

example, who knows what he wants and finds the men like Sir Charles Harris, who can get it for him. A committee, in short, can draft a program, but it cannot see that program through. If it does, it is because the committee has surrendered its function to some dominating individual member. Nor have Mr. and Mrs. Webb discussed, with anything like the fullness it requires, the position to be occupied in their system by the judiciary. The scheme they propose involves a written constitution, and a written constitution involves judicial review. Yet these are criticisms of detail rather than of fundamental purpose. What Mr. and Mrs. Webb have done is to cast a light upon the mechanism of government such as it has not had since Mr. Graham Wallas's *Human Nature in Politics* in one field, and Bagehot's *English Constitution* in another.

Mr. and Mrs. Webb desire to destroy what they call the dictatorship of the capitalist; by which they mean the association of power with property. That involves the view that power so created is dangerous, for it erects about itself safeguards and they are built upon the lives of other men. The power derived from property Mr. and Mrs. Webb would replace by power derived from public service. That this can be effected is the unstated assumption of their system.

Can it be done? The argument has never been discussed in the detail it deserves. Is public service, to take an obvious instance, compatible with that absorption in private experience with which so much of modern psychology concerns itself? And how far is the ability at the service of the state really able to cope with the tasks Mr. and Mrs. Webb ask it to undertake? To the first question we can at least say that if the accumulation of property is to be made impossible our social system must provide an adequate channel of compensation, and public service can, as the record of English politics makes clear, be made as attractive as any other mode of life. Whether we have the ability at our command, in a full sense, the future alone can determine. Certainly we shall not know until we give to the next generation an educational system which frankly recognizes their citizenship. The questions to be debated in the future will be even more highly technical than now; and much will depend upon the way in which the policy of government is explained to the public, and the education the citizens receive to prepare them for its explanation. Here, it must be confessed, Mr. and Mrs. Webb are a little disappointing. They do not seem to realize how intimately an adequate news service, and a fair comment upon it, is bound up with democratic institutions. So, too, with education. One of the lessons of the war has, I think, been the demonstration that our educational systems are largely useless for the purpose we have in view. They do not seem to confer that detachment in the presence of facts which is vital to statesmanship. The truth seems to be that the kind of detachment we require in the presence of contemporary facts is unrelated to the substance of our present educational methods. But all Mr. and Mrs. Webb's institutions will be useless, or, if not useless, will merely add a new oligarchy to the old, if they do not appeal to a populace which grasps their meaning. How is that to be attained? What proportion of the people must become interested for its attainment? What method will secure the certain presence of that proportion?

Here, I think, we move into the realm of collective psychology; and that is, at present, a little like saying that we move into the realm of ignorance. There are, I know,

not a few who believe that good houses, steady employment, proper pay and a share in the control of their lives, will resolve these questions without further ado. Mr. and Mrs. Webb, I should suspect, are inclined to be on this side. Yet we have many who enjoy all these advantages, who yet remain not so much anti-social in outlook as entirely unaware of the social issues. It may well be, indeed, as Mr. Tawney has argued, that a society informed by acquisitive ideals becomes so distorted in its moral judgment as to give us no basis for reflection. It may be that when public service rather than private gain is the dominating motive, these difficulties will disappear. Russia, at least, should show us how far economic change becomes directly responsible for the emergence of that moral idealism of which Mr. and Mrs. Webb are themselves so admirable an example. At any rate we need, in this realm, a far more searching inquiry into first principles than Mr. and Mrs. Webb have given. For we demand in politics not so much the best that can be conceived as the best that can be fitted into the facts with which we work; and until those facts are more fully known, a good deal of our speculation must remain in a vacuum. H. J. L.

Common Sense in Labor Management, by Neil M. Clark. New York: Harper and Brothers.

"ONLY one theme runs through this book," says Mr. Clark—"the need for frankness, force and justice in management."

Believing thus that it is good business for managers to be mindful of their employees' opinions and desires, Mr. Clark records typical examples of successful ventures in industrial relations. His narrative is informing and persuasive as he discusses working conditions, living conditions, incentives, security of employment and other problems. He even advises employers that they can advantageously work out many methods in cooperation with the "best conservative union leaders."

Mr. Clark has learned well from editorial experience on business journals how to inoculate his employer readers with the beginnings of ideas without their full awareness of what is taking place.

But to what extent can that justify the statement of half-truths in which the more important half is withheld? Mr. Clark is responsible for such sentences as these: "The unions have in many instances taught employers justice. . . . In the last analysis, however, it is a task of management to see that provisions are made whereby justice may be done." "The right of the employer to discharge is fundamental in a free industry."

These sentences betray a confusion of thinking which detracts from the book's usefulness. Such ideas will never be agreed to by the workers. And the agreement of the workers is one of the things that determines the soundness of practical proposals to improve industrial relations.

Mr. Clark does not mean to mislead, for he is in general traveling on the right road. Witness the point of view with which he begins and ends when he says: "There is a spirit abroad that the true aim of business is service to society; and that it is right and necessary, and profitable, to see that the workers have a more equal share in the satisfaction of serving and the rewards of service."

But in addition to a good sense of direction, it is essential today to have a shrewd sense of ways of realizing "liberty," "equality" and "justice," which workers no less than managers will agree to.

O. T.