

They must have no children, otherwise there is no employment for them in the country. And, on the other hand, there were about thirty-seven advertisements which stated that one child was not objected to. That is the position. There are scores of married men in the cities who would be only too pleased to go into the country to work in the farming industries if provision were made for them to have just a decent wage and decent living-conditions, and if they were allowed to have their children on the farms. But they are absolutely unable to go on to the farms at the present time. They are not wanted if they have any encumbrances. That is a problem which the farmers should face, and they should meet the workers in order to have that problem solved. There is just one other matter I would like to ask Professor Belshaw; and in doing so, I want to compliment that gentleman on the statement he has brought down, which I think is the most constructive of any the professors placed before the Conference. I would like to ask him on what authority he makes the statement that a fall in world's prices is likely to occur within a few years. All the authorities I have followed are optimistic that the world's markets are going to improve in the very near future.

Mr. Fisher (Dairy-farmers' Section): Sir, I wish to ask a question. I think that most of the criticism so far has been destructive and not particularly helpful, not taking full advantage of the excellent papers the economists have provided. Though the papers are widely divergent on some matters, there is one matter upon which, apparently, they all agree. They all agree, as I read them, that there is a possibility of an alternative to the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act in the direction of an industry setting up within itself an organization to deal with its own industrial troubles. I would like to learn in their replies, either from one or from each of them separately, the nature of the organization the professors suggest. I ask this because in the dairy industry, which it has been admitted has made some progress upon the lines of added production, we have been investigating this matter and are at present engaged in considering it. The suggestions made by the professors are indeed helpful, and if they could assist us by giving an indication of the framework they would propose for this internal organization, I think that the dairy industry at any rate would welcome it from both sides, employers and employees. Out of it we might fashion an organization that would make for peace, harmony, and good will in our great industry. I would therefore like them to give us some constructive suggestion along that line.

Professor Murphy's Reply.

Professor Murphy: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I propose to save time as much as possible, and therefore will confine myself to replying to the criticisms made upon me. I want to deal first with the criticism made by Mr. Bromley, who quoted some passages from a book of mine with a view to showing that they were inconsistent with certain remarks I made before the Conference. I must congratulate him upon his taste in literature, but I regret that he has not read the book with more care and attention. He referred to my treatment of the minimum-wage question, and I stand by it; but "the minimum wage" is an expression that is used by different men in different senses, and the context of the passage Mr. Bromley read makes it clear that I was there referring to a wage that would purchase the minimum compatible with civilized decency. I was not referring to the minimum wage fixed by the Arbitration Court at all.

Mr. Bromley: That is all we want, professor.

Professor Murphy: So much for that. Then Mr. Bromley quoted and commented on the statement in my book that "The history of labour legislation has shown clearly that to be effective it must not be couched in general terms, but must be of the most detailed character, inquisitorial in nature, and enforced by effective supervision and inspection, with prompt penalties for breach on both employees and employers. Unless this is done the legislation becomes a mere futility and a dead-letter." That is true. I stand by it. The history of factory legislation in England makes that quite clear; but the context makes it clear that that reference was to regulations governing sanitation, buildings, hygiene, conditions likely to cause physical, mental, or moral deterioration, and so forth, and cannot be fairly open to what I may call "raspberry-jam criticism." The compulsory-arbitration system gives an outside body the right to dictate the apportioning or allocation of tasks and other trivial minutiae of that kind. The Court cannot possibly be acquainted with the details of every industry, and I think that the resulting comic-opera effects, such as that referred to, do not a little to prejudice many against the Arbitration Court. Mr. Bromley also quoted what I said about a more even distribution of wealth leading to greater efficiency on the part of the workers and consequently increased production. I stand by that; and if he had looked the book through he might have quoted passages that would have landed me in a much more awkward tactical position than he actually did. The passage he quoted runs on: "On the other hand, the amount of wealth that can be distributed is limited by what is produced. Many contemporary schemes of social amelioration fail to give this obvious fact the importance it deserves. The problem of social welfare cannot be solved without increased production" I have always held to that; and I think that if the one quotation is selected the other might fairly be selected too. I think perhaps it is a pity that he did not go on and say what is said in that book about compulsory arbitration. You cannot write a scientific treatise in such a way that captious or playful critics will not misunderstand it; and it is not fair to select isolated passages, which often when taken in that way appear to have a meaning not intended by the writer. I think Mr. Bromley was a wee bit playful at my expense. Mr. Cook evidently gave the Conference the impression that the jam-tart incident originated in the depths of my imagination. But that is not so, and the whole thing is so rich that I will quote it. My authority is the Book of Awards, Volume XXIV, 1923, page 122. On that page is embalmed the whole entrancing, comic incident; and if you listen carefully it will give you an idea of the mentality that the operations of the Court are bringing into this country:—