

mended that grants should be made through the Agricultural Organization Societies in England, Scotland, and Ireland, or through the County Councils. Grants for experimental work have been made in the past to the British Flax and Hemp Growers' Society and to the British Tobacco Growers' Society, and similar grants could be made to other like bodies. Ultimately, rural industry will have to stand on its own legs, be economically self-supporting, able to face worldwide competition, and not be artificially bolstered up in any way. Much good work has already been done by voluntary organizations; and if a considerable measure of success has been achieved in the past in the face of inertia and neglect, there seems no limit to the possibilities when this great reform movement is powerfully backed up by better housing, better transport, and all the blessings of electricity, rural education, and scientific research, and public sympathy based on knowledge.

There is not space to describe here what already has been done, but reference should be made to the valuable work undertaken by such bodies as the Village Centres Council, the Peasant Arts Guild, the Rural League (whose energetic secretary is Mr. J. L. Breen, author of books on small holdings), the Home Arts and Industries Association, the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, the Rural Organization Society, and more especially the Agricultural Organization Society with its affiliated Federation of Women's Institutes. Possibly these various associations could coöperate or combine in one great federation, or otherwise define their respective spheres, in order to avoid overlapping, duplication, or unnecessary dispersion of energy, so that the great work of rural industry restoration could go vigorously forward.

The Economist

THE BRITISH MERCHANT SERVICE

BY L. COPE CORNFORD

OFFICERS and men of the British Mercantile Marine are giving an example to their countrymen, alike in their determination to secure their just dues justly, and in their resolve to maintain the sea industry by which the country lives. The struggle to rebuild England is based upon these two principles: the right of the men who do the work to a fair share in the profits of the work, and the necessity of maintaining British industry. No man has earned his share more hardly than the British seaman; none better understands that it is first of all necessary to serve the industry by which he lives. During the war the seamen fed the country and supplied the armies of the Allies. There is no case on record of a man refusing to sail because he feared danger, though there are several cases in which men failed to join their ship for other, usually convivial, reasons. Men who had been seven times torpedoed continued to sign on.

During the war pay and wages were increased; the men, for the first time, received reasonable wages; but the officers received no proportionate increase, and are still underpaid, and still lack a pension. It has never been suggested, so far as the present writer is aware, that the shipping industry cannot afford the additional expense involved. It may raise freights, but the proportion of the freight charge, under normal conditions, to the total cost of an article, is inconsiderable. So far, so good. The war has brought a tardy justice to British seamen. But it has done more. All the various branches of the great sea industry are joining together in the common interest. During the war there was con-

stituted by the Ministry of Shipping the National Maritime Board, composed of four panels: the Navigating Officers' panel, the Engineer Officers' panel, the Sailors' and Firemen's panel, and the Cooks' and Stewards' panel; and representatives of the shipowners; thus representing the merchant service as a whole, and dealing with the government as a representative body. Colonel Leslie Wilson, Parliamentary Secretary to the Shipping Controller and Chairman of the National Maritime Board, in introducing the Estimates for the Ministry of Shipping, told the House of Commons that a conference had been held among shipowners, officers, and men, at which it was proposed to replace the National Maritime Board by a Joint Industrial Board, to be called the Seafarers' Joint Council, on the principle of the Whitley scheme. Colonel Wilson said that the government would gladly consent to the supersession of the National Maritime Board by the Seafarers' Joint Council. There the matter stands.

The Seafarers' Joint Council has been formed, and consists of: the Imperial Merchant Service Guild, which is the officers' guild; the Mercantile Marine Service Association; the Association of Coastwise Masters, Mates, and Engineers; the Marine Engineers' Association; the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, a powerful trade union; the United Kingdom Pilots' Association; the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union; the National Union of Ships' Stewards, Cooks, Butchers, and Bakers; and the Hull Seamen's and Firemen's Union. At present the Seafarers' Joint Council exists together with the National Maritime Board, and one of its objects is to maintain the decisions made by that Board. But apart from matters affecting the welfare of officers and men, the

main purpose of the Seafarers' Joint Council is to form 'an Industrial Council of Seafarers on the lines of the Whitley Report.' It will be observed that so far the shipowners are not represented on the Council, and that so soon as they are represented, but not before, the Council will, in fact, become a Joint Industrial Council for the whole of the sea industry. The constitution of such a body is, in fact, absolutely essential to secure and to maintain the industry of the sea. Until the Joint Industrial Council is established the sea industry is divided against itself. The present writer would humbly suggest that the projected Council should include representatives of the Royal Navy, which is and must remain intimately associated with the civilian sea service.

In the meantime, the creation of the Seafarers' Joint Council has joined together officers and men as they were never joined before, and for the first time the merchant service is acting as one body. For instance, a certain firm of shipowners recently informed the officers of a certain ship that they would not receive the benefit of the overtime clause passed by the National Maritime Board. What happened? The Sailors' and Firemen's Union immediately declared that the ship would not get a crew. What happened then? The firm in question yielded at once. Again, another firm refused to grant passenger rates to the officers of a passenger ship, and the same thing happened, with the same result. Of course, these disputes ought never to have arisen; but until the shipowners make common cause with the seafarers, and the Joint Industrial Council is established, there will be such troubles. The principle, indeed, should eventually be extended to joint councils of shipowners, officers, and men in each

shipping concern, as the Minister of Labor suggests.

The unity of officers and men in the merchant service is a recent development; but it is not a new thing in the navy; and the government (and the Treasury) would, perhaps, be surprised to learn that injustice to officers in respect of their pay and allowances is as deeply resented on the Lower Deck as injustice to the men.

Mr. Havelock Wilson remarked that it was of no use to demand better conditions so long as alien ships, working at less cost than British ships, were allowed to enter British ports. Here he indicated one of the effects of war most injurious to the British shipping industry; for under government control and owing to the exigencies of war, British freights were limited, while neutral freights were, of course, unlimited; British voyages were restricted and British markets were abandoned and lost, while the neutral trader sailed where he would, charged what he liked, and took over British trade. If, by increase of pay, the British shipowner increases the cost of his operations, he may be unable to oust the alien trader and regain the British carrying trade. Mr. Havelock Wilson seems to rely upon the influence of the League of Nations to fix a universal standard of wages and conditions, so that the traders of all nations, being all compelled to pay the same running expenses, cannot undersell one another. But it is very doubtful if the League of Nations can achieve this enterprise. In any case, the League would hardly interfere with the cutting of rates and with other forms of competition. In the meantime, the miners' leaders have done more in five months to ruin the carrying trade of this country than the German or the neutral accomplished in nearly five years.

Nevertheless, in response to the in-

itation of President Wilson, the International Labor Conference will be held at Washington in October, according to the terms of the Labor Section of the Treaty of Peace. Each state is to send four delegates, of whom two are to represent the government of that state, one the employers, and one the workpeople. Each delegate will have the right to vote independently. The Conference is empowered to draft conventions and treaties. Any convention or treaty adopted by a two-thirds majority must be laid before the respective Parliaments of the states represented, and the respective Parliaments are bound to ratify the instrument. This remarkable project, evidently of unusual importance, has been almost ignored by the public and the newspapers. It will be observed that the respective Parliaments of the states represented do, in fact, delegate their powers to their representatives at the Conference; who, without the consent of the Parliaments they represent, may commit the people of the various states to the wildest legislation. It is probable, however, that in the event profound mutual jealousies will neutralize action.

So far as the sea is concerned, the United States, for instance, is making a tremendous effort to increase and to establish her mercantile marine. That service is conducted by the United States Shipping Board, a government department, under Director Henry Howard. During the war Director Henry Howard (according to the *Boston Transcript*) determined that American ships shall be entirely manned by Americans. To this end, the Recruiting Service of the United States Shipping Board are advertising for 'experienced men to be trained as deck officers and engineers.' Free courses in navigation and engineering are

offered by the Board in the schools established in the great ports. Men who have had two years' experience, 'ocean or coastwise, or equivalent in fisheries, or on lake, bay, or sound,' can obtain a third mate's license, 'or higher,' in six weeks. Men who have had any kind of engineering experience can gain a third assistant engineer's license, 'or higher,' in one month. There are now over three thousand official recruiting stations in the United States. British Merchant Service officers applying for employment in the American Marine are politely rejected. The Imperial Merchant Service Guild, in an article published in its *Gazette*, delicately suggests that a six weeks' course, even after two years' salt- or fresh-water experience, may possibly not serve to make a fine young American fit to take a watch at sea. 'We feel it a duty to suggest that where safety of life at sea is concerned it is a matter not for one but for all maritime nations.' But America is in a hurry, as usual. Before the war, according to the *Boston Transcript*, 'economic conditions were such that our merchant marine could not hold its own with the competition of the merchant services of other countries.' That is now to be altered.

Before the war the nation most formidably competing with this country was Germany. The German Government subsidized shipping companies, so that British private firms were competing with the financial resources of the whole German Empire. Germany, having lost nearly the whole of her mercantile marine in the war, after the perpetration of the most abominable infamies, is now impudently proposing to start again. The Finance Minister, the ineffable Erzberger, addressing the Weimar Assembly on August 12, announced that 'we must immediately with all speed create a mercantile fleet, and then help

Germans abroad with state advances.' It will occur, to British seamen at least, that if Germany can afford to build a mercantile marine and send money to Germans outside Germany, she can afford to pay some of the war costs of this country. Is Germany to be represented at the International Labor Conference to be held at Washington in October? Presumably she is. And is Germany to be represented upon the section of the Conference dealing with the sea? She will undoubtedly claim such representation, but it is far from certain that the British seafaring delegates will consent to meet the German pirates. For, peace or no peace, the Germans are pirates; nor have they as yet expiated their crimes.

The National Sailors' and Firemen's Union, of which Mr. Havelock Wilson is the head, have decreed the ostracism of the Germans on the sea, and if they choose to enforce their will, no government can prevent them from so doing. International diplomacy may arrange the most elaborate treaties, but the fact remains that there is a blood-feud at sea between Germany and British seamen, together with the seamen of other maritime nations. The sea has its own code of laws, traditions, and customs, written and unwritten, and the penalty for their violation is ostracism. Some perception of the situation seems to have glimmered upon Dr. Helfferich, who, according to the statements contained in his book, supported the Imperial Chancellor in opposing the demand for unrestricted submarine war. Dr. Helfferich records that he told the main committee of the Reichstag, 'If the card of the unrestricted submarine war is played, and it does not win, then we are lost; lost for centuries to come.' But the main committee of the Reichstag, a bloodthirsty lot, approved of the demands of the Admiralty Staff,

and the Imperial Chancellor and his adviser, Dr. Helfferich, were constrained to acquiesce.

Fourteen thousand six hundred and sixty-one officers and men of the British Mercantile Marine lost their lives in the war, and 30,000 were wounded or disabled. There were, in addition, hundreds of passengers, men, women, and children, murdered by the Boches at sea. Enemy submarines sank in gross tonnage 15,053,786 of the world's shipping, belligerent and neutral alike. Of that amount, this country lost 9,031,828 gross tons, or more than half the total loss. Deducting enemy captures, purchases, and new construction, the net loss of the world's tonnage, excluding British, on October 31 last was 1,811,584; but the British net loss was 3,443,012. The cargoes carried in the ships sunk, amounting to many millions of tons of commodities and foodstuffs, are a dead loss. Germany, however, does not propose to suffer for that monstrous and wicked destruction. She clamors to be fed and supplied by the Allies, and the British Government began to send foodstuffs into Germany soon after the armistice was concluded, when our own people were being insufficiently supplied. The process is continuing; and German traders are being licensed to enter this country. We may expect to hear at any moment that British capital is being lent to Germany to build German ships.

The Board of Trade scheme of pensions and allowances to widows and orphans of masters and officers is still far from adequate.* The merchant service estimates that there are

some 300 more deaths due, directly or indirectly, to enemy action than the 14,661 cases officially recorded. The most of these losses leave widows and children destitute. A deputation from the Seafarers' Joint Council asked the Prime Minister, during the deliberations of the Peace Conference, to exact from the enemy a sum which would provide for the subsistence of the families and dependents of the dead sailors. Mr. Lloyd George definitely promised that Germany should be compelled to pay the full amount. 'The Germans must pay for this,' said the Prime Minister, 'and he must pay this as the first claim; this must come before mere [sic] indemnity for war expenses. There are a good many questions as to what his capacity is for paying huge war indemnities, but there is no doubt he can pay, at any rate, compensation for the losses of this kind which he has brought about. This compensation must come first.'

Has Germany paid a single penny? What governments are apt to forget is that while payment is delayed poor people are starving. They have no private income. They depend upon money coming in on Saturday night. And in addition to the families and dependents of the men who have lost their lives, there are some 30,000 officers and men disabled by wounds or sickness. Very many of these cases receive either a small grant, which does not enable them to live, or, owing to circumstances, they are not eligible for a grant. The Imperial Merchant Service Guild has founded and administers the Captain Fryatt Memorial Fund, for which £50,000 are required, for the purpose of relieving these cases of distress. America, with an admirable generosity, is raising a fund of £10,000,000 sterling for the same object, as a tribute to the valor

* Compensation is based on the rates of pay obtaining six months before the war, when the rates were less than half what they are now, and the cost of living about half what it is now. The average pensions of widows of captains of the Merchant Service who lost their lives owing to enemy action are £107 per year, exclusive of allowances for children, approximately £24 per year for each child. Chief officers' widows, £68 per year, exclusive of allowances for children.

of the British Mercantile Marine during the war. Mr. W. H. Appleton, who is organizing the collection of the fund, stated that it was proposed to secure an income of £2 a week per man, for which a capital fund of £60,000,000 is required. Toward that sum America intends to contribute one sixth.

It is far from fitting that the merchant service should thus depend upon private beneficence. Officers and men, who were in fact in the first fighting line, should either be treated on the same basis as the naval seaman and the soldier; or if, as the Prime Minister promised, full reparation and compensation are to be exacted from the enemy, the British Government should advance the full amount at once.

The present writer, before the war, when the country generally ignored the mercantile marine, conceived the fantastic idea of the creation of an Imperial Transport Service, a national sea service working in association with the Royal Navy. During the war, when the two services worked and fought together, there seemed a prospect that the notion might be made practicable. Eighty thousand merchant service officers and men were employed in the navy. The merchant service also contributed to the Navy 20,000 Royal

Naval Reserve ratings, and 36,000 Trawler Reserve men; 20,000 mercantile seamen and firemen were working on Government Transport agreements. All shipping was controlled by the government. Here, in fact, was the Imperial Transport Service in being.

Alas! the intromission of the state into the shipping industry, justifiable or not, was resented by the whole of that industry. Shipowners and seafarers alike reject official control. Alike they demand the management of their affairs, and no doubt but they are right. The experiment of state control was fairly tried; the government had every chance, and the government failed. It seems that there is something fatal inherent in the nature of state control. The wise man will deal with things as they are. The idea of state control should be dissociated from the idea of state countenance, support, and help. They are two quite separate things. It is the duty of the government to do all that the state can do to encourage the sea service and to insure its welfare and prosperity. That industry is sticking by the country in peace, as it held by the country in war. Of what other industry can we say the same?

The National Review

TALK OF EUROPE

ADMIRAL SIR PERCY SCOTT has recently given away some of the secrets of the defense of London from air raids. He writes: 'I received a letter from Mr. Balfour asking me to undertake the gunnery defense of London.

'I accepted. After fourteen months of war the so-called defense consisted of eight three-inch high-angle guns; four six-pounders, with gun-sights; and six pompoms, which would not fire up as high as a Zeppelin, and were consequently a danger only to the population.

'The ammunition supplied to the guns was of the worst possible description, and was more dangerous to the population than to the Zeppelins.

'In selecting the ammunition to fire at Zeppelins the authorities should have known: First, that a shell with a large bursting charge of a highly explosive nature was required so that it would damage a Zeppelin if it exploded near; second, that all that went up in the air had to come down again, and that, in order to minimize the danger to the public from falling pieces, they should have used an explosive in the shell which would break it up into small fragments.

'The ammunition supplied was exactly the opposite to what we wanted. The shells had so small a bursting charge that they could do no harm to a Zeppelin, and they returned to earth almost as intact as when they were put into the guns.

'General Gallieni, who was in charge of the defense of Paris, had to defend his 490 square miles of city: he had 215 guns and was gradually increasing this number to 300. He had plenty of men trained in night flying, and lighted-up aerodromes. I had eight guns to defend our 700 square miles of the metropolitan area, no trained airmen, and no lighted-up aerodromes, and this notwithstanding the fact that a Cabinet Minister had told the country that when the Zeppelins came over they would be attacked by our hornets (aeroplanes).

'This was the state of affairs when the Admiralty handed the colossal blunder over to me. To cheer me up, they informed me that they could not give me any more guns; that, although they had been experimenting for ten years, they had no time-fuse suitable for exploding high-explosive shell; that the only guns they had mounted on mobile mountings were Maxims, which were of no use against Zeppelins; that they had not ordered any guns for the defense of London; that they had no air-men who could fly at night, and if they had they would be of no use, as there was no ammunition suitable for attacking a Zeppelin. Practically, although the Admiralty had seriously undertaken to defend London, they had done nothing in fourteen months — or, at any rate, nothing in the right direction.

'As regards the gunnery defense of London, the most criminal part of the Admiralty negligence was in the ammunition.

'Nothing having been done, it was very easy to do something, and as Captain Stansfield, the head of the Anti-Air Department, was an efficient officer, and had under him a capable staff, we quickly got to business. Our only difficulty was to get clear of the Admiralty red-tapeism.

'The first thing was to find a satisfactory fuse. The Admiralty said that they had been trying for ten years to get one and had not succeeded. One of my staff, Commander Rawlinson, solved the problem in ten minutes.

'The next thing was to get a design of a high explosive shell which could be quickly manufactured. This was arrived at, but how were we to fit the shell made?'

Once more red-tape had to be circumvented, and Admiral Scott solved the problem only by ignoring the Admiralty altogether and placing his orders direct in France with motor-car manufacturers.

THE little boy who thought his father had gone to heaven because he had gone to