. Martin, The British Public and the General Strike (1926)
- R. Miliband, Parliamentary Socialism (1961)
- J.R.H. Moorman, A History of the Church of England (1953)
- J. Moran, Natsopa: 75 Years (1964)
- A.J.A. Morris, Radicalism Against War 1906-1914 (1972)
- J.E. Mortimer, A History of the Association of Engineering and Shipbuilding Draughtsmen (1960)
- A.L. Morton, A People's History of England (1938)
- P. Mousnier, Social Hierarchies (1973)
- C.L. Mowat, The Charity Organisation Society 1869-1913 (1961)
- A.E. Musson, The Typographical Association (Oxford, 1954)
- R.S. Neale, Class and Ideology in the Nineteenth Century (1972)

- R. Nettel, A Social History of Traditional Song (1969)
Seven Centuries of Popular Song (1956)
- S. Nowell-Smith (ed.) Edwardian England 1901-1914
(Oxford, 1964)
- A. Oberschall, Social Conflict and Social Movements
(Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1973)
- J. Oliver, The Church and Social Order (1968)
- Open University, Stratification and Social Class (1972)
- W. Owen, English Philanthropy 1660-1960 (Oxford, 1965)
- P.E.P., Report on the British Press (1938)
- E.R. Pease, The History of the Fabian Society (1963 ed.)
- H. Pelling, Popular Politics and Society in Late
Victorian Britain (1968)
- C. Petrie, Scenes from Edwardian Life (1956)
The Carlton Club (1955)
- S. Pollard, A History of Labour in Sheffield (Liverpool,
1959)
- R. Postgate, The Builders' History (1923)
- R. Found, The Strand Magazine 1891-1950 (1966)
- and G. Harmsworth, The History of the Times. The 150th
Anniversary and Beyond 1912-1948.
Part I, 1912-1920 (1952)
- L.H. Powell, The Shipping Federation (1950)
- A.R. Prest, Consumers' Expenditure in the United Kingdom
1900-1919 (Cambridge, 1954)
- B. Fribicevic, The Shop Stewards' Movement and Workers'
Control 1910-1922 (Oxford, 1959)
- R.G.G. Price, A History of Punch (1957)
- J.B. Priestley, The Edwardians (1970)

- C. Pulling, They Were Singing (1952)
- R.M. Punnett, Front Bench Opposition (1973)
- D. Read, Documents from Edwardian England 1901-1915 (1973)
Edwardian England 1901-1915 (1972)
- R. Reiche, Sexuality and the Class Struggle (1970)
- B.C. Roberts, The Trades Union Congress 1868-1921 (1958)
- R. Roberts, The Classic Slum (Manchester, 1971)
- G. Rose, The Working Class (1968)
- G. Routh, Occupations and Pay in Great Britain 1906-60
(Cambridge, 1965)
- P. Rowland, The Last Liberal Governments. Unfinished
Business 1911-1914 (1971)
- A.K. Russell, Liberal Landslide (Newton Abbot, 1973)
- B. Russell, Education and the Social Order (1932)
- J.W.R. Scott, A Story of the Pall Mall Gazette (Oxford
1950)
- J. Seabrook, The Underprivileged (1967)
- L.C.B. Seaman, Victorian England (1973)
- G.R. Searle, The Quest for National Efficiency (Oxford,
1971)
- A. Shadwell, Drink in 1914-1922. A Lesson in Control
(1923)
The Socialist Movement 1824-1924 (1925)
- G. Schaffer, Light and Liberty (Bromley, 1949)
- T.N. Shane, Passed for Press. A Centenary History of the
Association of Correctors of the Press
(n.d.)
- B. Simon, Education and the Labour Movement 1870-1920 (1965)
- N.J. Smelser, Theory of Collective Behaviour (1962)

- H.L. Smith and V. Nash, The Story of the Dockers' Strike
(1889)
- W.S. Smith, The London Heretics 1870-1914 (1967)
- D.C. Somerville, British Politics since 1900 (1950)
- P. Sorokin, Social Mobility (New York, 1927)
- J.A. Spender, The Public Life (2 vols. 1925)
- K. von Stutterheim, The Press in England (1934)
- H.M. Swanwick, Builders of Peace (1924)
- J. Symons, The General Strike (1957)
The Press and its Story (n.d.)
- R.H. Tawney, The Acquisitive Society (1933)
- A.J.P. Taylor, Politicians in Warfare and Other Essays
(1964)
- F.M.L. Thompson, English Landed Society (1963)
- K.A. Thompson, Bureaucracy and Church Reform (Oxford 1970)
- Times Newspaper, Past, Present and Future (1932)
Fifty Years 1882-1932 (1932)
- H.A. Turner, Trade Union Growth, Structure and Policy (1962)
- D.O. Wagner, The Church of England and Social Reform since
1854 (Columbia, 1930)
- D. Wardle, Education and Society in Nineteenth Century
Nottingham (Cambridge, 1971)
- E. Watkins, The Cautious Revolution (1951)
- S. Webb, The Story of the Durham Miners 1662-1921 (1921)
and B. Webb, The History of Trade Unionism 1666-1920
(1919)
- W.B. Whitaker, Victorian and Edwardian Shopworkers
(Newton Abbot, 1973)
- C.L. White, Woman's Magazines 1693-1968 (1970)

E.R. Wickham, Church and People in an Industrial City (1957)

A.R. Wiggins, The History of the Salvation Army. Vol. V.
1904-1914 (1968)

F. Williams, Dangerous Estate (1957)

Magnificent Journey (1954)

R. Williams, Culture and Society 1780-1950 (1963 ed.)

R.V. Williams and A.L. Lloyd, English Folk Songs (1959)

T.G. Williams, The Main Currents of Social and Industrial
Change 1870-1924 (1925)

T. Wilson, The Downfall of the Liberal Party (1966)

G. Winter, A Country Camera 1844-1914 (Newton Abbot, 1971)

J.M. Winter, Socialism and the Challenge of War (1974)

C. Pamphlets

Brighton, Hove, and District Trades Council, The Brighton, Hove
and District Trades Council 1890-1950 (Brighton, 1950)

Delegate, Short History of the London Trades Council 1860-1935
(1935)

W. Hamling, A Short History of the Liverpool Trades Council
1848-1948 (Liverpool, 1948)

J. Leask and B. Bellars, Nor Shall the Sword Sleep (n.d.)

Mansfield and District Trades Council, Golden Jubilee Year
Book 1955 (Mansfield, 1955)

Oldham Trades and Labour Council, Centenary Handbook 1867-1967
(Oldham, 1967)

Peterborough and District Trades Council, Diamond Jubilee 1899-
1959 (Peterborough, 1959)

H.B. Williams, History of the Plymouth and District Trades
Council from 1892-1952 (Plymouth, 1952)

D. Articles

- W.S. Adams 'Lloyd George and the Labour Movement' Past and Present (1953)
- B. Bernstein 'Language and Social Class' British Journal of Sociology (1960)
- C.F. Brand 'British Labor and the International during the Great War' Journal of Modern History (1936)
- J.M. Bullock 'Peers who have married players' Notes and Queries 10 August (1935)
- A.E. Dingle 'Drinks and Working Class Living Standards in Britain 1870-1914' Economic History Review (1972)
- E. Frow and H. Hikins 'The Liverpool General Transport Strike of 1911' Marxism Today, March (1964)
- G. Gibbon 'The Public Social Services' Journal of the Royal Statistical Society (1937)
- B.B. Gilbert 'Winston Churchill versus the Webbs: The Origins of British Unemployment Insurance' American Historical Review (1966)
- J.G. Goldthorpe and D. Lockwood 'Affluence in the British Class Structure' Sociological Review (1963)
- H.R.G. Greaves 'Personal Origins and Interrelations of the Houses of Parliament (since 1832)' Economica (1929)
- W.L. Guttman 'Aristocracy and the Middle Class in the British Political Elite 1886-1916' British Journal of Sociology (1954)
- 'The Changing Structure of the British Political Elite 1886-1935' British Journal of Sociology (1951)
- J. Hall and D.C. Jones 'Social Grading of Occupations' British Journal of Sociology (1950)

- C. Hazlehurst 'Asquith as Prime Minister 1908-1916' English Historical Review (1970)
- H.R. Hikins 'The Liverpool General Transport Strike 1911' Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire (1961)
- E.J. Hobsbawm 'General Labour Unions in Britain 1889-1914' Economic History Review (1949)
- R.J. Holton 'Daily Herald and Daily Citizen 1912-15' International Review of Social History (1975)
- D. Lockwood 'Sources of Variation in Working Class Images of Society' Sociological Review (1966)
- R.I. McKibbin 'James Ramsay MacDonald and the Problem of the Independence of the Labour Party 1910-1914' Journal of Modern History (1970)
- S. Meacham '"The Sense of an Impending Clash". English working class unrest before the First World War' American Historical Review (1972)
- C.S. Orwell and B.I. Fulton 'A Century of Wages and Earnings in Agriculture' Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society of England (1931)
- H. Pelling 'State Intervention and Social Legislation in Great Britain Before 1914' Historical Journal (1967)
- S. Pollard 'Real Earnings in Sheffield 1851-1914' Yorkshire Bulletin of Economic and Social Research (1957)
- R.E. Pumphrey 'The Introduction of Industrialists into the British Peerage' American Historical Review (1960)
- M. Rose 'Late Victorians and Edwardians' Victorian Studies (1974)

R.V. Sires 'Labour Unrest in England 1910-1914' Journal of Economic History (1955)

A.P. Wadworth 'Newspaper Circulations 1800-1954' Journal of the Manchester Statistical Society (1955)

J.E. Williams 'The Political Activities of a Trade Union' International Review of Social History (1957)

J.M. Winter 'R.H. Tawney's Early Political Thought' Past and Present (1970)

E. Theses

J.P. Addis, The Heavy Iron and Steel Industry in South Wales (Ph.D., Wales, 1957)

J.A. Banks The English Middle Class Concept of the Standard of Living and its Relation to Marriage and Family Size (M.A., London, 1952)

R.S. Barker The Educational Policies of the Labour Party 1900-1961 (Ph.D., London, 1968)

L. Bather A History of the Manchester and Salford Trades Council (Ph.D., Manchester, 1956)

N. Blewett The British General Elections of 1910 (D. Phil., Oxford, 1967)

J.B. Bonham The Politics of the British Middle Class (Ph.D., London, 1953)

D. Brown The Labour Movement in Wigan 1874-1967 (M.A. Liverpool, 1969)

J. Brown Ideas Concerning Social Policy and Their Influence on Legislation in Britain 1902-11 (Ph.D., London, 1964)

E. Burdick Syndicalism and Industrial Unionism in England until 1918 (D. Phil., Oxford, 1950)

- D.M. Chewter A History of the Socialist Labour Party of Great Britain from 1902 until 1921 with special reference to the development of its ideas (B. Litt., Oxford, 1966)
- J. Child A History of Industrial Relations in the British Printing Industry (D. Phil., Oxford, 1953)
- D. Cox The Rise of the Labour Party in Leicester (M.A., Leicester, 1959)
- M.S. Edwards S.E. Keable and Nonconformist Social Thinking 1880-1939 (Ph.D., Bristol, 1969)
- J. Fraser The Impact of the Labour Unrest, 1910-14, on the British Labour Movement (Ph.D., Leicester, 1968)
- E.G. Gregory The Miners in Politics in England and Wales (D. Phil., Oxford, 1963).
- P.S. Gupta History of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants (D. Phil., Oxford, 1960)
- G.C. Halverson Development of Labour Relations in the British Railway since 1860 (Ph.D., London, 1962)
- S. Hassan The Parliamentary Labour Party and its Relation with the Liberals 1910-14 (M. Litt., Aberdeen, 1967)
- D. Head Industrial Organisation in Leicester 1844-1914 (Ph.D., Leicester, 1966)
- P. d'A. Jones Christian Socialism in Britain and the U.S.A. 1880-1914 (Ph.D., London, 1963)
- A.L. Levine Industrial Change and its Effects upon Labour (Ph.D., Wales, 1957)
- S.H. Mayor The Relations Between Organised Religion and English Working Class Movements 1850-1914 (Ph.D., Manchester, 1960)

- S. Maddock The Liverpool Trades Council and Politics 1878-1918
(M.A., Liverpool, 1959)
- J.H. Richards Fluctuations in House Building in the South Wales
Coalfield 1851-1954 (M.A., Wales, 1956)
- K.B. Robbins The Abolition of War - a study of the ideology and
organisation of the peace movement 1914-1919 (D. Phil.,
Oxford, 1965)
- M.I. Thomas The Labour Movement in Great Britain and Compulsory
Military Service 1914-1916 (M.A., London, 1959)
- P.R. Thompson London Working Class Politics and the Foundation
of the London Labour Party 1885-1914 (D. Phil., Oxford,
1963)
- C. Tsuzuki H.M. Hyndman and British Socialism (D. Phil, Oxford,
1959)
- C.L. Whible The London Lighterage Trade: its history, organisa-
tion and economics (M. Sc., London, 1939)
- J.E. Williams Derbyshire Coalminers 1880-1944 (Ph.D., Sheffield,
1959).