

business matters should listen to exponents of capital, labor, and especially of the public interest at large. It should recommend legislation by Congress as needed. It should answer such questions as whether we should have a permanent Coal Labor Board, as we have the Railway Labor Board; whether the present laws about coal mining, transportation, and distribution are obeyed; whether human labor conditions are what they should be; whether the seasonal conditions of the coal trade are properly adjusted; whether regularity of employment can be substituted for the present alternation of rush periods and long "lay-offs" of miners; whether the soft-coal trade is, as has been said by Mr. Hoover, "one of the worst functioning industries in the country;" whether the admitted waste in the present coal business can be lessened.

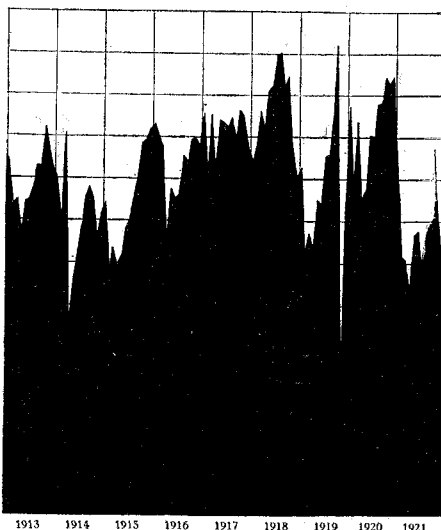
One suggestion of the possible recommendations of such a board is made by Mr. William Hard in one of the remarkably instructive group of articles published in the "Survey's" Graphic on Coal. He says:

Suppose, then, that a freedom of co-operative selling, mildly similar to the freedom granted to farmers in the Capper-Volstead Law, were offered to—or imposed upon—coal operators. Suppose that a certain degree of co-operation and of combination, by certain methods and within certain limits, were legalized throughout the coal industry in both its sections, anthracite and bituminous. Suppose that the activities of the co-operating persons and combined persons were subjected to a publicity which also would include the investments, the costs, the prices, the profits, existing and current in the whole totaled industry. What would happen then to the public's interest in an ethical price for coal?

I venture to maintain the thesis that then for the first time the situation would exist which would make it possible to ascertain and to promulgate an ethical price for coal.

The graph reproduced herewith from a valuable pamphlet on "The Coal Miners' Insecurity" just issued by the Russell Sage Foundation will give an idea of the extraordinary variations in production in the soft-coal industry. Some of the varying conditions in the coal industry are shown in Mr. W. P. Helm's article in this issue.

As the soft-coal trade is very much the larger part of the country's coal business, and as its groups of mines differ extremely in quality and quantity of production, possibilities of profit, local and general sale opportunities, and many other points, it is evident that the bituminous-coal trade is complicated and insecure. To this add the competition between the unionized and non-unionized fields, and the difficulties grow



Courtesy of Russell Sage Foundation  
THE IRREGULAR PRODUCTION OF SOFT COAL  
IN THE LAST NINE YEARS

greater. All the more reason that a National Coal Commission should study and report. The ordinary manufacturer is bewildered by the complicated claims and statistics laid before him by capital and labor. He would like to know the facts simply and clearly. Congress has shown no disposition even to discuss on its floor several bills providing for public information or mild Governmental oversight. It could hardly ignore altogether in like manner the recommendations of a National Coal Commission.

The anthracite industry is highly organized; too highly organized, consumers say, for they are paying admittedly exorbitant prices, while a quarrel goes on as to whether it is the miner, the producer, the railway, or the middleman in distribution who gets too much. The operators and miners are still in conference and may settle their disputes. But beyond this the consumer would exceedingly like to have a judicial statement from a National Coal Commission which would let consumers know whether or not they are being fairly treated—and if not, why not.

That the worker should have a wage upon which he can support himself and his family decently and save a little for the future all non-partisans in this quarrel agree. Apparently some miners do, others do not; certainly of late the miner's employment, whatever the wage, has been exceedingly irregular and uncertain; thus seven dollars a day may be a high wage, but if it is received, say, only 150 days in a year the total of \$1,050 is small nowadays, and the enforced idleness is demoralizing.

Yes, there are plenty of subjects in both branches of the coal industry which might well occupy the attention of such a National commission as many journals, conservative as well as radical,

are now advocating. It is earnestly to be hoped that the President will take steps to that end.

## EGYPT

A RECENT issue of the New York "Times" contains a long and well-written article by Joseph Collins entitled "England's Problem in Egypt." We regret that we do not know the author or his capacity for a first-hand knowledge of the Egyptians, except that it is apparent from the article that he has made a recent visit to that unhappy country. It is quite possible that there may be an indication in his name of a Sinn Fein prejudice against the colonial administration of the British Empire. But, while his article gives some very interesting and suggestive facts about the present situation in Egypt, it is also an illustration of the confusion of mind which has been produced in many good men by the phrase "self-determination of nations," invented, we believe, by President Wilson.

The facts are that the English Government, which has for many years been maintaining both a nominal and actual protectorate over Egypt, has entered upon a policy of retiring from that country as rapidly and as completely as the demands of law and order will permit. But this is not enough for some Egyptian politicians nor for Mr. Collins himself. Mr. Collins says:

Yet freedom must come to Egypt and come soon. It is absurd to have given a listening ear and an understanding heart to the righteousness of self-determination, as we have done the past decade, and then stand supinely aside and be a witness of the repeated shipwreck on the rock of militarism of the negotiations leading to liberty and not raise our voice to justify Egypt's cause and clearly to publish its merit. There are approximately 13,000,000 voices in Egypt, and it is probably quite within the truth to say 95 per cent of them are clamoring for the British Empire to terminate its protectorate, with its forces, and substitute fraternalism for paternalism. It is not a question of religion, as some alarmists would have us believe. It is not even selfishness and predatoriness.

Just as a child can make its mother yield if it keeps up its clamor long and loud enough, providing it does not display conduct that alienates the mother's affection and provoke wrath that is beyond control, so will Egypt succeed. First, because it is her right; second, because it is in conformity with evolution; and, third, because an enlightened public opinion of other nations will insist upon it.

Having uttered this sentiment, which is creditable to his feeling but not entirely to his logic, Mr. Collins in an amusingly inconsistent fashion goes on to point out that Egypt is still in the

infancy of development and needs a protecting mother. He says that no nation can be self-governing unless it has education and intelligence, and that with this necessity the "blighting illiteracy" and the "supine acceptance" of the Egyptians of the unwillingness of their leaders to give them elementary education is "enigmatic." He describes the only university which the Egyptians themselves have established, the Mohammedan University of El Azhar.

This University has thousands of students, and the writer of these lines, like Mr. Collins, has seen them assembled in their mediæval fashion, sitting on their haunches studying the philosophy of the Koran. There are, as Mr. Collins rightly says, in this unique Egyptian University no laboratories, apparatus, charts, or other aids or ancillæ of the pedagogic art and no Arabic scientific literature. What modern nations understand by education is to be obtained by the Egyptians only in schools established by English and Americans. To quote Mr. Collins again: "Lice, mosquitoes, and flies kill men, potential and actual men, in Egypt every year, and will continue to do so until the fundamental principles of hygiene are taught in the schools and enforced by the medical profession. Imagine a country, the mother of civilization, in which the simplest principles of sanitary science are as hidden from ninety per cent of its inhabitants as the meaning of the inscriptions on the Rosetta stone are to the scrubwomen of the British Museum, and one gets a faint idea of their ignorance of hygiene and all that it implies."

And yet, saying this, Mr. Collins still insists that under the law of self-determination these people ought to be left to themselves to maintain the great waterworks and projects of the Nile, and perhaps even to protect the Suez Canal, which is one of the essential highways of modern civilization. We do not understand the consistency of a political writer who urges that the British administration should retire bag and baggage from Egypt and almost in the same breath exclaims: "How can a country, the vast preponderance of whose education and culture is fostered and conditioned by such an institution as El Azhar, legitimately expect to participate in world order and conduct of civilized nations?"

The facts are that Great Britain has saved Egypt from the murderous exploitation of the Turks and has given the peasantry of that ancient country the only system of justice that they have known for centuries and the only methods of agriculture which have saved them from periodical famine and starvation. The English Government still has



(C) Keystone  
FUAD PASHA, WHO HAS ASSUMED THE  
TITLE OF KING OF EGYPT

a duty to perform for the civilized world in Egypt. The only things that can be demanded from England with regard to Egypt are that her protectorate government in the country of the Nile shall be administered for the benefit of the Egyptians and the purpose of as rapidly as possible giving them a control in administrative affairs.

If England had followed the will-o'-the-wisp of self-determination in 1910, when Boutros Pasha, the native Egyptian Prime Minister, was assassinated by the very type of Egyptian revolutionists who are now demanding that the British abandon the Nile and the Suez Canal, Egypt would have been successfully invaded by the Turks under German leadership in the World War, the Suez Canal would have been cut, the Mediterranean might have been made a closed sea, and the Germans might have won the World War in the first two years of its prosecution.

## MEMORIES CONVENIENTLY SHORT

**V**ARIOUS organizations have begun an attack upon the Volstead Act and upon the Eighteenth Amendment. It is their entire right to agitate for a modification of the Volstead Act or for a repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment.

If, in accordance with our Governmental practices, they desire to effect a change in the law and the Constitution, no one should object, but if in working towards this end they use arguments which are palpably false they ought not

to complain if certain facts are kindly and considerably brought to their attention.

Those who are working for the repeal of prohibition legislation say, and rightly, that the Volstead Act has made lawbreakers out of previously law-abiding citizens and that part, at least, of our present crime wave is due to this fact. When, however, they say that the restoration of the liquor traffic will restore respect for the law, they manifest a singular forgetfulness. When did the liquor traffic in America show anything but an enforced recognition of the sanctity of the law? The saloon and the saloon element, backed by brewers and distillers, laughed at law whenever the laugh proved profitable. The liquor traffic corrupted legislatures, dominated municipal governments, and debauched minors without the slightest moral compunction. Greed for the dollar at any cost was not confined to the manufacturers of what prohibitionists call the "demon rum;" it was the gentle-hearted brewer as well who, holding the corner-saloon keeper between his thumb and fingers, forced in many instances violations of law and public order. A little less greed and a little more regard for public decency, and the country might not have been roused to the elimination of the saloon.

The present situation presents tremendous difficulties, but let us not fool ourselves into believing that these difficulties can be eliminated by turning the country over to the tender mercies of a law-abiding liquor trade that never was.

## NOT SO RED AS THEY ARE PAINTED

**I**T is a spirit of pharisaic intolerance that sweepingly imputes low morals by classes or professions. Actors and college students have suffered most under such sweeping condemnation. We are glad to see that the talk about low standards of conduct in the colleges was deprecated the other day at the New England Conference of the Methodist Church. One of the secretaries of the Educational Board, Dr. Warren Sheldon, reported that a recent examination of moral conditions in a hundred colleges left the conviction that among students the standards as to morality are at least as high as in any other group of corresponding numbers. Dr. Sheldon said: "I do not mean to imply that college dormitories are glowing examples of rectitude, for single men living in barracks do not naturally grow into plaster saints. My contention is that the moral standard of any representative group of college men is higher than a correspond-