INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649613076

Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration by Douglas Knoop & Syndey J. Chapman

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DOUGLAS KNOOP & SYNDEY J. CHAPMAN

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Trieste

INDUSTRIAL

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AND

ARBITRATION

BY

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LONDON P. S. KING & SON ORCHARD HOUSE WESTMINSTER 1905

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INTRODUCTION.

STUDIES of the sort made by Mr. Knoop in this essay are more urgently needed at the present time than they have been in most periods of our history. In saying this I am aware that the man who tries to judge relatively the magnitude of the problems of his own times is liable to become the victim of illusion. His interest in the social questions just before him imparts to them a vividness and impressiveness in comparison with which the past is dull, and he is led to feel, as hundreds of others have felt before, that he stands on the threshold of a new era. But, these considerations notwithstanding, it does seem as if the present age would be distinguished in history by the economic changes that took place in it and the attempts that were made to deal with social difficulties. In the field of industry we are faced by the 'trust' which, if not new, is at least more

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predominating in industry than it was a generation ago. Among the activities of buying and selling we find again old forces so transformed as to constitute new facts. Many markets, through grading, organisation, and the telegraph, are broadening into world-markets and stretching into the future, and the large dealer, who is aided by improved financiering, is being provided, therefore, with a wider field for his operations. It is not England alone that is agitated by the question of speculation on produce exchanges. But of all the matters that are troubling advanced communities none is more serious than the labour question in its diverse aspects. Moreover, there is at the present time an undoubted disposition on the part of municipal and central governments to act in relation to the labour question. The last few years have seen a Workmen's Compensation Act adopted in this country. which deals with the risks of accident on a principle that is entirely novel to us; an immense system of workmen's insurance undertaken by the State in Germany ; the compulsory fixing of wages by legally authorised boards in certain of our Colonies ; attempts in many countries to render more peaceable the settlement of wages; and a new activity

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among States, local authorities, and private persons to minimise the evils of unemployment by insurance, labour bureaux, labour colonies, and other means.

Never perhaps was there greater need for close studies of the social question; for there are many problems to be solved, and in an age of social effort experiments will be made, which, if not preceded by scientific investigation, will be full of risk. "The present age," writes Professor Marshall in his Plea for the Creation of a Curriculum in Economics and Associated branches of Political Science, "is indeed a very critical one, full of hope but also Economic and social forces of anxiety. capable of being turned to good account were never so strong as now; but they have seldom been so uncertain in their operation. Especially is this true of the rapid growth of the power and inclination of the working classes to use political and semi-political machinery for the regulation of industry. That may be a great good if well guided. But it may work great injury to them, as well as to the rest of the nation, if guided by unscrupulous and ambitious men, or even by unselfish enthusiasts with narrow range of vision. Such persons have the field too much to themselves. There is need for a larger number of sympathetic

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