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Syndicalism and the Co-operative Commonwealth. (How we shall bring about the Revolution.) By EMILE PATAUD and EMILE POUGET : translated by CHARLOTTE AND FREDERICK CHARLES. (Oxford : The New International Publishing Company.)

To those fatigued with the mythologies of M. Sorel, this is in many ways a refreshing book. At last we are told with some approach to definiteness what two, at least, of those who profess and call themselves Syndicalists really do want, and how they propose to get it. It is not, indeed, clear how far the authors' opinions are to be considered representative. The translators content themselves with a mild protest against the description of the suffrage movement as a childish hobby, and the authors' too ready acceptance of the latest medical fad of serum treatment ; but Tom Mann and "grand old comrade Kropotkin," both of whom contribute forewords, appear to reserve the right to differ on more important points ; and Will Dyson, who contributes the rather flamboyant drawings, has clearly dreamt dreams and seen visions on his own.

The first part of the book, written in a staccato and melodramatic narrative style which recalls Mr. Guy Thorne's *When it was Dark*, describes the mechanism of the Revolution. The most interesting point is the stress justly laid on the importance of capturing the army and the instruments of war. The authors, indeed, are at some pains to conceal the suicidal effects of the general strike *per se* : from the description of the "spiking" of the ovens on p. 22 one would suppose that only the capitalist class consumed bread, and the only serious efforts to avert harmful reactions upon the worker seem to have been made by the dustmen, who continued to clean the streets in the working-class districts. But the authors are, nevertheless, alive to the truth that it is only by a rapid and forcible capture of the accumulated stocks in the hands of the capitalists that the superior staying power of the latter can be overcome.

The second portion of the book, dealing with the subsequent reconstruction of society, is considerably the more interesting. The management of each trade, as we know, is to be in the hands of the trade union. In this connection one cannot refrain from noting the naïve tributes paid here and there to the effete and idle *bourgeoisie*, deserters from whom "came over quite frankly to the Revolution" and put their "knowledge and experience" at its disposal ; and in whose offices numbers of "valuable documents

and important statistics" were discovered and made use of by the Syndicates.

But the instruments of production, though managed, are not apparently in any sense to be owned by the workers in the trade. The system of distribution proposed is one of pure Communism for articles of necessity, including railway transport and house-room, combined with an equal remuneration in "labour-notes" to be used in payment for articles of comparative luxury. It is left entirely to the syndicates in the luxurious trades to change their occupations in accordance with the movements of demand as evidenced by the use of these notes. It is gratifying to learn that the goldsmiths and the jewellers set a good example in this respect, but one looks in vain for a guarantee that it will be followed.

Each trade is to be allowed a blank order on the trades making the instruments of production—a system which seems hardly likely to conduce to economy of management. As to agriculture, the large farms are to be organised at once on a Syndicalist basis, while the peasant proprietors are to be converted gradually through the half-way house of co-operative institutions.

Co-ordination is to be secured by the local Bureaux de Travail, the Trade Federations, and the Federal Committee, consisting of delegates from both. Their work is "not direction, but condensation and analysis," and they wield no power in the interests of consumers against a refractory syndicate. One cannot repress a vision of a distracted Labour Exchange telephoning to Mr. Sidney Webb to send over a competent bureaucrat to put an end to the reign of industrial anarchy.

The concluding chapters deal with the social aspects of the new Utopia. The most pleasing feature is the prosperity of amateur theatricals, and the most curious the new penal code, which combines lynch-law for the offence of rape with a moral boycott for all other known forms of crime.

I have said that this is a refreshing book, but it is also a disappointing one. It is redolent of the central fallacy of Syndicalism—that oblivion of the standpoint of the consumer which is at the bottom of the worst excesses alike of trade unionism and of capitalism. But the one solid common-sense contribution which we had supposed that Syndicalism offered to the solution of the industrial problem seems to have vanished—the suggestion of the possibility of a restoration to the manual workers of a sense of personal ownership in the means of production, and of direct financial interest in and responsibility for the prosperity of their

own trade. We are left with a *réchauffé* of the visions of early English Socialism, exhilarating, like all fine visions, to the imagination, but leaving the reason distrustful and unconvinced.

D. H. ROBERTSON

Le Droit International Ouvrier. By ERNEST MAHAIM. (Paris : Recueil Sirey. 1913. 385 pp. Price 6 francs.)

New inventions necessitate new laws. The modern development of international life has resulted in the appearance of a new branch of international law (*le droit international ouvrier*). This was the subject chosen by Professor Mahaim for a course of lectures to students at the Sorbonne, which have now appeared somewhat amplified in book form. Professor Mahaim covers the ground very thoroughly. He finds it convenient to divide the subject into three parts. The first deals with the settlement of workers in foreign countries, both from the point of view of the attitude of the law towards foreign persons wishing to immigrate, and inversely as regards the attitude of a State towards its subjects abroad. In the second part he considers the position of foreigners under the various branches of labour legislation. Of these by far the most important from the standpoint of international law are the insurance and compensation laws, which show great variety in their treatment of the rights and duties of persons of foreign nationality employed temporarily or permanently within their respective spheres of operation. These laws illustrate most strikingly the influence of modern legislation on international relations. The countries concerned have found it necessary to conclude a whole series of treaties relative especially to accident insurance; the texts of most of these are printed in an appendix. In the third part we come to labour treaties proper, *i.e.*, conventions by which two or more States definitely pledge themselves to introduce laws of a particular type, not so much in the interests of the subjects of any other States within their territories, but generally for the benefit of all workers, and especially in order to avoid inequality in commercial interests. We note, by the way, that Professor Mahaim denies that these latter interests are at stake. He maintains that industrial legislation is economically profitable from the point of view of the individual manufacturer as well as of a nation at large. It is clearly impossible to give a general reply to the much disputed question of how far a high standard of wages and conditions is an economic advantage—too much depends upon local conditions, the skill and capacity of the individual employer, and his power to turn temporarily increased