LABOUR POLITICS IN N.Z.
1850-1913
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND.

THESIS

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A HISTORY OF THE

POLITICAL LABOUR MOVEMENT IN NEW ZEALAND

1850 - 1913.
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PREFACE.

A typically modern trend in democratic countries has been the entry of labour representatives into the political arena. New Zealand has proved no exception to the rule, but the history of her own labour movement, particularly in its earlier years, is still rather disconnected in the eyes of the general public. This thesis therefore attempts to recount the origins of that movement with the object of presenting a clearer idea of the nature of the beginnings of the party which constitutes the present government. It was at first intended to write of the Labour Party in later years, but preliminary investigation was sufficient to show that no such treatment could be adequate without a knowledge of the origins of the Party. Further investigation showed those origins to be worthy of separate study in themselves, and the history of the Labour Party is therefore left for other pens to write. The aim throughout has been to trace, not a party, but a movement, and to discover how much that movement was influenced by contemporary events and how much it was a natural and inevitable development.

A thorough study of the subject, giving an exhaustive survey of opinions and incidents, individuals and groups in every centre of population, would have required intensive and prolonged research which the writer was not in a position to carry out. The extra work would doubtless have made the history more comprehensive, but it is certain that the general conclusions arrived at would not have been modified seriously. Newspapers are generally regarded as an unreliable source of evidence, but in this case exception can perhaps be claimed for making extensive use of one paper, since it
gave expression to working-class opinions without displaying the fanaticism of purely labour publications.

Thanks are due to the Central Office of the Labour Party in Wellington for the courtesy of the officials in placing material at my disposal. It is unfortunate that some of this material, which may have been of considerable value, went astray in the post, and was not traced. Thanks must also be expressed to the Hon. John Rigg, who was helpful in supplying newspaper cuttings and reminiscences dealing with the Political Labour League, and to Mr. E. J. Howard, M. P. for valuable advice. In some cases likely people who were approached, while showing keen interest, seemed unable to rely on their memories for anything definite; one supplied suggestions which were of no use; another, from whom much was expected, did not reply at all. During the whole period of research what impressed one most was the dearth of published material on the subject and the scant attention paid to the movement in general in comprehensive works. This made the task of constructing general outlines as a basis for work very difficult.

The investigation has suggested that the early organised labour parties in New Zealand were striving not so much for something they did not possess as to maintain certain privileges which they felt were slipping from their grasp. Their aim appears to have been not so much an emancipation from the present as a safeguard for the future. This, at least, is apparent to the mind of the writer, and it is hoped that his efforts may be of some use in clearing the mist which shrouds the infancy of labour in this country.
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In mid-nineteenth century England wretched conditions prevailed among the working classes, and prospects for the future were gloomy. Some people were out of work and starving, and others had to work 16 hours a day to keep body and soul together.

The palliatives applied to social evils during the Napoleonic Wars had ceased to be effective; the granting of rewards to large families and the extravagant bestowal of poor law relief had soon counteracted any good they may have done by increasing the population and creating a tendency to thriftlessness. Social distress and unemployment were rampant in both agricultural and industrial areas, and there was little chance of improvement while a corrupt electoral system kept the control of the masses in the hands of a minority of wealthy landowners and merchants. While high protective duties were in force high prices were bound to prevail in the interests of the upper classes, and high prices meant a high death rate among those who could not afford to buy. Accordingly the prevailing misery, intensified by the evils of the factory system, induced a steady flow in the tide of emigration. During the years 1839–42 more than 400,000 bade farewell to the home of their birth, but of these only 8,000 turned their faces New Zealandwards.

It was at this time, however, that the first attempts at system-
atic colonisation as advocated by Edward Gibbon Wakefield were being conducted by the New Zealand Company. The earlier settle-
ments at Wellington (1840), Nelson (1841) and New Plymouth (1841),
were unsatisfactory, as the Company was unable to put the settlers
in quiet possession of the land which it had sold to them. But
the system was given a much fairer trial in Otago (1848) and Can-
terbury (1850), and in many respects the successful foundation of
these two provinces must be placed to its credit. They bore am-
ples testimony to the wisdom of a 'sufficient price'. £3 per acre
in Canterbury and £2 in Otago did not deter the wealthier colonist,
and kept the labourer in his place until such time as he was suf-
ciently experienced and of proved thriftiness to take land of
his own. The promoters of the Canterbury Association were en-
thusiastic in their efforts to transplant a slice of English society
in the new land, but they were careful to stress the point that
there would be all the virtues of such a society with none of its
vices. For the working man in particular the prospect was rosy.
He was guaranteed employment as soon as he stepped off the ship
at rates far in advance of those he was accustomed to receive in
England. By dint of hard work and thriftiness he could make him-
self his own master in a short number of years; and, perhaps most
important of all, he was promised complete powers of self taxation,
of legislation on all matters concerning his class alone, and of
control over all functionaries engaged in local administration.

(2) "The Art of Colonisation."

(3) "The Canterbury Papers." No. 1 page 15.
This was a big step from what must have been virtual slavery if we accept the following statement:

"If we descend to the humble class it cannot be said that the prospects of a village labourer and his wife are either very agreeable or very secure; for there is scarcely any imaginable misfortune, humiliation, sin or disgrace that is not within the scope of an ordinary British labourer's expectations ... The trades, the professions are stocked; public employment is out of the question for the commonalty, and as for the army and navy, they call for reduction rather than increase."

In New Zealand, therefore, there was something for oppressed English artisans and labourers to look forward to, and those who braved the journey mostly resolved that the causes of their poverty and wretchedness should not be given a foothold in the new land. In Otago from the earliest days artisans insisted on an eight hours working day, and colonists in other parts of the country were equally determined to uphold what they considered to be their natural rights. The assignment of the honour of first introducing the eight hours system has been much disputed. The authorities are most conflicting - in turn they claim the honour for Wellington (Samuel Duncan Farnell) in 1840, for Wellington (Ticehurst and Taylor) also in 1840, for Otago (Thomas Burns) in 1848, and for Auckland (William Griffin) in 1856. "Wherever lies the individual honour, it is quite clear that the early settlers were strongly in favour of the system. It is therefore interesting to note that New Zealand has not yet (1923) enacted a legal eight hours

(4) "The Times" August 1, 1850. Quoted by the Canterbury Papers Nos. 5 & 6, page 183.
(5) See J. D. Salmond's thesis, Chapter II "The Eight Hours Movement"
day."

Once the disputes over land claims had been amicably settled by Governor Grey, the fear of complications on arrival, which may have retarded the stream of emigration, was removed. The New Zealand Company was dissolved in 1850, but in its pioneering efforts it had achieved a worthy end. It had opened up vistas not only of investment for the capitalist and quiet retirement for the gentleman, but of a new society and a new life for the humble working man.

Between 1850 and 1860 the provinces of the infant colony made steady progress. Existing conditions of labour have been described thus: "The wages of unskilled labour may be quoted from 6/- to 10/- a day; it is impossible to state them more nearly, a regular employment demanding lower wages than an occasional job. Carpenters can obtain 12/6 a day, and if inclined to work by contract or to work over hours, much more; blacksmiths, brickmakers and other mechanics obtain about the same. The opening for members of higher professions is of course limited in so small a community, and the remuneration for such services is not greater, generally, than in England. For one class alone, however, there is no opening whatever; that is, for young men of no particular trade or profession, with moderate education and no capital, who have neither the inclination nor the ability to work hard. Such men are far less likely to get on in a colony than in an old country." (7)

This passage is worth quoting in full, because it indicates the type of settler who was most likely to succeed, and the type whose chance of success was limited or impossible. The chief qualifi-

(6) Salmond op. cit. page 185.
cations for success were a capacity for hard work and a fair knowledge of a trade, the first of these being the most important. For the professional man with an established, if not flourishing business in England, the chances of a slightly higher income in a new land were not worth the risk and trouble of emigration. But working people who read the pamphlets issued by emigration enthusiasts must have been fired by a new hope. Many of them had nothing to lose and much to gain by emigration, and consequently we find the farm labourer and the artisan emigrating in larger numbers than any other class. Some few were actuated by the spirit of adventure, but the majority embarked to free themselves from narrow opportunity and harsh customs and laws. It is not difficult to imagine that such hardy spirits as these were determined to establish themselves as free men and women in their new home. The germ of unrest was working in them. Even as early as 1849 E. G. Wakefield had observed that "the change for this class of man, being from pauperism, or next door to it, to plenty and prosperity is indescribably, to our apprehensions, almost inconceivably agreeable." (8)

The colonists were not starved politically. The country was divided into six provinces, almost completely isolated from one another; there were no interprovincial roads at the time and only occasional communication by ship. The Constitution of 1853 gave to these provinces powers of self-government which the Governor, Sir George Grey, decided to set in motion before summoning a general assembly for the whole colony. Although Grey has been cri-

(8) The "Art of Colonisation" page 128.
ticaised for this move, it was most expedient at the time, when
the provinces were in fact six separate communities not very
interested in each other. In every chief centre of population
the scheme was taken up with alacrity, and the keenest interest
was shown by the immigrants in their new rights and privileges.
Electioneering campaigns were carried on with all the enthusiasm
shown in the old land, with this difference: that the voters
felt themselves much nearer to their candidates, and experienced
a feeling of real self-government which they had not known hither-
to. Once their little parliaments were elected all the form-
alities of Westminster were observed each time the Councils met
for session in their chambers. We do not wonder, therefore,
that they clung to the provincial system long after it had served
its useful purpose; for it gave them control over the sale of
Crown lands, police, immigration, laws relating to livestock
and timber, harbours and the making of roads and bridges. Un-
til sufficient roads and bridges had been built and a regular
shipping service established to connect one province with another,
such power was rightly theirs. But with these essential tasks
of colonisation completed it was natural that the chief legis-
lative and administrative powers should be relegated to the Cen-
tral Assembly, and accordingly the provincial governments were
finally abolished in 1876.

The sixties are in many ways an important decade in New Zea-
land history, with the Maori Wars in the North Island, gold dis-
coversies and agricultural development in the South, increased im-

migration and a general advance in development. The gold discov-
eries are our chief concern, for they introduced a new type of
settler; essentially democratic, adventurous, and imbued with
a desire for a newer and better order of things than he had been
accustomed to.

The first considerable rush for gold took place in Central
Otago in 1861; in two years the population of the province had
more than doubled itself. Dunedin was already a substantial
town when the rush started, and although the sudden influx of
settlers was valuable in opening up the interior, gold remained
only one among the primary products exported. Agricultural and
pastoral farming, already well established, were further stimu-
lated by the demand created by the mining population. But the
goldfields were alluvial and scattered and consequently the Otago
miner tended to be individualistic rather than co-operative.

With Westland the case was different; in 1861 when the Govern-
ment bought the province from the Maori, the Inhabitants did not
(10) total more than 30. In 1864 gold was discovered, and adventur-
ers of all types, filled with a lust for riches, or eager for
freedom from town life, flocked from the other provinces and from
overseas to a practically virgin country. There were no towns
and no roads. Lucky strikes kept up the flow of immigrants;
gold was found in almost every locality in payable quantities,
and by 1866 mushroom towns had sprung up in many places, with
Hokitika the centre of a population of many thousands. This
population, excepting storekeepers and publicans, consisted sole-

ly of miners — a splendid type, none more rough and ready, but none more manly. After the first "glorious riotous days which seemed so good that none believed they could end", thousands of miners in the district were glad to be employed at regular work for £2 a week. Mining, first for gold and then for the coal discovered, thus became the chief source of employment, and a permanent mining community was established which, in its occupation and isolation, had no counterpart anywhere else in the colony. Although the period of high exaltation caused by the sudden access of fortune was comparatively short, as it is with all gold rushes, many of the diggers made the West Coast their permanent home, either remaining at the occupation which had lured them there, or putting their energies into the growing coal and timber industries. Thus the rush makes an important link in the chain of the Labour movement in New Zealand; for the people and their conditions of life were strong factors in the development of organised labour both politically and industrially in the closing years of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth. In years to come, many prominent politicians were to rise from the ranks of the West Coast miners, where they received practical training in local government and in the discussion of those social problems which made up the Labour Question.

Until 1876 the political life of the country, apart from the debates on the Maori Question, was localised and free from the party strife which characterised the English parliamentary

system. It was centred mainly in the land question, and was therefore to be found in its most active phase in the provincial councils. By 1870 the glamour of the gold rushes had already faded, and the aggregation of land by the squatters was forcing workers and immigrants into the cities. A voice of protest against the land sharks and capitalists, although thin as yet, was the first indication of the radical movement which was to swell swiftly once the abolition of the provinces had placed the land problem in the hands of the central government.

More important for our subject than the mutterings of political unrest which, though significant, were faint as yet, is the growth of a labouring class more intelligent, better off and better informed than the class from which they had cut themselves adrift in England. In this respect the South Island communities, growing rich on the fat of the land, were far in advance of the North, torn by dissensions with the Maori. By 1874 Otago had a population of 85,000 and Canterbury nearly 60,000, with 50 per cent. more people in the South Island than in the North. In most trades there was plenty of employment to be obtained for the asking, particularly since the initiation of Sir Julius Vogel's extensive public works scheme in 1870. Letters from settlers, published officially to encourage further emigration, indicate that the average lower class colonist was satisfied with his new surroundings:

"Dear Brother - I hope you will make up your mind to come to New Zealand at once: it will be the best day's work you ever

(12) See J. B. Condliffe's "N. Z. in the Making". Chaps. I, III, 1
done (sic). You will be sure of immediate employment at good wages when you land. Food is very cheap and wages high. You will be able to save more every week than you are earning where you are now. New Zealand is a fine healthy country; no one can help but like it. Any man may do well that will work."

(Copy of a letter from Jesse W., Canterbury, New Zealand, to Daniel W., Brinklow, near Coventry, Warwickshire.)

This is an officially published letter, and was probably carefully selected; but there can be no doubt that it was actually written. Like those printed with it, it sends out an obvious message of hope, and suggests that the New Zealand of this time was in many respects a working man’s Utopia. The country was open to men and women of the lower classes who had a fair share of courage and enterprise, and the independent testimonies of early settlers make it clear that courage and enterprise in most cases received their due reward. Emigration authorities pointed out that New Zealand offered the workman tenfold the chances of success that the over-crowded countries of Europe afforded. Failure would result only from his own fault. He had a variety of occupations from which to select, as men were free to follow other than their own trades. His pay was at least one half more than it was at Home, and the price of provisions was considerably cheaper. If he exercised ordinary economy he could very soon save enough to buy a section of land and build a house of his own, with a garden attached in which to employ himself in his leisure hours. Everywhere the demand for labour was great,

and the development of new industries called for large supplies of skilled men. Carpenters, bricklayers, painters, plumbers, unskilled labour for public works, tailors, shoemakers, pattern makers, boiler makers, moulders, mechanics, engineers, blacksmiths, female domestic servants, miners, farm labourers, could at once find remunerative employment. In Otago thriving industries—grain mills, biscuit factories, breweries, boot factories etc.—were prevented from expanding by a dearth of hands.

Since men were needed for the public works during the seventies, vigorous steps were taken to paint the advantages of New Zealand in glowing colours for the British working classes, and to organise a system of state-aided immigration. Essential qualifications for selection were a good character and physical fitness; ways and means were partly or wholly provided for by the government. The scheme proved completely successful; in the decade between 1870 and 1880 100,000 state-aided immigrants were introduced, and the population of the country was nearly doubled. Many of these people carried with them the memory of social evils; a sense of wrong which was to bear legislative fruit in their new country, and was the foundation stone of the labour organisations which first took form in the "hungry eighties."

During the seventies, also, a powerful impetus was given to political radicalism by the land boom, an orgy of large-scale buying which was to have dire results in the next decade.

(15) For selection regulation see the Canterbury Papers No. 3, pages 64-68.
The influx of immigrants and English money for public works, together with the cessation of Maori troubles, led to a period of prosperity and high prices. The man with capital bought up large blocks of land, and the man without capital was forced to remain in the towns. By such cunning practices as "spotting", "gridironing" and "dummyism", squatters could render futile the restrictive clauses in the laws governing land sales, and so build up huge estates. For English labourers who had come out to escape from such monopolisation and its resultant class barriers, this was a bitter pill to swallow. Hence the most prominent position in the Liberal platform of 1890 was given to the plank of land reform. The contest over the abolition of the provinces in 1876 gave birth to an opposition with Sir George Grey as its leader. This opposition was the germ of the Liberal-Labour party which was later to hold office for more than 20 years. Radical as he was in most things, Grey was passionately so in his views on the land question. He advocated a land tax, settlement based on lease rather than on sale, and restriction of the area that any one man could hold. When he became Premier on a small majority in 1877, he showed himself too autocratic to be the successful leader of a popular government, and his two years of office were a severe disappointment to Liberal hopes. During this period he quarrelled with his ablest minister, the Treasurer, John Ballance, and took over the Treasury himself at a time when the land boom was bursting and bad times were setting in. The principal measure passed by his ministry was a tax on

(17) Shrimpton & Mulgan "History of New Zealand" page 286.
the unimproved value of landed estates over £500; this roused considerable alarm amongst the conservatives and consolidated the opposition parties. In July, 1879, the Grey Ministry was defeated on an amendment to the address-in-reply, and at the subsequent elections sufficient opposition members were elected to force the Government to resign on a want of confidence motion. Liberalism was in disfavour for a time; but the seeds scattered by Sir George Grey had fallen on fertile soil; they were to bear a rich harvest after ten years of depression had turned the politics of the country into a veritable chaos.

In the eighties politics in New Zealand were bound up closely with the economic and social problems arising out of conditions that had been developing since the early sixties. Most of the legislation of this decade was concerned with maintaining the financial equilibrium. Changes in government occurred as ministries failed in their efforts to stem the depression, and the "party system" became merely a parody of the English model. Conservative ministries upheld Liberal principles because the pressure of public opinion made it expedient for them to do so — those who styled themselves Liberals were often found voting for conservative measures. The Conservatives were in power during the greater part of the period, not because their policy was in any way superior to that of the Liberals, but because the latter had been left leaderless. Moreover, the system of plural voting, which gave the large landowner several votes, was sufficient while it remained to ensure the election of a majority.

of conservative mind.

But various factors were combining throughout these years to modify the situation in favour of the Liberals and to defeat Conservatism at the elections of 1890. They were mostly an outcome of the economic condition of the colony. Sir George Grey had left office with a deficit of £1,000,000. A measure that roused the opposition of the lower and middle classes was the property tax, introduced to take the place of the Liberals' land tax. Regressive in incidence and highly inelastic, it was imposed on all types of property, personal or otherwise, and therefore favoured none but the monied classes, especially the landowners whose unearned increment escaped almost free of taxation. Shopkeepers and small manufacturers who were suffering already from the lean times, were taxed equally whether they made a profit or a loss. Resentment increased when in 1887 Sir Harry Atkinson's Government aimed at producing a credit balance in the lowest depth of the depression, and raised the tax by 50 per cent to one penny in the pound. Many were unable to pay, and the result was a combination against Atkinson and a growing tendency to associate conservatism with the landed interests. As these interests held the reins of government, there could be no hope of fairer taxation until they were removed from power; this animosity against land monopoly was fanned into flame by other important contributing factors:

1. The financial policy of the ministries, designed to maintain a balance during the depression, gave rise to a number of

obnoxious measures, of which the chief were: retrenchment by reducing the pay of members of parliament and public servants; the imposition of a primage duty of one per cent.; and the raising of loans, the interest on which public opinion foresaw would have to be met by increased taxation. The Liberal party, and Labour in later years, pandered to public opinion by making 'no borrowing' a chief plank in its platform.

II Though the Conservative party was divided on the subject of tariff reform, Sir Harry Atkinson in 1888 established a tariff with marked protectionist leanings. As a strong minority of the party were staunch supporters of free trade, this led to a complete breakdown of party allegiance.

III The Liberal party gained in strength and cohesion from the time Ballance was elected as its leader in 1889. Together with Seddon and John MacKenzie, he organised an impassioned attack on the Government's land policy which by 1890 had done much to break the country's faith in the Atkinson Ministry. The refusal of Sir Harry to assist unemployed farm hands led to an "Exodus" of this class from the country in 1890 and the years immediately preceding it. Those who did not emigrate turned to the Liberals for support.

These political factors took their shape from economic and social forces, already gathering strength in 1880, which were exerting a powerful influence in the political world by the end of the decade. The economic depression was to bring labour into politics much quicker than would otherwise have been the case.

(20) See Maloney - "A History of the Ballance Ministry" Chap. III.
"Each year brought fresh outbursts of unemployed agitation, the depression made itself felt at all times and in all places, trade was stagnated, employers dismissed their workers, factories ceased to operate, and farmers turned away their hands." In the centres of population, to which unemployed artisans and farm labourers flocked, measures were taken to alleviate the distress by means of relief depots; but only mediocre success resulted in face of a cry for "work, not bread." Many of the despairing ones were state-aided immigrants who a few years before had been promised a land flowing with milk and honey. Where they had expected independence and freedom they now found only want and unemployment. The older settlers blamed the immigrants for all the misery, and looked askance upon any new arrivals; the immigrants urged the State which had brought them out, to send them back again. "Every shipload of toiling Britons which found its way to a New Zealand port was met by a howl of something very much like rebuke from the working classes. They were deemed interlopers." Workers already in New Zealand must bear a share of the blame for the prevailing stagnation. According to one observer:

"Ten thousand genuine toilers of each sex might easily be absorbed every year by the colony. In all directions enterprise is checked by the scarcity of capital and labour. The highly paid workmen are in danger of 'killing the hen that lays the golden eggs.' They fight hard to keep up the artificial wage, and even governments are far too dependent on popular caprice to ven-

ture on further immigration; but the game is a dangerous one. In England the question which is rapidly forcing itself on the attention of all thoughtful people is this: "How long, and by what authority, are English workmen to be virtually warned off the colonial labour fields?"

This picture may have been seen with one eye, but it bears more than an element of truth. There is no doubt that the wages of the average workman were abnormally high for such a time, and those lucky enough to be in work fought tenaciously to remain there. Labourites wanted no more additions to their ranks for the present. Amongst themselves, however, they were organising, partly to resist attempts at wage reduction by employers, and partly to protest against the legislation of the Ministry. Their first systematic efforts to readjust the politics of the country were launched when a Working Men's Political Association was formed in Auckland in 1879, and in Christchurch in 1881. They put forward the following programme:

1. Both Houses of Parliament to be elected with payment of members;
2. A system of triennial parliaments to be adhered to.
3. A land and income tax.
4. Encouragement of colonial industries.
5. Modification of the land laws.
6. No further free immigration.
7. Manhood suffrage on a basis of six months' residential qualification.
8. An employers' liability act.

(23) Clayden, op. cit. page 20.
9. No further pensions to be granted.

By 1884 similar organisations had sprung up in many parts of the country. Their cause was championed by Sir George Grey, whose radical views on the land question were incorporated in their programme. In this year an effort was made by the Christchurch Association to form a National Organisation of all the Associations in the country, which meant in fact the formation of a political labour party. But the idea was stillborn, as the loosely constituted nature of the associations led to their disbandment in 1885 in favour of the industrial organisations then gaining a foothold: Trades and Labour Councils and the Knights of Labour.

At this time the most politically active of the trades and labour councils established in the colony was that of Otago, which in 1881 adopted a political programme through a parliamentary committee, and in the election of that year supported six of the 17 successful candidates in Dunedin. A public meeting under the auspices of the Council was held in the Lyceum, Dunedin on Friday, June 6, 1884. As showing the grip the Council was getting on public opinion, four members of Parliament - Messrs. T. Brocken, H. S. Fish, W. H. Green and W. Barron, were present. The main questions discussed were the granting of the franchise to women, the adoption of the eight hours system, the abolition of plural voting, the extension of the hours of polling and the then proposed Workmen's Lien Bill. During 1884 a revised and more complete

\footnotesize{(24) Salmond: "History of the Labour Movement in N. Z." page 149.}
\footnotesize{(25) For a full account of their organisation read Salmond's work.}
\footnotesize{(26) Salmond, op. cit. page 151.}
The comprehensive programme was drawn up (that of 1881 included only the first ten planks):

1. Crown lands to be leased only and not sold.
2. Land already sold to be taxed.
3. Local industries to be encouraged.
4. The eight hours day system to be legalised.
5. No further immigration.
6. Technical education to be added to the present system.
7. An Employers' Liability Act to be passed.
8. Trades not to be taught in prisons.
9. Local option as to the sale of alcoholic liquor, and the abolition of bottle licences.
10. Law reform.
11. The abolition of pensions.
12. The extension of polling until 8 p.m. on election day.
13. A progressive land tax and a tax on large incomes.
14. Local government reforms.
15. The reform of the jury system.
18. An elective upper house.
20. The abolition of plural voting.

The Council actively engaged in the election of 1884, but that of 1887 was passed practically unnoticed by working class organisations, the country being so overwhelmed by the depression that

(27) On July 9, 1884, the Parliamentary Committee recommended the adoption of the following candidates for the House: Dunedin South, Mr. Fish; Dunedin Central, Mr. Bracken; Dunedin East, Mr. Stout;
men had lost interest in its political welfare. In 1890 five members of the Council were returned to Parliament — the President, Mr. Pinkerton, and Messrs. Fish, Hutchison, Dawson and Earnshaw. Pinkerton, elected as a labour member, polled the highest vote in the country.

In other cities trades and labour councils, although not so progressive as that of Dunedin, continued political agitation throughout the period, and combined with the Liberals in 1890 to end forever the regime of the Continuous Ministry. The Auckland movement was initiated in 1877, and in its early years aimed to unite all the democratic organisations in the province against the land monopolists. In 1890 the Council combined with the Knights of Labour, and the resulting Electoral Committee drew up a programme based on the immediate repeal of the property tax and the substitution of a land tax, and fought the coming election. The Wellington Council, smaller and less progressive than that of Otago, was formed in 1884 and remodelled in 1888. Its chief agitation was for Labour representation in the Legislative Council, and its point was gained in 1892, when its president, John Rigg, and three other members were appointed to the Upper House.

New Zealand political life in the eighties did not reach a very high standard. It has been asserted that it was democratic to the last degree. Payment of members was resulting in a number of

(27) Cont. Caversham, Mr. Barron; Roslyn, Mr. Bathgate; Peninsula, Mr. Hodge. The Council endorsed the candidatures of the men recommended. The choice was condemned in some quarters, it being alleged that a "Free Thought" combination was responsible for the selection. (Salmond, op. cit. page 152.)
(28) Dunedin at the time was still the largest and most advanced town in the colony.
(29) Without success.
needy and sooty adventurers being sent to the House, and there was a growing tendency for higher class men to abandon politics, so disgusted did they become with the whole business. The working men, realising that they were being politically cheated, were bold enough to make their dissatisfaction articulate. Their organ "Labour" of June 25, 1884 published this scathing comment of a prominent demagogic leader: "He opposed with his tongue the advocates of immigration, but he voted with them. He has always breathed forth his indignation against those who have filched the public lands for their own benefit; but he voted with them. He has always said he had no sympathy with those who seek to reduce wages; but he voted with them. He has always declaimed against the political thieves who looted and destroyed Parihaka; but he voted with them. Tried in a crucial time and found wanting (sic) his detractors can now say that all his past political life has been a lie."

During those ten years between 1880 and 1890, then, indications pointed to the new era which was to issue from the elections in the latter year. The depression created unemployment and social distress which the contemporary governments made only half-hearted attempts to alleviate. The land monopolists still held sway, and all progressive forces in the country were raising the same cry for reform of the land laws and for land taxation. The evils of the factory system involving the sweating of female workers and the employment of child labour were creeping in in spite of

(30) See Chap. 11 for the Canterbury Council, which was not organised until 1890.
(31) A. Clayden: "A Popular Handbook to N. Z."
(32) The parliamentary battle in the eighties was one of the again
assertions to the contrary. A sweating commission which made an investigation at the end of the decade could find no evidence (on a majority decision) of sweating as it was known in England; but revelations were made, especially in the columns of the "Otago Daily Times" which profoundly shocked the community. Instances of girls who were forced to work until eleven o'clock at night to earn a subsistence wage were far too common, and boys were often found to be employed doing the work of men. Sir Harry Atkinson's government lost favour through making no attempt to deal with a recommendation of the Commission that the Factories Act should be amended with a view to improving conditions. Consequently, those who were thrown out of work by the employment of children, and those who had to work long hours for low wages voiced their grievances through the Trades and Labour Councils. The Liberals wisely took up the cause of the oppressed workers, and incorporated factory legislation in their election programme.

Towards 1890 energetic assemblies of the American Knights of Labour, with their secret signs and signals, were formed in New Zealand, and soon began tackling the pressing social and political problems of the day. Effective existence dated from the visit in 1890 of Mr. W. W. Lyght, an American organiser of the Order, and mention will be made later of how his reorganisation aided the Knights in consolidating the Liberal-Labour alliance at the elections of 1890 and 1893.

(32) Cont. Outs rather than one of principles and achievement.
(33) For a full and comprehensive account see Dr. Salmond's thesis pp. 82 - 89.
(34) "Otago Daily Times", Jan. 22nd, 24th and 29th, 1889. Also sermons preached by Dr. Rutherford Waddell at about the same time.
On the eve of a new epoch "Labour had grievances and reason to think that if it did not bestir itself these grievances would grow. Suffering from growing unemployment and falling wages, quite unrepresented in Parliament and the newspapers, it felt that it must awaken in its thousands and use the unanswerable argument of its members. It had plenty of example to go by. Looking overseas it saw Labour stirring in England, Australia, everywhere. Its leaders read socialist tracts and humanitarian protests. By the autumn of 1890 they had made up their minds to send working men to the House of Representatives as well as to influence the election of friendly Liberals, and were priming their people and getting ready for the battle." (35)
CHAPTER 11.
The Year 1890 and the Era which followed.

"Although the New Zealand working man never formed a class party, and the members met in 1891 without experience of concerted action and parliamentary procedure, the Unionists undoubtedly held in their hands the fate of the Liberal Government during the first few years of its life." (J. D. Salmond)

For several reasons the year 1890 stands as a landmark of great prominence in the story of the labour movement. It saw the so-called conservative party topple to the ground with never a hope of being rebuilt; it pointed to a new era of progress, prosperity and erstwhile content; it heard the first organised speeches of labour politicians whose one purpose for the next generation was to see the working man come into his rights, and to prove universal brotherhood something more than a vision. Forces, economic and political, co-operated to produce a government pledged to do everything its predecessor had failed to do, resolved to reward the population of workers who had voted in its favour at the elections. The colony followed with unfeigned interest the action of six new Members of Parliament who represented Labour's first entry into politics. The depression was lifting, workers' organisations were increasing in wisdom and in strength, and the socialist teachings of Henry George and Robert Bellamy were beginning to have a real influence.

It is commonly believed that the General Election of 1890 marks the birth of 'democracy' in New Zealand, but democracy was past

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(1) "Progress and Poverty" (1879)
(2) "Looking Backward" (1887). "Fabian Essays in Socialism" (1889)
the childhood stage by that time. It was entering upon its maturity, and produced legislation which 50 years of pioneering work and economic uncertainty had made necessary. The climax to an evolutionary growth came when the union of progressive and labour forces succeeded in giving power to the Liberal Party, led by John Ballance. The failure of the Australasian maritime strike in that year was opportune, for by destroying the faith of the workers in trade unionism as the sole means of effecting social reform it served to strengthen the alliance; the dissatisfied men sought to redress their immediate grievances by legislative means. At previous elections the labour question had been discussed and working men were urged to take up politics and use the ballot to right their wrongs. In 1890 they followed this advice, and the Liberal-Labour regime resulted.

During the lean years preceding 1890, working men had already begun to look upon politics in a new light, the keener and more intelligent among them eagerly studying the collectivist doctrines which Henry George and Robert Bellamy had done so much to popularise. The electoral reforms of 1889 gave the franchise to thousands of working men, and these, ignoring the wealthy political leaders and great land-owners, offered their services in politics to the Liberals. The reformers knew well enough that they would get strong support if they went to the polls as an independent party, but realised that the success of the Liberals would give them an immediate benefit which they could not otherwise obtain.

"The coming of organised labour into politics in the years be-

(4) Infra page 26.
tween 1890 and 1893 did not mean merely that work people were bestirring themselves to obtain certain reforms. Half its significance and force sprang from its being a new departure in the matter of men as well as of measures. Up to 1890 labour had been content to vote for middle-class candidates. In that year it decided to send into Parliament not a few units of its own class but bands of workers. A rapid growth of trade unions in the eighties had taught colonial labour the strength of organisation. The success of the German Socialists at the polls and the loud declarations in England in favour of an Independent Labour movement were heard of in the colonies. A wave of socialistic feeling swept over them.(5)

The evolutionary aspect has been dealt with in the first chapter. The immediate factors influencing the alliance may be classified as five in number, namely, the Electoral Reform of 1889, the Sweating Commission, the strengthening of the trade union movement, the protectionist agitation, and the Maritime Strike.

**ELECTORAL REFORM:** The voting system followed during the first 30 years of representative government was based on a property qualification which prevented many citizens voting at all, and gave more than one vote to large landowners. This grossly unfair method was one main reason why the Conservatives, with the landed interest behind them, were able to hold office for so long. But during the depression progressive opinion found a very articulate champion in Sir George Grey, who for many years upheld the cause of 'one man one vote' against the passive opposition of the landowners. The Representation Bill was finally brought before the House and passed on to the Statute Book in 1889; many thousands of workers were given a vote who had hitherto been powerless against the Continuous Ministry.

**PROTECTIONIST AGITATION:** The natural growth of trade unionism noted in the last chapter was accelerated by the protectionist agitation, which grew with the depression and was championed by

Bad times had enabled the factory workers to see how much the struggling industries of the colony were affected by competition from overseas, and they were therefore not disinclined to listen to advocates of protection. They saw a means of encouraging local manufactures by higher import duties, and also by a tax on landowners which would provide a fund for subsidising secondary industries, and at the same time help to break down land monopoly.

THE MARITIME STRIKE OF 1890: By 1890 trade unionism had become fairly well organised and eager to seize any opportunity of testing its strength. The London dockers' strike of the previous year had roused keen interest among the Australasian unions, which had shown their sympathy by gifts of considerable sums of money, greatly welcome and contributory to the success of the strike. Shortly afterwards a dispute broke out in Australia between ships' officers and owners. The officers, affiliated to unions, were joined by the seamen and later by the wharf labourers, and what had been a trivial matter became a battle royal over ill-defined principles. In New Zealand, seamen, wharf labourers and other unionists with no maritime connection whatever joined the strike and downed tools as a mark of sympathy for their Australian brethren. Unfortunately, public opinion was against them, and plenty of free labour was therefore to be obtained; in addition, the Atkinson Government refused blankly to take action. The dispute continued for about three months, and ended in the complete and unconditional surrender of the militants. Opportunity, the collapse came just as campaigns for the general election were in preparation, and the disappointed labourers saw a chance of gain-
ing politically what industrial organisation had failed to give them. The Liberals were not slow to grasp the significance of these events and to give labour reform considerable space in their electoral platform.

"If the Liberal Party had not acted as it did, trade unionism, which had now turned to organise itself so as to secure members of parliament favourable to its cause through the polling booth, would have returned to the House a separate group of labour members upon whose socialistic tendencies there would not have been the check there was." (6)

The first organised election campaign of Labour was fostered by the Trades and Labour Councils. We have already mentioned the part played by these bodies, which were strongest in the South Island centres, Dunedin and Christchurch. The Christchurch workers also revived the idea of a political association, and on August 23 a People's Political Association was formed 'for the purpose of advancing the interests of the industrial classes of Canterbury in the House of Representatives.' (7) It drew up a programme which, in a slightly amended form, was recommended by the Trades and Labour Councils to all unionists; it formed branches in and around the city and showed much vigour in conducting a campaign. An agreement was reached early in October by which candidates were to be selected by a joint committee of the Trades and Labour Councils and the People's Political Association, after the unions had balloted for each candidate. Four of these candidates, Messrs. Perceval, Taylor, Tanner and Joyce successfully contested Christ-

(6) G. S. Maloney: "A History of the Ballance Ministry"
(7) J. D. Salmond: op. cit. page 158.
church seats. An appeal to electors was sent out in manifesto form, which read as follows:

"Some of the gentry soliciting your support have the audacity to claim 'kudos' for having voted for liberal measures. No conservative government ever voted for a liberal measure until compelled by the liberal section of Parliament and public opinion to do so, and the conservative element of our parliament has never been an exception to this. Wake up, working men, to the patent fact that the so-called government of this country is a great octopus that preys on the working man. This conservative pet arranges the taxation of this country to suit the capitalist class. It bolsters up unrighteous monopolies. By an oppressive customs tariff it hampers the trading section of the country, impoverishes the artisan, and yet we are blandly told there are no party politics in this land ... Wake up, working men, and by united effort free yourselves from the monster, and then crush it out of existence. So long as the conservatives rule New Zealand, so long will the working men make use of the power they possess and by united and concerted action will bring in the dawn of their prosperity."

The Knights of Labour also received a new lease of life from the visit of the American organiser, Mr. W. W. Lyght, in March, 1890, but although certain progress had been made towards unified political action before the elections, the Knights were still too much in embryo to have any real influence.

On polling day, trade unionists faced the contest giving open support to 54 candidates. The representatives of Labour were

(8) Salmond: op. cit. page 158.
(9) Salmond: op. cit. page 164.
notable for their knowledge of trade unionist matters affecting their own class, an appetite for details, a capacity to work together, a certain 'not very exhilarating' argumentative power, and an over-abundance of tenacity. With the nervous build of the skilled mechanic who read and argued and fretted 'at the bars of low birth and iron fortune', they were the reverse of boisterous, thirsty demagogues, who belonged rather to the lower middle-class. They were very seldom brilliant men, looking for strength not so much in individual action as in loyalty to the class which they served, and cohesion amongst themselves. A few working men had been in Parliament long before 1890, but always as individuals, never standing for some aim or ideal representative of working people as a whole. In this year, 21 of the 34 supported by trade unionists were elected but the term 'labour member', when applied to them, in many cases referred not to their social standing but to the electoral district which had given them power. "Twelve were the children of trade unionism; nine, though supported by the trade unions, were not created by them; only six were peculiarly representative of the ordinary wage earner."

In spite of the political agitation which had been fomenting during the year, public opinion registered surprise at the result. People were taken aback at the sight of a genuine labour contingent, drawn straight from the factory and workshop, being sent to Parliament with the sole object of attending to the needs of their class. True, the colony had seen working men in Parliament before

(11) Salmond: op. cit. page 170.
(12) Salmond: op. cit. page 170.
The honour of being the first man elected to the House while still engaged in a working vocation had gone to Mr. S. P. Andrews of Christchurch, who belonged to the 1879 Parliament. Another distinctly working class member had been Mr. H. A. Leveston, an engineer who represented Nelson City from 1881 to 1889. But in 1889 the labour population as a body, goaded to action by the strike felt the urge to be directly represented by members of their own class who would be 'labour members first and anything else afterwards.' The six victorious candidates were all returned by constituencies in the South Island. They were:

W. W. Tanner, a boat operator, elected for Heathcote, Christchurch; D. Pinkerton, a boot-maker elected for Dunedin City, who polled the largest number of votes ever recorded for one candidate in the colony at that time; W. Barnshaw, a brass finisher, elected for the Dunedin suburbs electorate; J. L. Buick, a working carpenter elected for Wairau; J. W. Kelly, a tailor elected for Invercargill; E. W. Sandford, a compositor on the "Lyttelton Times" Christchurch, elected in 1891 at a by-election, to fill a vacancy left by the appointment of Sir Westby Perceval as Agent-General in London.

The Liberal-Labour alliance proved that it was something more than a mere electioneering scheme, and the labour contingent, sober and practical in their views, found in Seddon and Reeves men who held theories a good deal in advance of their own. The Liberals led the way, and Labour followed with practical advice based on trade unionist knowledge.

"Most members of the old parliament agreed that, as labour legislation was in the air, the new men would be able to give valuable assistance in preparing measures dealing with a technical subject, which called for extremely delicate handling, and this has often proved to be the case." (14)

Sir Robert Stout thought they moderate men with the rights of labour at heart; but with intelligence to realize that the well-being of the colony should be looked at as a whole, and not from the point of view of one class. They knew they were being watched to see how they would act, and from the first they grasped the sense of responsibility which they owed to their constituents, a sense which forbade them to play with politics. They were there largely as an experiment, believing they could adapt themselves to politics, and looking upon themselves as the trustees of the destinies of the people who had placed them in power. "On us and on our conduct" they said "depends in a great measure the permanency or otherwise of the movement started in 1890."

The Hon. W. P. Reeves, as Minister for Labour, was in a better position than any other to judge the worth of these men in their new capacity. He acknowledged the debt which both the labour laws and the Labour Department owed to them; for they chose to be helpful rather than critical and revolutionary. He found them very easy to work with, neither clamouring for the impossible nor jeering at what was done. From the outset they demonstrated that their aim was not notoriety through rowdy speeches and scenes, and proved themselves orderly, business-like and fair-minded. They

(15) In an interview a few days after the election.
did everything to lighten Mr. Reeves's task, assuming responsibility for many of his amendments, taking a broad view of the interests of the community, and pacifying the less patient of their supporters. By their wisdom in keeping petty personal considerations in the background and concerning themselves only with major issues, they helped the Minister to do much solid work, and gain advantages which would have been out of the question under a system of class war. They helped not only to remedy existing grievances, but to achieve, at least in part, the ideal of the Minister that "the Colony should be secured against any future invasion of the worst evils of European industrial life." (17)

Although the Ballance Ministry was not the first in New Zealand (18) to attempt to regulate labour conditions, it was the first to incorporate a definite programme of labour reform in its policy. Six acts relating to this programme were passed:

Factories Act 1891 and Amending Act 1892;
Employers' Liability Act 1891-2;
Contractors' and Workmen's Lien Act 1892;
Shop and Shop Assistants' Act;
Truck Act;
Servants' Registry Office Act 1892.

These were concerned mainly with the improvement of conditions of labour for young men and women through reducing the hours of employment; requiring the provision of suitable sanitary conveniences, prohibiting workers from engaging in trades injurious to health; checking exploitation of unemployed workers and making provision for the general comfort, and establishing a system of

(17) W. F. Reeves: "The Long White Cloud" page 290.
(18) See Appendix 1.
more effective administration over the places in which people worked. They were also designed to protect workmen, particularly in regard to their earnings and to compensation in case of accident.

The quantity of reforms drew accusations of socialism against the government from many parts of the globe, and "state socialism" became a common term in the colony. But the charges were unjust and quite false; doctrinaire socialism was unknown in New Zealand, and had no influence upon the development of a practical socialism in the colony. New Zealand people as a whole were more interested in the utopian socialism of Arnold, Ruskin, Meredith and J. S. Mill. Bellamy influenced the emotional part of the community greatly and Henry George, who visited the colony, also stimulated opinion toward taxing unimproved land values. But of revolutionary socialism there was never a thought. The opportunist use of state action was merely a "characteristic New Zealand trend" and the needs, aims, methods and reasoning of the progressives were the result of their environment and local experience. The social and economic conditions prevailing in 1890 were such that immediate reform was essential, and the Ballance Ministry embarked on a policy of "governmental paternalism", not as the first step of a complete socialistic process, but as a move necessitated by bitter experience. The Labour politician supported the Progressives, not as a conscious socialist, but because he thought it his busi-

(19) G. S. Maloney: "A History of the Ballance Ministry" Chap. X.
(21) Dr. V. S. Clark: "Labour Conditions in N. Z." (American Bulletin of the Bureau of Labour No 43, 1903)
(22) J. B. Condliffe: "New Zealand in the Making" page 166.
(23) Coinage of G. S. Maloney in "A History of the Ballance Ministry".
ness to obtain tolerable conditions for the masses, and to stand
by the small man wherever the small man was not "a petty, cunning
employer." (24)

During the years 1890-93 the political organisation of Labour
outside Parliament centred largely in the Order of the Knights
of Labour, which was just beginning to take finite form at the
time of the 1890 elections. The Auckland branch became very ac-
tive in furthering the early closing movement, and in supporting
the timber mill workers and tramway employees in their demands
for shorter and more regular working hours. On July 31, 1890, at
a meeting held under the auspices of the Knights and the Anti-
Poverty Society, it had been resolved to form a national political
party which should have as its platform the immediate repeal of
the property tax and the substitution of a tax upon land values
exclusive of improvements. With the passing of the labour laws
and the breaking up of the large estates the Auckland Knights gradu-
ally became weaker and eventually went out of existence. The
Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin branches were all sufficient-
ly advanced by 1893 to take an active part in the elections of that
year. Sir Robert Stout and Messrs. Maclean and Fraser stood as
candidates for Wellington, supporting the view that 'the regulation
preventing the acquisition of freehold are conducive to the pros-
perity of the colony.' Sir Robert and Mr. Fraser were elected.
In Christchurch an effort was made to unite all progressive forces
in an endeavour to obtain an equitable representation of workers
in the Upper House. In January, 1893 a Parliamentary Committee

(25) J. D. Salmond: op. cit. page 165.
representing the various assemblies of the Knights was set up, and it drew up and published a political platform for the united assemblies, which was as follows:

1. Nationalisation of land and mines.
3. Franchise for women.
4. A direct veto by adult suffrage.
5. A referendum on state questions.
6. Municipal reforms in town and country on the one man one vote basis.
7. The maintenance of the education system intact.
8. A statutory eight hours day system.
9. A public holiday at a general election, with compulsory closing of public houses.
10. The abolition of all conspiracy laws relative to industrial disputes.
11. The unseating of a Member of the House of Representatives on a two thirds majority adverse vote of his constituents.
12. A second ballot where three or more candidates are nominated for a one member constituency.(26)

The Inmedin body, which was not formed until September 16, 1892, was mainly concerned with temperance reform; but, together with the others, it passed gradually out of existence with the break-up of land monopoly.

The strength of the Order lay in the fact that its numbers were unknown. Though their effective membership was small, their policy was to get their resolutions into the Press and have matters fully ventilated. Both John Ballance and John MacKenzie were deeply interested in the Order, and on one occasion were proposed for

(26) J. D. Salmond: "A History of the Labour Movement in N. Z." p. 16
(27) Dr. Victor Clark gave the numbers as 5,000. (Labour Conditions in N. Z.)
membership in the Auckland assembly, though they were never in-
itiated into the order. What found it favour among colonial
leaders was not so much the originality of its suggestions as the
fact that it represented an organised propaganda of views with
which they were already in sympathy. It certainly did serve as
a channel of expression for the thinking section of the working
classes, both artisans and small farmers. Once Mr. Seddon had
consolidated his position as premier, however, the movement quick-
ly lost all force, for he had no time for political agitation;
and increasing prosperity led the average man to abandon what ra-
dical views he had and cease to take any keen interest in politics.

What the Order did accomplish is told in a pamphlet by Mr. W.
T. Hildreth, from which the following excerpt is taken:

"Since our Order was organised in New Zealand it is really as-
tonishing to look back and note how the reforms we advocated have
become law. Many of those reforms we ourselves were almost fright-
ened at, and spoke of their magnitude and socialistic tendencies
with bated breath. We advocated, and it has become the law of the
land - Leases in Perpetuity, that is, for all time; that the Govern-
ment be allowed to purchase large estates at Property Lease in small
holdings; Women's Franchise; Labour Day to be a holiday by special
enactment; Legislative Council appointments to be for a fixed pe-
riod and not for life; the Co-operative System to be adopted in
Government and Local Bodies' Works; no Publican to be allowed to
tender for Government or Local Bodies' Work; the Government to re-
sume control of our state railways; the abolition of the tax on im-
provements; a State Bank, of which to all intents and purposes the
Bank of New Zealand is the nucleus; Government advances to settlers
on the value of their improvements, at 5% interest; compulsory clos-
ing of shops on a half day each week, thus bringing us within measur-
able distance of our aim of a higher degree, viz.: - 'Five days for
Labour'; abolition of imprisonment for debt; compulsory arbitra-
tion and conciliation; abolishing the alienation of Native lands to
private individuals.

We thus see how, by working together and standing shoulder to
shoulder, we have been an enormous power for good. Our influence
has been felt, and we have helped to raise our fellow men to a high-
er level." (28)

Throughout the era, however, the trade unions remained closest

(28) Salmond: op. cit. page 168.
to the Liberal party, and were the real Labour element in the struggle over Labour Representation in the Legislative Council. This body in 1890 was still dominantly conservative, and for the first few months in Ballance’s term of office continued to throw out measures of the popular assembly which were directed to the amelioration of working class conditions. The Trades and Labour Councils voiced indignation against this negation of democratic government, and agitated for the appointment of Labour members to the Council. The Government yielded to the cry, and in 1891 four Labour councillors, members of the Wellington Trades and Labour Council, were appointed - a printer, a compositor, a boilermaker and a storekeeper. These men were no exception to the average labour politician of the time, practical, moderate, of sound common sense and progressive ideas. They were in many ways ably fitted for the work of revision, which is the main concern of a second chamber.

The National Liberal Association, which was the strongest progressive force in the community, numbered among its officers in the centres many prominent trade unionists. Trade unionists as a consequence became the most faithful and the most valuable of Liberal supporters, and the small Labour group never wavered in its loyalty to the Ministers. Labour members did noble work in the reformation of the taxation system and the attack upon the large estates, which Reeves regarded as a social pest, an industrial obstacle and a bar to progress. The unions themselves continued to flourish, keeping in touch with politics through the parliamentary committees of the Trades and Labour Councils; many of the suggestions which these committees put forward were adopt-
ed by the Hon. W. P. Reeves. The Dunedin Trades and Labour Council continued to lead the way, and in 1892 set up a Workers' Political Committee, consisting of the executive officers of the Council and two representatives of any union or other progressive body, whether affiliated to the Council or not. As a prelude to the 1893 election a manifesto was issued urging the electors to vote for labour if they wanted to prevent class tyranny, and classing those who voted otherwise as traitors to the working man and to their country. The programme which the Committee followed advocated far-reaching reforms, industrial, educational and social, and was in the main carried out by the Seddon Government. The Committee's first political fight was a triumph after a strenuous campaign. Messrs. Pinkerton, Earnshaw and Hutchison were elected for the city, Pinkerton once more polling the largest number of votes in the colony - 6771. Mr. Millar won Port Chalmers and Mr. Morrison won Caversham.

The Wellington Council contested the election in co-operation with the Knights of Labour, and supported two successful candidates, Sir Robert Stout and Mr. F. H. Fraser. In the following year a Workers' Political League was formed with the object of uniting all the progressive and liberal forces of the city, and for several years this body proved an effective instrument of propaganda.

The Auckland Trades and Labour Council also decided to contest the 1893 election, a bold step for a struggling body without the necessary funds and with few platform speakers of any ability.

(29) Salmond: op. cit. page 153.
(30) "The Early Battles of Labour" (Article by A. J. Rosser in the "N. Z. Observer" Dec. 29, 1932.)
The candidate selected was the Secretary 'Honest Tom' Tudehope, a far from ready platform speaker whose chief claim upon the citizens was that he was a man of upright principles. Reliance was placed chiefly on his good repute. As one of the dailies commented after the election "If Mr. Tudehope had only managed to break his leg four weeks prior to the polling day, and gone into hospital, there is no doubt that he would have won his seat." As it was, his meetings were poorly attended, and the final results of the poll placed him fourth in a triple electorate, 66 votes below the last member returned. Mr. Tudehope did not stand again, but at the next general election in 1896 a strenuous campaign was conducted, with Mr. Arthur J. Rosser, a working carpenter, as official Labour candidate. He also was placed fourth, with 4673 votes.

Of the original Labour members, Pinkerton, Earnshaw and Buick lost their seats in 1896, after being re-elected in 1893. Pinkerton was appointed to the Legislative Council, where he remained until his death in 1906. Sanford lost his seat in 1896 and never offered himself again; Kelly was defeated in 1899. Only Tammer remained in his old seat throughout the term of Seddon's administration; and he preferred being a sympathetic Liberal to joining the Independent Political Labour League.

The years between 1896 and 1904 are devoid of interest as far as any organised political labour movement is concerned. As Dr. Concliffe has noted, the chief merit of the Liberal-Labour legislation was that it cleared the way for, and gave impetus to, the economic forces that were transforming New Zealand in this period. The numerous Acts dealing with Labour problems, together with the

(31) "New Zealand in the Making" page 207. New Zealand was producing from virgin land continually increasing
increase in general prosperity, were sufficient to satisfy the grievances of the working man for a number of years. The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act took effect from 1896, and gave workers a copious theme for discussion. They were now more contented with their lot than they had been for a generation; the Department of Labour, instituted by Ballance in 1891 for the purpose of meeting the unemployed difficulty, continued and expanded its activities as the years went by. Its duties covered the supervision and oversight of factories, the administration of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, the organisation of employment bureaux, and other matters closely relating to working class conditions in the colony. In 1893 a monthly journal was commenced, the "Journal of Commerce and Labour", which included information concerning the state of trade and labour and labour legislation passed. In 1897 the name was changed to the "Journal of the Department of Labour".

Once Seddon had won the confidence of the people by the passing of measures relating to their welfare, he did not find it difficult to make working men believe that they were running the Government. This was at once a source of satisfaction to them and a source of power to the premier. Neither a labour leader nor a socialist, and not in close touch with organised labour generally, he was shrewd enough to make it appear to the people that he was one of themselves. By touring the country and appealing in his speeches

(31) Cont. quantities of products, which found a market that not only shared the general rise of the price-level, but gained a further rise from the fact that animal products were in relatively short supply in the world's markets.

(32) See Appendix II

(33) See Appendix III
to the human sympathies and collective pride of the labour element
"he succeeded in encouraging the belief that ordinary men were
good enough to govern the country, though he was by no means an
ordinary man himself." He had no love of political agitation, and
took care that there should be no necessity for it. Labour com-
plaints, such as they were, found expression through the parlia-
mentary committees of the Trades and Labour Councils, which met in
conference each year at Easter. At the 1900 Conference, for in-
stance, the Executive in its report congratulated the Conference
on the fact that during the previous session of Parliament a
fair attempt appeared to have been made to grapple with a number
of industrial questions brought under its notice from time to time
by the various Conferences of Trades and Labour Councils.

The value of this 'hardy annual' consisted not so much in the
number or kind of the motions carried as in the exchange of ideas
among the delegates and in the appeal to the public. The mere
affirmation of a long list of reforms, great and small, seemed to
count for very little, in view of the fact that the same measures
were placed on the order paper year after year without making much
impression either on the public or on Parliament. The earnest-
ness of the representatives was beyond question. They were evident-
ly all fired with a determination to improve their fellows, and
recognised also that their activity should extend to local as well
as to colonial politics. Their influence at the time was small
because labour was lulled into complete acceptance of many measures
against which it later revolted. Arbitration seemed such a good

(34) W. P. Morrell "New Zealand", page 81.
(35) From the report of the Annual Conference 1900.
thing that "Labour slept under this great politically-appointed foster mother"; it needed several years of practical application to prove that the workers' bed was not made entirely of roses.
"Extremes are dangerous; a middle estate is safest; as a middle temper of the sea, between a still calm and a violent tem-
pest, is the most helpful to convey the mariner to his haven."

- Swinnock

In 1901 there appeared in the "Otago Daily Times" an attack on colonial trade unionism under the heading "Industrial Arbitration (1) in New Zealand - Is it a success?" It expressed what may be con-
sidered the middle-class view of the labour movement at the time - as a general and growing tendency towards socialism of a vague kind. Unionism in New Zealand was a triple tyranny - the ringleaders and agitators tyrannising over the general body of unionists; the union-
ists over the workers generally and the workers exercising almost complete control over the ministry and legislature. They were con-
tent to surrender their individual liberties and individual judge-
ments to coerce the employers, and willingly submitted to dicta-
torial rule by their self-constituted leaders. An artificial soli-
darity was made the pretext for tyranny over non-members as well as unionists. Mr. Macgregor accused the workers of completely cap-
turing Parliament by means of a few "wire-pullers" who arranged (2) tickets at election time. As a result they foisted upon the con-
stituencies members of whom they were in some cases ashamed when they came to know them.

(1) By J. Macgregor, M. A. - reprinted in pamphlet form.
(2) As special instances, a secret alliance with the Catholics and the liquor interest is cited.
"The whole tendency of our boasted labour legislation is to discourage real co-operation, and one of the worst evils of our arbitration system is that it tends, not only to divide permanently employers and wage-earners into two hostile camps, and to render it more and more difficult for the wage-earner to become an employer, but also segregate the wage-earners more and more from the other classes in the community."

The "Otago Liberal and Workman" answered the challenge. In reply to the charge that many of the workers asserted rights to the whole of produce, it declared that existing relations between Capital and Labour made radical change essential. As a human being was different from the machine he operated, he had inherent claims to something higher than to be a mere chattel. A recent writer in the 'Clarion' was quoted: 'There is a growing grasp of ideas, of ambitions, of desires, books, newspapers and travel contributing to the awakening of Labour to a world of sense. The Trade unions, because of the lessons of the past, are beginning to fight the drudge curse, to apprehend a bigger lesson ..... facts (relating to civilised life) are becoming better known and appreciated. Instead of being drudge, to be master and sharer of these is the dream of the dawning intellect and conscience of the worker.'

For the workers, unionism was the symbol of a silent but irresistible revolution against the modern curse of capitalism. Its aims, higher than the mere immediate matters of wages and hours, destined it to be an immense force in trade and politics. In New Zealand an impulse had been given to it by the simple provision authorising the inspection of an employer's books; and the giving of employment was becoming more an honour than an act of charity.
"The day is nearer" said articulate Labour, "when the grisy hand will not necessarily imply social or mental inferiority, when the artisan will be as highly honoured as the capitalist, because he is personally of as much value in the world ... and when industrial relations, founded on reason and not on brute force, shall ensure lasting peace."

Such statements on the part of politically active working men were a form of ideal rather than a practical programme. The majority of the workers were still apathetic if not contented, and the picture painted is that of a utopia, desirable but unattainable. The general trend of the argument, however, does point to an increasing desire among the workers to improve their condition as much by education as by agitation. But the 'growing grasp of ideas and ambitions' was longer attaining to its maturity than labour leaders hoped at the time. Whatever views most workers had on the subject, they preferred to keep their individual opinions to themselves. The Trades and Labour Councils at their conferences (3) continued to be the only organs of political expression; and their recommendations to Parliament had become a habit rather than an organised demand. In October, 1905, these words could still be truthfully applied:

"Labour is becoming diplomatic and restful under its blessings in this favoured land. There are no strikes in the air, no great wrongs are crying out for redress, and so Labour contentedly attends a picnic or a hill-climbing expedition (on Labour Day). Its own hill is, in truth, only half mounted. Midway between foot and summit it began to limp and then grow tired, and finally lean-

(3) There were socialist groups in each of the centres, but they never received strong support.
heavily against the State and rested there. It does not realise
that some day somebody may move the State away and let poor La-
bour slip into the bondage at the bottom .... The workers should
be at work always, not merely securing their hold upon the State
and upon the legislation already passed, but also strengthening
their own position, independently of the State." (4)

Thoughtful labour men had realised before this time that the
"Great Liberal Party" was absorbing the members of Parliament who
had been returned by the workers. The difficulty thus created
was discussed privately by the delegates attending the Conference
of Trades and Labour Councils at Auckland in 1902, but no decision
was arrived at. At Greymouth in 1903 the delegates discussed the
matter as opportunity offered, and it was decided by the more ac-
tive spirits that at the next Conference an attempt should be made
to have it considered fully and openly. This unofficial step led
to direct action on the part of the Otago Council, which broached
the matter in the following year. The first organised political
labour party in the country dates its birth from the Christchurch
Conference in 1904, when Mr. J. T. Paul moved

"That the Conference is of opinion that an Independent Political
Labour Party should be formed immediately, to effectively organise
and secure proper representation in Parliament and on municipal
and other bodies - (a) to secure such legislation as will be for
the benefit of the colony as a whole, (b) to conserve and protect
the rights already secured to the people." (5)

Mr. Paul in a lengthy speech supported his motion with the follow-

(4) The "Lyttelton Times" leading article October 24, 1903.
(5) The "Lyttelton Times" April 9, 1904.
ing main reasons:

(1) The resolutions passed at the Trades and Labour Councils conferences would continue to be ineffective so long as there were no members in the House to see that they were attended to.

(2) The example of the Independent Labour Party in Great Britain must be followed if the New Zealand workers were not content to lag behind the rest of the world.

(3) The formation of a third party for Labour was essential: on the one hand there was too much difference of opinion amongst members of the Government for them to hold together much longer, and on the other he considered that Mr. Massey and his party were out of the question as far as sponsoring labour legislation was concerned.

Other members, hopeful of immediate success, believed that the Labour Party would supply an organised opposition "which was lacking at the time." The only voices of dissent came from the Canterbury delegates. Their leader, Mr. James Barr, in no uncertain terms denounced labour parties the world over as the incarnation of corruption, giving opportunity for certain self-seeking faddists to lead uneducated workers astray. He thought the establishment of the proposed party would lead to corruption and serious dis-sensions in the House.

The motion, on being put to the vote, was carried by 16 to 3. Apparently Canterbury withdrew its objections after the motion was passed, for it was further unanimously agreed "That when the dele-

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(6) All delegates were previously instructed by their Councils how to vote. Two of the Canterbury delegates voted against their own express convictions.

(7) For a full report of Mr. Barr's antagonistic address see the "Lyttelton Times" April 9, 1904. It is fuller than the official
gates assemble in Wellington to lay before the Government the de-
liberations of this Conference, they should be instructed to form
a Constitution and platform in conformity with the resolutio
adopted in favour of the Independent Labour Party for the whole
colony, and submit the same to the various councils for consider-
ation."

Commenting on this argument, it was pointed out by a partially
sympathetic newspaper which still believed firmly in the Liberal-
Labour Alliance, that although the 'go-slow' policy of the Liberals
was not meeting with favour from the general public, a Labour party,
however fully organised, would not be able to capture more than 12
seats at the next election. "A more than likely result will be an
alliance of Liberals and Oppositionists, with opposition to Labour
as the basis of their policy .... We are satisfied in our own minds
that the step which the workers propose to take would retard the
progress of the reforms which they have most at heart." To the
majority of politically minded people at the time, who still viewed
Liberals and Labour as one, the salvation of the workers lay not in
independence but in co-operative organisation with the Liberals.
That organisation should be based, not on a few narrow party planks,
but on a broad progressive policy which could educate members pro-
perly to a knowledge and understanding of the needs of Labour.

Advocates of the movement argued that Liberalism had gone as far
as it intended to go which was not far enough for Labour. It was
ture, they said, that the experimental legislation had for a time
placed the New Zealand working man far ahead of his brother on any

(7) Cont. report of the Conference.
(8) "The Lyttelton Times."
other part of the globe; but after the first few years the novelty had worn off, and faults and flaws in the social system had begun to make themselves apparent. The Arbitration Court was proving a failure; and under an iniquitous capitalist system social equality was still a far cry off. "What Labour wanted was that State Socialism of which the Liberals had given it only a small instalment." So the workers felt themselves impelled to take the first decisive step since 1890.

No further progress was made until September 19, 1904, when a conference of Delegates from the Trades and Labour Councils met in Wellington for the purpose of drafting a Constitution and platform. This was ready by the 22nd. The national programme advocated extensive reforms in land laws, local government and economic government. Some of the most important of these had appeared in the programmes of the Workers' Political Associations and the Trades and Labour Councils in the eighties. They were permanent Labour planks, viz. — The abolition of the Sale of Crown lands, Government regulation of workshops and the abolition of the Upper House. The establishment of a State Bank, and a referendum on State questions were further points in the platform which had been advocated by the Knights of Labour in 1893. The whole trend of the platform was towards the nationalisation of resources and industries, and a carefully planned municipal programme bore the same strain.

All candidates for election to Parliament were to sign the

(9) For the change of opinion towards the Arbitration Act see Chapter IV.
(11) A full copy of the platform is annexed to the end of this
the following pledge:

"I hereby pledge myself not to oppose the selected candidate of this or any other branch of the Political Labour League. I also pledge myself, if returned to Parliament, on all occasions to do my utmost to ensure the carrying out of the principles embodied in the Labour platform, and all such questions, and especially on questions affecting the fate of a government, to vote as a majority of the Labour Party may decide at a duly constituted caucus meeting. I further pledge myself not to retire from the contest without the consent of the executive of the Political Labour League of New Zealand, and, if elected, shall as far as possible place my services at the disposal of the League for organising purposes."

Membership was restricted to persons over 18 years of age, but only those over 21 years of age could be eligible to vote for candidates, and all members were to be pledged loyally to support the League. A yearly subscription was fixed at 2/- for men and 1/- for women, with half rates for financial members of Trades Unions. In any electoral district where only one branch existed, it was to be known as an "electorate branch". Where more than one branch existed "electorate councils" could be formed, and also "district assemblies". The executive, through at least one local paper and by instruction to the secretary, could, after hearing the body implicated in explanation, declare any branch electorate council or district assembly "bogus" (sic) for disloyalty to the platform or disobedience to the Executive. The funds of the League were to be applied to the expenses of political and municipal work only.
The Executive was to consist of a President, a general secretary and ten members elected by the annual conference. Any Liberal members of Parliament or local bodies were to have the right of attendance and speech at all special and general meetings. Triennial conferences of delegates were to be summoned. Branches or councils having 25 members could select their own candidates, by an exhaustive ballot if two or more candidates were selected. Any member or ex-member of the League opposing a League candidate at a Parliamentary election was to be disqualified from being selected for the four years next following. All nominations had to be endorsed by the executive before going to ballot and any candidate personally canvassing for votes was to be disqualified for selection. Members elected under the auspices of the League were to form a distinct party, and were forbidden to join any Ministry not mainly composed of members of their own body.

The committee which drafted the Constitution gave advice as to the organisation of the League, and concluded on this note: "Labour in politics does not seek the advantage of a class or section of the community, but the general good by combined Parliamentary and municipal action. The well-being of each is the concern of all... Educate, organise, agitate."

The "Lyttelton Times", in a leader, criticised the League for the blunder against which it had warned it before, namely its declaration of "labour independence", which made the League too exclusive and practically restricted membership to city unionists. Its municipal reforms were "commendable" but its strict rules of expulsion "were not calculated to attract timid spirits." The
"Dunedin Star" was severely critical, and accused the founders of the movement of mistaking the success of the Liberal-Labour alliance for a failure.

The opinions of the few working people who thought at all in the matter were divided. One group argued from the inefficiency of the political party then in power. They claimed that the mass of the people had been mainly demanding a substantial land tax for years; that nothing had been done to remedy the wholesale alienation of the remainder of the Crown lands of the colony; that other departments were being favoured at the expense of the Labour Department; that the worker's average wages were lower than before the Government took office; and that the position of that Government was generally regarded as doomed through lack of initiative, bad administration, indifference to the public welfare and general incapacity.

The other group, arguing from the side of the workers, stated that they had never as a whole, or as a majority of the whole, asked or made any sign that they wanted such a party. Compared with the English Liberals, they said, the New Zealand Liberal Party was advanced Labour. Would workers throw away their individuality and allow others to think for them and dictate to them as to how they should cast their votes? "The League would cease to exist if every worker became a thinker" sums up the attitude of this class of the community toward the League. Early in 1905, during the tour of the League's President, the Hon. John Rigg, Mr. Andrew Collins of the Wellington Trades and Labour Council remarked: "The new party is not wanted by the working classes,

(12) "Let Well Alone" to the "Lyttelton Times" October 15, 1904.
and even its inauguration under such auspices as it has is weak in the extreme. There are 486 unions in New Zealand, of which only about 120 are affiliated with the Trades and Labour Councils, and even the delegates of the Councils are almost evenly divided upon the necessity of inaugurating the new political party."

The indifference of workers like these latter was the chief reason for the formation of the League. The promoters wished to stimulate political interest in the mass of the people, and accordingly proceeded to carry the resolution of the Easter Conference into effect in spite of protests from their own ranks. The inaugural meeting, "composed largely of socialists calling themselves the Political Labour League", was held in Wellington at the Trades Council on October 22. Mr. E. T. Young moved "that this meeting accepts the principles, Constitution and Platform of the Political Labour League, and resolves to establish a central branch of the League in Wellington." The motion was agreed to by a large majority, and the League thus came into existence, with Mr. John Rigg as its President.

The Wellington body remained alone until the new year, when branches were formed in Dunedin on January 26, and in Christchurch on February 8. The idea of absolute independence which had crept into the Constitution, and which was now generally associated with the League, was evidently not contemplated by the original movers. Mr. Paul declared when the Dunedin branch was formed that the League was quite prepared to join forces with other parties. "From the extension of the movement", he said, "it has become blazoned abroad that it is an attempt to oust the Seddon Govern-

(13) "Lyttelton Times", February 8, 1905.
but there is no such intention." They merely wished to displace the reactionary part of that Government. Again, Mr. Rigg, when questioned in Dunedin on February 17, replied: "It is to be a separate party, but it will work in with allies. If it is not strong enough to have a government of its own, it will support the Government."

This was said in the middle of his presidential tour of the South Island. The progress made by the end of 1904 had been poor, and the country as a whole had not taken kindly to the movement, partly through political apathy, partly from an antipathy to anything exclusively "Labour". With the idea of fostering greater interest Mr. Rigg had therefore undertaken to make a tour of explanation and propagation. He was thought by sympathisers to be ideally suited for the task, because his deep interest in the League gave him power to speak with a personal conviction that could not but appeal strongly to this listeners. His "kindly, unassuming manner and entire absence of silly side" brought home to many "the immense superiority of personal influence and the living voice over all other agencies in carrying out the work of organisation."

The tour was heralded by a manifesto from Wellington circulate among the workers. It was necessary, so the argument ran, to break down the opposition in Parliament to democratic land and labour legislation. This could be done if only the workers forming 63 per cent. of the population would organise. "You have handed your political mansion to strangers and you beg at the doorstep ... Shall New Zealand shake hands with Tasmania

(14) "The Otago Liberal" February 2, 1905.
(the most conservative colony in Australia), or will you make an effort to place it in the foremost rank of democratic colonies? It is for you to say. The Independent Political Labour League is organised for reform. Come and join us."

As a piece of political propaganda the manifesto was inherently a failure. In one sentence it practically denies the necessity for the League - viz. "... this unsatisfactory result has been brought about by want of organisation, due to your indifference." A body such as the League could succeed in introducing ferment among the workers only if there was among them an underlying sense of dissatisfaction. The workers as a whole were indifferent to politics, the manifesto says, and it is reasonable to conclude that they were generally satisfied with their lot. They seemed to have no immediate and vital grievances which could be redressed only by political action. A great number of the workers, only semi-educated, were not yet capable of grasping the conception of themselves as a political machine. Further, the 63 per cent. quoted as being wage-earners were certainly not all labourites of the type to whom such a manifesto would appeal. Many were those for whom "labour" meant "socialism" - a vague, misunderstood word synonymous with revolution. Any hint of political action on the part of Labour was therefore calculated to fit these wage-earners more firmly in the groove of conservatism.

Mr. Rigg embarked upon his tour, therefore, having to fight the strongest enemy of any political movement - indifference. He was by no means an extremist, and the words he spoke deserved more attention than they received. The tour had the primary ob-

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(15) The Labour League Manifesto, issued January 24, 1905.
ject of encouraging the workers to organise for the purpose of ousting the reactionary element of the Liberal Government. "We do not want a divorce" said Mr. Rigg, "but we cannot live on the memories of the past and so we seek to reinforce the labour section of the alliance in order that it may be no longer an appendage of the Liberal Party, but, instead, the dominant factor in the Liberal-Labour alliance."

The President's march was not a triumphal one calling a nation of workers to action; nor was it even widely supported; but it did succeed in setting the movement on a national basis and increasing the membership to a number which justified its name. In answer to a question regarding the result of his mission, Mr. Rigg said that he had accomplished much more than he had anticipated when he set out. In Dunedin the Workers' Political Committee disbanded in favour of the League, and a new branch was formed in Dunedin South. Invercargill took up the work enthusiastically under the leadership of Mr. T. O'Byrne, and it was expected that a large branch would be formed there shortly. At the meeting where the Christchurch branch had been formed, between 30 and 40 names had been enrolled, which, to Mr. Rigg, was an encouraging sign. He believed, from his observation, that wherever the League was established, from Wellington to the Bluff, it embraced the most influential labour men in the district. Progress was slowest in Dunedin, where there was least opposition, and where people seemed inclined "to think that things were all right, and that they would be 'there' when the time came."

On April 26 the first Annual Conference of the League met in Wellington. It was attended by Messrs. W. C. Horning (Auckland)
G. Turner (Taipaho); J. Rigg, J. Ball, T. H. Stephens and A. Adams (Wellington); J. A. Mc Cullough and A. Patterson (Canterbury); R. Breen, W. Hood and J. Scott (Dunedin); W. G. Noot (Southland); and E. Stevenson (New Plymouth). The President in his report stated that the numerical strength of the League had then exceeded 1,000 (1,026), and expressed his confidence in its ultimate success. The Conference adopted the fighting platform of the League as a basis for its general election campaign.

From the date of the Conference until December the various branches continued to organise with this campaign in view. Delegations approached some of the more liberal members of Parliament and asked them to join up; but although these men may have sympathised with the League's principles, they thought that membership would hinder their chances of re-election. One of them, Mr. W. W. Tamer, was of the original six who had been returned in 1890. He "gave fatherly advice", but felt that it would probably be "against his interests" to sign the League's pledge. Mr. G. W. Witty said he could not fairly "sink his personality in order to placate one section of the community at the expense of the rest." The League consequently had to produce inexperienced men from its own ranks.

Before the elections Mr. Rigg and his followers were careful to point out that the League did not expect or aim at immediate success, but wished to give to the candidates an experience which would build up the prospects for the future. On September 4 the President reported that steady progress had been made since the Conference, especially in Christchurch, where membership had al-

(16) "Lyttelton Times" June 2, 1905.
most reached the 1,000 mark. Progress was also "good" in Dunedin, although there are no statistics recorded. In the North Island great interest was focussed on the Main Trunk Railway Works, where many of the workers had been induced to join up. The Hāupāpu and Taikhe branches had a membership of 300, steadily increasing, and the Wanganui figures had reached 80 after one month's existence.

League officials were quite satisfied with these figures, and thought them sufficient to warrant eight candidates being put up for election: two in Auckland, four in Wellington and two in Christchurch. In Dunedin proceedings were hampered by the Workers' Political Committee, which had agreed not to dissolve until 18 months from the Elections. This meant that if the League supported a worker's representative, he would be a non-member, which was contrary to its constitution. The Committee resolved to support four government candidates, Messrs. J. A. Millar, J. F. Arnold, A. R. Barclay, and E. A. Allen, and the League as such remained inoperative.

The Candidates who stood under the auspices of the League were:

Robert F. Wray, a Queensland journalist who had come to New Zealand in 1900, and 'remained a fighter for labour ever after.' He polled 103 votes for Auckland East.

James Aggers who polled 360 votes for Auckland Central.

George Dickson McFarlane, a member of the Petone Borough Council, who stood for Wellington North and secured 290 votes.

Albert Hunter Cooper, Secretary of the Wellington Trades Council, and workers' representative on the Conciliation Board. Standing for Wellington Central he polled 423 votes.
David McLaren, Scottish born, a prominent man in Wellington public life. At the time of the election he was secretary of the Wellington Wharf Labourers' Union, President of the Central Branch of the I. P. L. L., and a member of the Wellington City Council. He stood for Wellington East, and was third on the list with 763 votes.

Alfred H. Hindmarsh, Australian born, who practised in Wellington as a barrister and solicitor, and was Vice-President of the Central Branch of the I. P. L. L., and a member of the Wellington City Council. He polled 383 votes for Wellington South.

John A. Efford, an employee in the Addington Government Railway Workshops for 25 years. He had been President of the Working Men's Co-operative Society on several occasions, and had retired from railway service about six months prior to the elections. He polled 383 votes for Christchurch South.

James Thorn, an employee at the Addington Workshops, described as a sound platform speaker with considerable educational attainments. He stood for Christchurch East, and with 1107 votes to his credit, was the only one of the eight to reach four figures.

In addition, Frederick R. Cooke contested Christchurch East as an Independent Labour candidate, securing 91 votes. W. A. Morris as an Independent polled 362 for Invercargili, and C. E. Darton as an Independent secured 974 votes for Waipau.

Judging by statistical results the League's first campaign was thus a dismal failure. An aggregate of 3532 votes was not a very inspiring total for eight men; and of these six lost their deposits through securing fewer than one quarter of the votes polled by the successful candidate. Obviously the League had not re-
ceived the support it had expected from workers who were non-members. On December 12 the Executive of the League issued a manifesto, "mainly concerned with accounting for the thoroughness of a defeat which was inevitable from the outset." (17)

"We are of opinion", says the manifesto, "that the defeat of our candidates was due almost entirely to the overwhelming odds against which they had to contend. There was arrayed against them the influence of the Government, the Opposition, the new Liberal Party, and the press, as well as the active opposition of a large number of trade and labour organisations .... It is due to ourselves to say that while we did not overlook or underestimate the difficulties to be encountered, our mistake was that we expected to receive from the workers a more loyal and substantial support than they were prepared to concede."

The opposition of the Trades and Labour Councils which had given it birth was the factor which made its task appear almost a "forlorn hope". The truth was that many "real friends" of Labour were not prepared to support a party based on such narrow principles as the League's Constitution advocated for the "welfare of the democracy". In spite of its asserting to the contrary, the League was at fault in making the distinction between classes too rigid, and purporting to represent the whole when it represented only a part. Such rights as the 'workers' in this sense claimed were equally due to other liberal sections of the community who also had to earn their living. Farmers, manufacturers, teachers, shopkeepers, would all be entitled to equally narrow representation and "only the unattached voters would be left without their party

Labour leaders voted against the League because they foresaw that it would only succeed in dividing Liberal supporters and making them ineffective in the realms of labour legislation. Independence may have appeared a sound policy to them, but only if it was based on an earnest devotion to the high principles which concerned the capitalist, the professional man and the old age pensioner as much as they did the worker.

That Labour men could not agree as to the success of the League is made apparent by the report of the 1906 Trades and Labour Councils Conference, held at the same time as that of the League. The Executive of the Conference had thought fit in its report to "notice with satisfaction the progressive work of the League." A number of delegates objected to the paragraph containing this statement, notably Mr. A. J. Rosser, who had stood as a lone Labour candidate in 1896. A motion that the paragraph be deleted was lost, but a feeling of hostility continued to rankle in the breast of those who thought that the Conference should not show party bias.

The League continued its periodic meetings, but it never contested another election. The Conference at Christchurch in 1906 was well attended, representatives from nine branches being present, with Mr. Rigg presiding. In his presidential address Mr. Rigg admitted that the League was failing, but pointed to the example of the British Labour Party, which had succeeded in returning 17 members at the last election. As a reason for failure he mentioned the active opposition of prominent Labour leaders, and

(18) "The Lyttelton Times", December 15, 1905.
(19) See next Chapter.
stated significantly that the need for the League had diminished because much labour legislation had been passed since its organisation.
NATIONAL FIGHTING PLATFORM of the Labour League advocating,

(1) **A State Bank**
   
   (a) The establishment of a State Bank with the sole right of note issue, which shall be legal tender.

(2) **Land Reform**
   
   (a) The abolition of the sale of Crown lands.
   
   (b) Periodical revaluation of all Crown lands held on lease.
   
   (c) Resumption of land for closer settlement to be at the owner's revaluation for taxation purposes plus ten per cent.
   
   (d) The absolute right of tenants to their improvements.

(3) **Local Government Reform**
   
   (a) By making the Parliamentary franchise apply to the elections of all local bodies.
   
   (b) By permitting every elector to have the right to vote on all questions submitted to the poll.

(4) **Economic Government** by
   
   (a) A Referendum with the initiative in the hands of the people.
   
   (b) The abolition of the Upper House.
   
   (c) Elective executives.

(5) **Statutory preference of employment to unionists.**

(6) **The cessation of Borrowing**, except for (a) Redemption, (b) completing works already authorised by Parliament.

(7) **Nationalisation**, entailing
   
   (a) The establishment of State ironworks.
   
   (b) The nationalisation of all mineral wealth.
   
   (c) The establishment of State woollen and flour mills and clothing and boot factories.

**NOTE:** Labour candidates shall have a free hand on the liquor and fiscal questions.
MUNICIPAL PLATFORM

Advocating,

(1) One vote only for each adult resident.

(2) Polls to be open till 8 p.m.

(3) Payment of mayors and councillors if approved by a plebiscite vote of the electors.

(4) The unification of municipalities around large centres of population.

(5) The municipal ownership and control of any industry or service deemed desirable by a plebiscite vote of the electors.

(6) The striking of all rates on the unimproved values of land within each district.

(7) Power to acquire the title to and power to lease, but not to sell, any lands on which rates are overdue and unpaid for a period of five years, provided the owner may recover possession on payment of all rates and accrued interest thereon.

(8) Quinquennial valuation of property by the owner.

(9) Compulsory power to acquire gas or electric lighting works.

(10) Power by initiative to demand a vote or any policy proposal of a local governing body.
CHAPTER IV.
Labour Organisations 1906 - 10.

"What is this, the sound and rumour? What is this that all men hear; Like the wind in hollow valleys when the storm is drawing near, Like the rolling on of ocean in the eventide of fear? "Tis the people marching on." - William Morris.

From the death of Seddon in June, 1906, restlessness in Labour ranks steadily grew. Feeling was not restricted to a general class conflict of wage-earners against capitalists, but succeeded in dividing the workers among themselves. The advocates of a third party for Labour continued their efforts in face of opposition from those who sought redress in unionist rather than political action. As a result the Trades and Labour Councils were accused of becoming too political in their outlook, and many unions broke off their affiliation. In Westland, the miners adopted the principles of the I. W. W. (Industrial Workers of the World) which asserted that the strike was the only effective weapon on the side of the workers. They discarded the prevalent system of craft unionism and advocated "class unionism" or federation, with the general strike as a basis for all demands. They did not at the time favour political action, but it is important to note that several of their leaders were ultimately returned to Parliament as Labour members.

PART I: Attempts at organisation by unionism and the Trades and Labour Councils.

(1) The Workers' Political Association
On Tuesday, June 19, 1906, a meeting was held in Christchurch for the purpose of forming a political association whereby politics questions affecting the welfare of the people of the colony as a whole could be discussed. The meeting was arranged "on the recommendation of labour leaders who had discussed the question fully beforehand." It was decided to call the new body, the 'New Zealand Workers' Political Association', and its objects were described briefly: "to advance the social, economic and political interests of the workers of New Zealand." A comprehensive programme advocated reforms in the land laws, labour legislation, taxation, education, State industries and institutions, local government and social legislation. In its main outlines it closely resembled the programme of the Independent Political Labour League, which had met with such a storm of abuse. It was decided to hold monthly meetings, and the following officers were elected: President, Mr. J. Barr; Vice-presidents, Messrs. H. R. Rushbridge and R. O'Brien; Secretary, Mr. M. J. Forde; Treasurer, Mr. F. C. Gerard; Committee Members Stace and Garner, Messrs. A. G. Ell, M. H. R., F. Cameron, J. Fisher, N. Orton and I. Ward.

The Association was not a political party. Mr. Ell was on the committee, although he had steadfastly refused to join the Labour League. Mr. Barr, the President, was one of the most hostile critics of a third party for New Zealand. "The time has arrived," he said "when the New Zealand workers will have to take a more active interest in the politics of their country, when they will have to meet to discuss their position, irrespective of party."

The Association was to be a discussion arena for men and women who

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(2) At the Parliamentary elections of 1905 the League's candidate,
objected to being tied by elaborate pledges such as the Political Labour League insisted upon. The absence of any such pledges was in fact the main difference between the Association and the League.

The Association was subjected to a savage attack from the League, and from those who thought that Labour should act independently. The Auckland Labour paper, the "New Zealand Worker," was venomous: "The whole object of the organisation is to ringnose the workers into continuing to be lap-dogs of any party calling itself Liberal. It was conceived in treachery and deceit; it will crawl along a pitiful misshapen thing and will eventually die as its leaders are absorbed into political jobs." (3)

Mr. J. T. Paul, speaking for the League, complained that there was nothing more solid behind the Association than the personal opinion of a few men. He was one of the best-known labour leaders in the colony, and yet neither he nor any member of the Otago Trade and Labour Council had received intimation that the Association was to be formed. The statement that labour leaders had discussed the question fully beforehand was therefore not true. Defending the Association, Mr. Barr replied that it had been formed by men who thought they were free members of society, and therefore did not consider it necessary to ask the permission of the Trades Council. Without doubt the Association was even less the outcome of national class action than the League had been. It went so far as to establish branches in Wellington and Auckland, and came to a decision to appoint agents in towns where no branch existed. A committee was set up for the purpose of discussing the most important planks

(3) Cont. J. Thorn, had opposed Mr. Ell.
(3) The "Lyttelton Times" July 14, 1906
(4) The "Lyttelton Times" June 27, 1906
(5) The "Lyttelton Times" July 4, 1906.
in the platform with district members of Parliament. But the periodical meetings were so poorly attended that on December 5 the question of holding socials to popularise the Association was considered but negatived. Again on February 9 of the next year (1907 a committee was set up to consider ways and means of increasing the members; no ways and means could be found apparently, for the meetings gradually became fewer, and had ceased altogether by the end of the year.

The one practical step taken by the Association was to sponsor labour candidates for the municipal elections held throughout the country on April 25, 1907. Labour for the first time offered a definite ticket, and by its election campaigns succeeded to a certain extent in rousing the public from its apathy. But there was little success in the polls. In Auckland Dr. Stopford was elected, and in Wellington Messrs. D. McLaren and A. H. Hindmarsh, sitting members, were returned. In Christchurch Messrs. J. Thorn, A. Paterson, D. G. Sullivan and Faulkner were all defeated. Dunedin brought forward no candidates.

If the workers were to organise politically with any prospect of success, then, it was not to be in the form of a discussion group.

(2) The Ghost of the Political Labour League and the 1905 elections.

During the years 1906-1908 the Independent Political Labour League continued to hold spasmodic meetings, and members gave Sunday afternoon addresses in public places. But the blow dealt by the 1905 elections had been too severe, and by 1908 the League had for all practical purposes ceased to exist. In the general elections of that year no candidates came forward under its auspices, but members stood variously as "Labour," "Socialist" and "Independ-
In Wellington they were supported by a Representation Committee of the Trades and Labour Council. The chief object of attack was the Liberal Party, especially the Hon. J. A. Millar, Minister for Labour; but many unionists refused to associate themselves with such a policy. Mr. W. H. Westbrookes, President of the Wellington Trades and Labour Council, spoke vehemently against the movement. On November 14 the "Lyttelton Times" published a letter signed by leading trade unionists denouncing the "socialists" and praising all that the Liberals had done for the workers.

In face of such divided opinion, 25 candidates contested seats, polling in all 24,262 votes. One member, D. Mc Laren, was elected for Wellington East. Those were the days of the second ballot, under which a second voting had to take place in any electorate where the candidates leading in the first ballot failed to secure a clear majority over all the other candidates. All except the two top candidates were eliminated for the second ballot. In the first ballot in Wellington East the results were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Votes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. R. Atkinson</td>
<td>Reform</td>
<td>2412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Mc Laren</td>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>1746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Mc Lean</td>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>1305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Winder</td>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>1076</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second ballot resulted:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D. Mc Laren</td>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>3450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. R. Atkinson</td>
<td>Reform</td>
<td>3022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

G. E. Barton (Independent Labour) contested Gisborne with the Hon. J. Carroll and secured 2062 votes in the first ballot and 2484 in the second, as against 3218 for Carroll. All the remaining candidates were eliminated in the first ballot or beaten outright: J.

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(6) The "Lyttelton Times" November 7, 1907.
Thorn again contested Christchurch South, as a Socialist, and polled 2227 votes, being 1273 votes behind H. G. Ell. R. F. Way (Socialist) secured 725 votes for Chinemuri, and H. T. Armstrong (Labour) 256 votes for the same seat. They were third and fifth on the list respectively. F. R. Cooke (Socialist) secured 506 votes in Christchurch East, and J. Mc Combs (Independent) contesting the same seat polled 1771. W. A. Morris (Independent) contested Awarua against Sir Joseph Ward and secured 886 votes. Standing for the first time, C. H. Chapman (Labour) received 687 votes for Wellington South, finishing third out of seven candidates. D. G. Sullivan (Labour) entered the lists at Avon, being fourth among five candidates with 676 votes. J. W. Munro (Independent Labour), contesting a straight-out fight at Dunedin West, polled 2338 votes to J. A. Millar's 4785. In Dunedin South R. R. Douglas (Labour) secured 2462 votes to 4292 for T. K. Sidey; and at Taieri J. T. Johnson (Labour) with 2070 votes, was 500 behind the Hon. Thos. Mc Kenzie. In Auckland A. J. Rosser (Labour) was bottom for Auckland Central with 621, and similarly J. N. Harle (Labour) polled only 374 for Auckland East. Contesting Haraden M. Soule (Labour) received 416 votes. G. S. Clapham (Independent) with 656 votes was fifth out of six candidates in the first ballot for Hawkes Bay. In Wellington Suburbs, among the four candidates eliminated by the first ballot were F. T. Moore (Independent) 644, and W. T. Young (Labour) 613. J. G. Cobbe (Labour) polled 406 votes to gain fourth place at Ashburton, and J. T. Koller (Labour) occupied third place for Timaru with 1259. R. J. Eckroyd (Socialist) received 405 votes for Christchurch North; J. V. Brown (Labour) polled 57 votes for Grey Lynn, O. Mason (Socialist) 297 for Thames.
and W. Barr (Socialist) 103 for Chalmers.

The election proved two things. First that Labour was more politically conscious than it had been three years previously, and secondly that Labour had not realised that its political consciousness could be made effective only by united action. It will be noticed that in several electorates two workers' representatives contested the same seat, or that a Labour man was pitted against a very sympathetic Liberal. This futile division of forces typified the general restlessness of the time, which continued until the great Unity Congress in 1913 met to weld the various factions into a single whole.

(3) Attempts to form a Federation of Labour.

Prior to the Trades and Labour Councils' Conference in 1907 a committee had been formed for the purpose of drafting a constitution for a federation of labour. When the Conference met at Auckland on July 18, the committee submitted a draft constitution, and strongly recommended the formation of a federation along the lines it advocated. The proposed federation was to be named the New Zealand Trades and Labour Federation, and its objects were to secure the best conditions possible for workers by political and industrial means, and to maintain a spirit of fraternal sympathy with the workers of all other countries. Its composition would be a Federal Council, and District Councils and Unions, the former having power in matters of national character and the latter acting as chief authorities within their own spheres. The Federal Council was to meet at a yearly conference, and business in the District Councils

(3) From the official report of the Conference 1907.
was to be conducted by means of three departments - Social, Industrial and Political. Political activity was divided into two groups:

(a) For the purpose of safeguarding the interests of the workers, the District Council at Wellington was empowered to elect annually a standing Parliamentary Committee. The duties of such a committee were to be: "To investigate carefully all legislative proposals and measures brought forward affecting labour; report from time to time to the Executive (and the Federal Council when in session), and generally act for the Federation in watching over the legislative interests of its branches and members."

(b) Party action: "The Federation shall refrain from entering into alliance with any political party other than a distinct labour party, and shall only take action on party lines by the direct action of the Unions in affiliation. In local government affairs the District Councils may take action in agreement with the Unions in working reforms or in running labour candidates for election."

The recommendation of the committee was received favourably by the Conference, but no immediate action was contemplated in view of the expense which organisation would entail. The matter lapsed completely during 1908, when attention was focussed on the general election, but interest was revived when Mr. D. McLaren took over the position of general organising secretary without remuneration early in 1909. During the year his mission of organisation carried him throughout the length and breadth of the country, when he noticed everywhere that Labour was showing a much greater interest in its own affairs than it had done a few years before. At the annual conference of Trades and Labour Councils in 1910 the Executive
noted his appointment as a most important feature. Councils and Unions throughout the Dominion had been addressed and circularised, with the gratifying result that up to that time 73 unions, 8 councils and 3 federations had intimated their desire to join the Federation. The completion of the matter rested with the Conference, and it was resolved by 13 votes to 4 that a Federation of Labour should be brought into existence with as little delay as possible for the purpose of healing the many existing breaches. It was further resolved that a conference with the executive of the miners' Federation should be arranged with a view to amalgamation. But the end of the year came with nothing completed; the conference with the miners had not yet taken place, and the Federation was still a mere name.

(4) Labour Representation on the Legislative Council.

The Legislative Council appointments announced on January 22, 1907 included two representatives of Labour in a total of 14, and a third was appointed in July of the same year. These men were the first 'wage-earners' to take their place on the Council since 1891, and it is significant that whereas in the earlier year recognition had been granted to labour claims only after prolonged agitation, such claims had by 1907 become accepted as normal. The new councillors were Messrs. John Barr, John Paul and, in July, John Rigg.

Mr. Barr was born in Scotland in 1867, working there as a young man, first as a weaver and then as an apprenticed mason. On the expiration of his apprenticeship he travelled to Canada, where for

(9) For the formation of the 'New Zealand Federation of Miners', later the 'New Zealand Federation of Labour' see Part II of this chapter.
the next few years he worked at his trade in British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba. He came to New Zealand in 1902, and at once associated himself with labour politics, becoming president of the Canterbury Trades and Labour Council. He was well read on social and political subjects, and was an earnest and impressive speaker.

Mr. Paul was born in Victoria in 1874, and came to New Zealand in 1899 after reading of its experiments in state socialism. He joined the mechanical staff of the "Otago Daily Times" and quickly became associated with Labour matters. He was president of the Otago Trades and Labour Council for two years, and president of the Typographical Association for three years. "He has seen all sides of life, and his experience should stand him in good stead in his new sphere of activity."

These two men were considerably younger than Mr. Rigg, both in years and experience; but "Hansard" shows that both of them were more articulate than he in the deliberations of the Council. On grounds of consistency it is difficult to justify their inclusion in a Council which they thought should be abolished, or should at least be made elective. Every Labour programme hitherto put forward had included a plank for Legislative Council reform; but evidently Labour wished to make the most of an opportunity which gave it some voice in the government of the country. Workers generally thought that three members were not enough. "We are afraid," they said, "that they will gradually become like other members of the Council and get out of touch with us and our aspirations." But a few voices in the Council were better than none at all, and workers were gradually beginning to realise that the road to success lay

(10) The "Lyttelton Times" January 22, 1907.
not through agitation, which was often ill-founded and unreasonable, but through organisation on broad progressive lines. For the present, however, industrial dissatisfaction continued to be of more moment than the political issues of the Legislative Council appointments.

(5) Dissatisfaction with Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration.

The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act was undoubtedly the cause of a very great improvement in the conditions of all workers who came under its jurisdiction. Between 1906 and 1910, when a great deal of abuse was levelled at it, the mass of unionists in New Zealand never lost faith in its underlying principle. It lost prestige in the eyes of the workers only through what they considered was an utter lack of sympathetic administration.

"There came a time when the Court refused to increase wages or alter conditions, when men with very little, if any, sympathy with the workers were appointed to the Bench. A time when, with increasing arrogance, the workers were lectured for their continuous demands for better wages and conditions .... Grade interruptions, bumptious advice, and scant attention to evidence, indicating either that the judicial mind was already fully determined upon a decision or to plainly show an utter contempt for an embarrassed and inexperienced union advocate, were all factors that played a part in preparing the way for a widespread and almost unanimous revolt against judicial tyranny."(11)

This is an extreme view, taken by the miners, and dissatisfaction was generally not so intense as the passage indicates; but it tend-

ed more and more to rouse the class-consciousness of the workers, which manifested itself in two ways, militant and political. The former used the method of strikes, but lies beyond the sphere of this work except in its relation to the Miners' Federation. The latter took form in further efforts to organise a Political Labour Party.

(6) Events Leading to the Formation of the "New Zealand Labour Party"

The division between the politically minded and the more "faithful" unionists reached a minor climax at Christchurch in 1909. The Canterbury Trades and Labour Council was accused of being a mere debating ground for politicians, and many of the Unions withdrew their affiliation from a body which they considered had outlived its usefulness. Increased unemployment at the time stimulated the controversy, and led a certain section of the workers to think more and more of independent political action as the only way of relieving the glut on the labour market. At a social gathering of the Canterbury Drivers' Union, held on July 15, the matter was discussed, and a motion was carried unanimously that "In the opinion of this meeting the time has arrived for the establishment of a political party, to be called the New Zealand Labour Party, to organise all those persons, both within and without the trades union movement who are in sympathy with and prepared to support the policy, aims and objects of the Labour Movement."

The proposal created a great deal of interest in the ranks of labour and in political circles, and a general opinion was freely expressed that there was no necessity for such a party. The name

(12) See Part II of this chapter.
ultimately adopted, the "Christchurch South Labour Party" indicates how far it was from being national, but it continued to keep interest alive by public meetings until it was absorbed in the national movement which took form in the following year.

The possibility and desirability of creating a new labour party was broached at the Trades and Labour Councils' Conference in 1909, when Mr. T. O'Byrne (Southland) moved:

"The time has now arrived when the Trades and Labour Councils should take definite action in endeavouring to return Labour members to Parliament."

A long debate followed during which all delegates except Messrs. Rushbridge and Barr (Canterbury) supported the motion, which was ultimately carried by 22 votes to 2. During the nine months which elapsed until the next conference, organising work was carried on through the medium of the Councils, and also through Mr. D. Mc Laren's tour in the cause of federation. In Auckland greater interest was shown than had ever been the case before. Considerable organising work was conducted during which budding politicians addressed no less than three meetings a night. A large campaign fund was amassed, support coming 'from the most unthought of' sources. Five members of the Government party had promised to stand as Labour candidates at the next election, and arrangements were being made for five members of the Australian Labour Party to help in organising and electioneering work. In Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin the same reports of steady progress were made.

Activity was greatest in Auckland because of a by-election which

(13) Formed at a public meeting on December 11, 1909.
was to take place there for the Auckland East seat on June 18. As far as Labour was concerned the contest was more than a parochial affair. The northern Trades and Labour Council invited leaders of the Party in the South to assist in the campaign, and Messrs. D. McLaren, M. P. (Wellington), T. E. Taylor, M. P., J. A. McCullough and T. J. McBride (Christchurch), travelled to Auckland to give support. But if this gesture was intended to show the strength of the Dominion labour movement it also revealed its weakness, a complete lack of solidarity. The unionists in Auckland were unable to suppress their petty jealousies and prejudices and combine to nominate a candidate who would command the attention of the electors. It was expected that their choice would be the Rev. A. J. Black; but he refused to be nominated because of the "duplicitv and bungling of the Labour Party." They finally selected Mr. G. Mc Knight, who had nothing to commend him for political honours, and whose possibility of return was generally ridiculed.

Ultimately there were two Labour candidates in the field. It was reported after Mr. Mc Knight's selection that he had avowed before the previous election that he was not in favour of preference to unionists. Accordingly the Central Organising Committee in Auckland resolved "That owing entirely to the fact of the personal conviction of the selected Labour candidate, Mr. G. Mc Knight, being in conflict with an important plank of the Dominion Labour Party programme, we have regretfully to request Mr. Mc Knight to retire from the present contest, with our assurance that we repudiate any reflection which may be cast on his personal character, and extend to him our sympathy, this decision being arrived at wholly on the

(15) The "Lyttelton Times" May 27, 1910.
ground that the party's interest must take precedence over all personal considerations." (16)

Mr. Mc Knight refused to withdraw, and even after the new candidate, Mr. George Davis was selected, he insisted on calling himself official Labour. The election resulted in a victory for Mr. A. M. Myers (Independent Liberal) with 3180 votes; Davis was next with 1087; Mc Knight polled 75 and was bottom.

In the eyes of the general public Labour's campaign had been muddled; but the Labour leaders themselves seemed satisfied with the result. It had been impossible for them, said Mr. T. E. Taylor, (18) in the absence of funds and in the short time at their disposal, to make anything like an effective canvass of the electorate. But the muddling had taken place before the canvassing began, and the fact that Labour sympathisers could not agree upon a suitable candidate showed that the unity essential to success had not yet arrived. It emphasised the need for such unity, however, and gave added importance to the Trades and Labour Councils' Conference in July, which was to consider final arrangements for the formation of a Labour Party.

The Executive of the Conference had approached a number of members of the House of Representatives, with a view to obtaining an opinion on the advisability or opportunity of forming an Independent Labour Party within the House; but the replies received were far from encouraging, and the Executive therefore strongly recommended the formation from without as the only possible solution of the

(16) The "Lyttelton Times" June 7, 1910.
(17) Official Government-and Opposition candidates were also in the field.
(18) The motor car was now beginning to play an important role in electoral campaigns.
The matter was debated fully, and an objective and platform provisionally drafted were passed. The programme testified to a sane outlook and endeavoured to meet the political situation in a more workmanlike fashion than any previous attempts. The objects of the new party were:

"To maintain upon our Statute Books all the progressive legislation that has already been enacted, and to insist upon its sympathetic and proper administration.

To enact comprehensive measures and establish such conditions as will foster and ensure equality of opportunity, also the moral material and educational advancement and the general comfort and well-being of the whole people, based upon the public ownership of all the means of production, distribution and exchange."

The platform, although it included measures relating specifically to the workers, was not by any means a purely class programme, in the forefront was the 'immediate nationalisation of monopolies', followed by eight planks on land reform which constituted, in the opinion of Mr. J. T. Paul, the best policy yet put forward by the Labour Party. "A vigorous closer settlement policy and an increment tax on all land sales, to secure to the State all socially created values, is at least an attempt to curb the land speculation which harasses the genuine farmer." Currency reform repeated the plea for a State bank and the cessation of borrowing. Electoral reform included a new plank advocating full political rights to all State employees, and eleven planks on industrial reform referred

(19) From the official report of the 1910 Conference.
(20) J. T. Paul in the "Lyttelton Times" July 26, 1910.
(21) State employees were forbidden to stand for Parliament.
purely to the improvement of working-class conditions. Demands for a graduated income tax and a graduated absentee tax, were followed by planks advocating free, secular and compulsory education from primary school to the university, and also Uniform school books supplied free by the Government. Social reform included provisions for widows' and orphans' pensions, and State assistance in maternity.

The whole trend of the platform was towards greater interference by the state; it was not so narrowly a class programme as that of the Independent Political Labour League, but it was more than mildly socialistic.

The Constitution adopted by the Conference was of a temporary nature, dealing mainly with the formation of the Party. The various Councils represented at the Conference were requested to give immediate effect to the decision establishing the Party. Each Council was to convene and be represented at a meeting of representatives of all progressive bodies willing to accept the objective, Platform and Pledge of the Party. Trades unions and progressive bodies could also form branches in districts where there was no council. In all cases membership was open to any person "willing to accept, conform to and support the objective, Platform and Pledge of the New Zealand Labour Party as adopted by the Conference.

All accredited candidates for any elective office in the interests of the Party were to sign the following Pledge:

"I hereby pledge myself not to oppose the candidate selected by the recognised branch of the New Zealand Labour Party, and if selected, to do my utmost to carry out the principles embodied in the New Zealand Labour Party's Platform, and on all questions
affecting the Platform to vote as the majority of the Parliamentary party may decide at a duly constituted caucus meeting.

I further pledge myself not to retire from the contest without the consent of the branch of the New Zealand Labour Party controlling the election."

Any sitting member of Parliament joining the Party and signing allegiance to its Objective, Platform and Pledge before the next general election was to be duly selected and endorsed as the Party's candidate at that election.

Branches when established were to strive for uniformity of rules and constitution, and for the closest fraternal relationship between each other. It was proposed that the Executive should convene a conference to take place after the Trades and Labour Councils' Conference in 1911, if it was the wish of existing branches that such a conference should be held. Representation would be limited to a maximum of two delegates from any one branch, and voting power would be according to the card membership of the branches represented.

The continued existence and progress of the Party depended solely upon the capacity of its leaders to open up a plain path towards the desired goal.
PART II. The organisation of the West Coast Miners.

While the various disjointed events described in Part I were taking place, another phase of the Labour Movement was developing in Westland. The importance of this phase lies less in the events which composed it than in the men which it brought before the public eye. Their political opinions at the time identified the Labour Movement with revolutionary socialism, and the men made themselves conspicuous by the strikes they fomented and the socialistic propaganda they disseminated among their fellow-workers. The opportunity which their occupation provided for leadership gave at least three of them a grounding in political agitation which was ultimately to lift them to cabinet rank. They were more active than the average trade unionist, and at that time had little sympathy with the plans on foot for the formation of a political party. They had more faith in class warfare and believed that a properly conducted strike was more efficacious than labour legislation.

Prominent among their number was P. C. ("Paddy") Webb, a young man in his early twenties who had arrived from Victoria in 1907. "A square-built young chap, always late for work, rushing across the Denniston plateau, the backs of his trouser legs worn through at the bottom for a distance of about nine inches, and vigorously flapping as he hastened on his way .... An enthusiastic socialist, he preached his philosophy at all times. His capacity for argument appeared - and I believe was - unlimited. Certainly in a single-handed contest he was unbeatable. He had but recently read Spencer's philosophical works, and used to insist, with right forefinger prodding the palm of his left hand that 'we must proceed from the simple to the complex!' From mine manager to trucker,
Paddy argued with them all." (23)

The second of the trio was R. ("Fighting Bob") Semple, who won repute in the sphere of organisation. He possessed a capacity for detail which he never failed to use when planning a campaign or outlining a policy. Together with P. H. Hickey he formed branches of the Socialist Party in Greymouth, Runanga, Brunnerton, Reefton, and Blackball, which were responsible for broadcasting among the mine workers pamphlets and booklets dealing with various phases of the Labour Movement. The interest which these pamphlets fostered in a "bigger unionism" was to strengthen as the years went by, and produce valuable recruits for the united political party which finally took form in 1913.

A third notable agitator was H. T. Armstrong, who was prominent in the Wainui Miners' and Workers' Union, Auckland, before he came to the West Coast in 1909, where he continued to take a keen and able interest in the movement. He was always a member of the Federation Executive, and his voice was one that fashioned its policy in the direction of militant propaganda and action. He and P. H. Hickey were the only New Zealanders who took anything like a prominent part in the miners' activities.

Under the guidance of these men the prevailing dissatisfaction with the Arbitration Court was exploited in a campaign for closer organisation. Messrs. Semple and Hickey toured the Coast in the interests of a federation of all miners, and as a result of their efforts a Conference of West Coast Unions was held at Greymouth on Tuesday, August 4, 1908, where the New Zealand Federation of Miners was formed. All unions throughout New Zealand were circularised,

and a further conference was held in Wellington on October 19, where 11 unions were represented with a total membership of 4259. The chief officers elected were, President, R. Semple; Vice-president, H. T. Armstrong; Secretary, R. Manning; Treasurer, J. J. Scanlon.

The preamble to the objects of the Federation stated that since all men were born to be free and were therefore entitled to equal opportunity of benefit in dealing with the natural resources of the earth, it was "highly fitting and proper that men engaged in the hazardous and unhealthy occupations of mining, milling, smelting and reduction of ores, should receive a just compensation for their labours." Among several "lawful purposes" the first was:

"For the purpose of securing the return of members to Parliament pledged to support and carry out the policy of Labour. The objective decided upon is 'the socialisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange, and the method at present adopted towards that end is the return of members pledged to support a Labour group, which shall be quite distinct from any other political party. All members returned to be controlled by a Labour Representation Committee. The attitude towards any other political party shall be that of independence, unless the party or the government is engaged upon measures likely to affect the interests of the workers or the objective of the committee, when, of course, the measure will be supported or opposed accordingly."

But the faith of the Federation in political action was not so strong as this object indicated. The advisability of alliance with any political party was never seriously considered. "Political parties and politicians we frankly regarded as rather spineless or-
ganisations and individuals who were so amenable to pressure that the reforms desired could be wrung from them quite as easily as from some more definite Labour group." Members of the Federation felt that no political party was sufficiently worth while to warrant their surrendering any of their activities into its keeping; for them class warfare was by no means an intangible thing. This belief in militant action created a breach between the miners and the Trades Councils at a time when the latter were making a serious effort at unity. The Councils' delay in forming a federation prompted the miners at their Conference in 1909 to change the name of their organisation to the New Zealand Federation of Labour. Thus there were two campaigns for federation on foot, each trending to one goal, but using divergent methods.

The trades Councils' Federation in process of formation was a trade union body, consisting mainly of unions which had grown under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. The miners' federation, on the other hand, was hostile to trade unionism, and advocated class unionism, with the general strike and not a political party as its chief weapon. This fundamental difference of principles made genuine attempts at amalgamation by the Trades Councils' leaders fruitless. At the 1910 Conference of the Federation Mr. J. T. Paul, as a representative of the Trades Councils' Conference, urged unity between the two bodies: "You're not all right, if I may say so, and we're not all right, and if we are to make any progress at all we must enter this suggested conference mutually making up our minds to give away a good deal of what we both hold strong opinions on." He was supporting a letter from the Dominion

Executive of the Trades and Labour Councils asking that a deputation be received from the Federation to discuss the question of unity. The proposal was agreed to after long discussion, and the meeting took place in Christchurch. The Federation delegates were: Messrs. P. C. Webb, R. Semple, P. Hickey and J. Glover; the Trades and Labour Councils were represented by Messrs. J. A. Mc Cullough, J. Young, R. Whiting, and J. T. Paul.

The delegates came to no decision after discussing the matter for a day; but they parted on friendly terms. The Trades Councils could not agree to any departure from their annual capitation fee of 1d, which compared with the Federation's 4/-, was an absurd sum. The political sect of the Councils accused the Federation of a loose and vague method of generalising which would be repudiated by many socialists. "It affirms abstract socialism", said Mr. D. Mc Laren, "and makes an attack on all existing political parties, including the Labour Party, but its weakness is that it substitutes no method or machinery for creating a Socialist Party."

Amid such unsettled conditions the year 1910 drew to a close; but if it was a year of dissension in the Labour world it was also one of great significance. An awakening had taken place and a spirit of activity was welling up which had been practically dead a few years before. The Liberal Party which constituted the government of the country numbered among its members several sympathisers (26) with the Labour cause, but a long period of power was making them increasingly conservative in their outlook. They felt that the workers still owed them a debt for the legislation which their pre-

(26) Many of them had been "labouring" men themselves. For example: The Hon. J. A. Millar (ex-seaman), T. H. Davey (ex-compositor and journalist), C. Lawsonson (ex-storekeeper), H. G. Ell (ex-stereotyper J. Stallworthy (ex-compositor).
deceivers had passed in the nineties, and regarded independent ac-
tion on the part of Labour as ingratitude. They continued to hold
fast by the "Liberal-Labour alliance", which they still claimed to
be the strongest progressive force in the country; but their con-
tinued refusal to pledge themselves openly to a labour programme in-
dicates that their sympathies were theoretical rather than practi-
cal — they had lost touch with labour conditions. One of their
number, Mr. T. E. Taylor, did indeed give open support to the La-
bour Party, and by vigorous public speeches (notably in connection
with the Auckland by-election), helped considerably in the prelimi-
nary work of organisation. Up to the time of his death in 1911,
he was regarded by many people as the leader of the Party, although
he never became a member. His secession from the radical element
in the House proved, however, that the Liberal Party lacked the
solidarity it had shown ten years before, and this supplied a justi-
fication for a new party which the earlier Labour League had not
been able to claim.

Labour was not united, but it was stirring, and most "labourites"
were beginning to realise that some action was required. Their
points of difference lay in the method to be used. On the West
Coast and at Waihi R. Semple, H. T. Armstrong, P. H. Hickey, P. C.
Webb and W. E. Parry were teaching the need for completing indus-
trial organisation before political action was considered. In the
main centres of population paid union secretaries were advocating
the immediate formation of a political party to contest the 1911
general elections. They in turn had enemies in their own ranks
who objected to the compulsory provisions in the Constitution, and
others, purely unionist in their views but almost extinct in the
active councils of the movement, who still adhered to the mild socialism of Ruskin. Finally, there were the "revolutionary socialists", championed by E. J. Howard, who aimed at an ideal which was altogether theoretical and impractical. At last genuine interest had been aroused, and it remained for the future to produce leaders or a leader who could fashion the only road to success - unity.
CHAPTER V.

The Advent of Unity.

"This that they call the organising of Labour is, if well-understood, the problem of the whole future for all who will in future pretend to govern men." - Thomas Carlyle.

(1.) Progress in 1911 up to the General Election.

The first conference of the New Zealand Labour Party, as the organisers had hoped, was held in conjunction with the Trades and Labour Councils' Conference at Christchurch, April 19, 1911. Fourteen delegates were present, representing eight branches, from Auckland to Invercargill, and all were agreed that the progress made had been most satisfactory. The chief topic of discussion was the Constitution, clauses 5 and 7 of which had given rise to a good deal of adverse criticism among those who deprecated any kind of pledge. It was finally resolved to retain clause 5, insisting on adherence to the objective, platform and pledge of the party, but to delete clause 7, which provided for sitting members of Parliament to stand in the interests of the Party at the next elections without being selected by ballot. In view of the approaching election it was further resolved that the executive should take immediate steps to communicate with all branches of the Party and submit a scheme for the inauguration of an active campaign. Branches were to be circularised with copies of the Constitution, and questioned as to what electorate in their district could be contested. Organising work was left in the hands of a National Executive, located in Wellington until the next conference was held.
While the Conference marked a definite step forward, its deliberations showed clearly that there was still a great amount of work to be done before the Party could become a machine of practical importance. That work was of a type which could best be undertaken by one man, provided he was a leader with a forceful personality who thoroughly understood his mission. Luckily for the Labour Party, the times produced a man who possessed these qualifications. He was an American, Professor Walter Thomas Mills of Milwaukee, who landed in Auckland on June 4, 1911, to make a lecturing tour of the dominion at the invitation of the New Zealand Trades and Labour Councils. "A quiet, quaint little grey man," described as one of the world's greatest orators, he originally intended to limit his stay to a period of two months, giving a series of lectures on social and economic problems generally, and on the socialistic movement which had developed in his native state of Milwaukee. But the restlessness of the New Zealand Labour movement made the country so attractive to him that he accepted the position of general organiser offered him by the Trades and Labour Councils at the end of his term. By August 5 he had made sufficient observation to plan a "unity campaign" addressed to the "useful people" of New Zealand, which he hoped shortly to place before individuals and organisations. It contained a scheme for a political platform and regulations for an industrial federation. The idea was too late in the field, however, to affect the preparations under way for the general election, and the organiser's main task lapsed for a few months while he assisted in the election campaigns of Labour candidates in various parts of the country.
The 1911 Elections.

The general elections of December, 1911, came at an interesting period. The Liberal Party which had been in power since the defeat of Atkinson's government in 1890 was rapidly losing public support. The huge majority of 36 seats in a House of 76 bequeathed to Sir Joseph Ward by Seddon in 1906 had already dwindled to 16, and it was generally recognised that the real battle was to be between the Liberals and the new Reform Party headed by W. F. Massey. Labour now prided itself upon the possession of a definite political party; but the party was not all-embracing, and the dissension which had characterised the 1908 contest was still apparent, although to a less degree. Thirty-seven candidates variously styled as Labour, Independent, Liberal-Labour or Socialists contested between them 50 seats, polling on the first ballot an aggregate of 59,479 votes, an increase of more than 25,000 on the 1908 figures. Eight candidates reached the second ballot and four were elected: A. H. Hindmarsh (Wellington South), J. Robertson (Otaki), J. Payne (Grey Lynn) and W. A. Veitch (Wanganui). D. McLaren, Labour's sole member in the previous Parliament, lost his seat by a narrow margin to Dr. A. K. Newman (Reform).

A share of the credit for the greater public interest shown in Labour's cause must be given to Professor Mills, whose addresses on behalf of candidates in all parts of the country drew large audiences. But his devotion to immediate interests was a hindrance rather than a help to his wider scheme of unity, which suffered eclipse during the campaign. The scheme had not yet been broadcast, and the cohesion which its earlier introduction would have

(1) For full results of the elections see Appendix V.
given to electors and candidates was consequently lacking. A certain amount of diversity in the opinions of the Labour representatives elected reflected the absence of a single purpose among the electors who had given them power.

Mr. J. Payne (member for Grey Lynn), speaking shortly after the election, said: "Individual freedom of action is absolutely necessary when we consider that Mr. Veitch is the only Labour Party representative, that Mr. Robertson is a socialist member, that Mr. Hindmarsh is a Labour member with party leanings in a certain direction, and that I myself am a Labour member without party predilections of any kind, the welfare of the worker being my only consideration."

Mr. Payne did not divulge his reasons for calling Mr. Robertson a socialist, nor the direction followed by Mr. Hindmarsh's "party leanings", but his words bore an element of truth, for when Mr. Massey moved a "want of confidence" motion on February 20, 1912, Mr. Veitch supported Reform, while Messrs. Payne, Robertson and Hindmarsh voted with the Government. The division was not permanent, however, and when on July 5, 1912 Mr. Massey finally carried a no-confidence motion by 41 - 33, all four Labour members voted with the "noses". Some criticism was levelled at them because of the support Reformers had given them at the second ballot in the hope of their helping to put the Ward ministry out of office; but they stated that their actions were guided by the events as they arose and that they had supported the more democratic of the two

(2) The "Lyttelton Times": December 26, 1911.
(3) The defeat of the Liberal Government was effected through the turnover, for one reason or another, between February and July, of Messrs. E. N. Clark, J. G. Coates, J. A. Millar, V. H. Reed and T. W. Rhodes, who, though all elected as Liberals, now voted with Mr.
parties. The advent of a Massey cabinet finally achieved the solidarity of the Labour members, who regarded the Reform party as a dead end as far as Labour legislation was concerned.

(III) The Easter Conference, 1912, and its results.

As soon as Professor Mills had completed his unity scheme it was circulated among the labour organisations of the Dominion for their consideration. The decisions arrived at were voiced at a combined unity conference of the Political Labour Party, the Trades and Labour Councils and the Trades and Labour Councils Federation, held in Wellington in conjunction with the annual conferences of those bodies. As a result of the deliberations the scheme was adopted and a constitution promulgated for the new organisation, to be named "The United Labour Party of New Zealand."

The most prominent feature of the conference was the spirit of real unity and compromise which characterised its proceedings. Delegates included lay preachers, lawyers, writers, teachers, labourers and tradesmen, and the earnestness and harmony with which they discussed the propositions was a revelation to many who had expected something far different. Very debatable matter concerning the collectivist and socialistic character of the objective gave rise to but little discussion on its essential features, and many of the decisions were unanimously arrived at. The dominant figure was Professor Mills. "In quiet but impassioned tones, his voice never rising above the necessity of making himself audible to his hearers, he advocates his cause, and carries conviction by his logic and

(3) Cont. Massey.
(5) For example, Mr. W. A. Veitch M. P.
transparent love for the toiling sons of the earth." He had made a place in the United Labour Party for all "useful people", and the useful people at the Conference responded to his appeal with enthusiasm. The general opinion appeared to be that Labour had always made a great mistake in the past in having anything to do with any of the political parties. Having attained its majority, it was now prepared to launch out for itself.

The Party was both industrial and political, the industrial side being conducted by a dominion Executive, and District Councils which had power to determine local propaganda, local activity in promoting organisation, and all matters pertaining to the nomination of candidates and the writing of local platforms. The platform of the Party contained the usual planks laid down by the trades unions of the country with regard to purely industrial matters so far as these required political action, and, in addition, included four questions considered by the organiser to be "of most fundamental importance to the common welfare".

(1) Arbitration.

The Party declared for the settlement of industrial disputes on the lines of legally established agreements and awards by methods of conciliation and arbitration. It sought for an appeal to reason, not to force, and for the adjustment of industrial controversies without the interruption of business, the loss of wages or social confusion; but it reserved the strike as a means of last resort.

(2) Land.

It declared for a land policy giving absolute equality of opp-

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(6) D. G. Sullivan in the "Lyttelton Times" Labour Column, April 12, 1912.
ortunity to all citizens of New Zealand in the use of land for farming, business or residence purposes by making the ownership of the land impossible on the part of those who did not use it, and by requiring an annual payment for the surplus use values, by those who had the best localities, into the common fund in the shape of a tax. Those with poorer sites or none at all were to have equal benefit in such a fund.

(3) Monopoly.

The policy of the Labour Party, declared in its objective, was to continue experiments in publicly-owned enterprises "until the means of production, distribution and exchange, insofar as they constitute in private hands instruments of oppression and exploitation, shall be socially owned and operated without profit for the common good of all."

(4) Education.

In classing education as the most important of all public questions, the Party insisted that the school should be given the best equipment and the advantage of the world's best achievements. "The children should have more of outdoors and less of confinement, more of natural employment and less of compulsion, more definite relations to the real things which must be actually undertaken in after life, and less of study and the mere reciting of historical achievements, many of which were better never to have been achieved and the sooner forgotten the better for the race." (7)

Candidates for political office were to be nominated by one of two methods, in each case by a plebiscite. In the one instance those voting in the plebiscite were to be members of organisations

(7) "The United Labour Party - its Platform and Constitution considered by W. T. Mills, Organiser."
holding charters from the United Labour Party and in good standing. In the other alternative case those voting in the plebiscite would be only those, whether members of such an organisation or not, who should themselves have signed a requisition agreement. This agreement included a brief summary of the platform, circulated with the understanding that the candidates were not to be nominated unless a number equal to one quarter of those who had voted in the previous election for the same office had signed the requisition.

The President of the new party was the Hon. J. T. Paul, M. L. C., and members of the Dominion Executive Council were Messrs. E. Tregear, J. Mc Cullough, G. R. Whiting, W. A. Veitch M. P., J. Robertson M. P. and D. Mc Laren. Their method of work depended for its success on an appeal to the public spirit of the people as a whole.

"No secret pledges, no back-door methods, no petty bargainings will have any share in our organisation." By public meetings, literature and personal canvass they aimed to present and explain the Party's proposals until they were understood and adopted by popular majorities. The scheme, therefore, was not one which would bear fruit after a few months' trial. It required years of steady organisation, and by the end of 1912 only the seed bed of that organisation had been made. The progress made during the year was due in great part to Mr. G. Foulds, a well-known figure in the dominion, who joined the Party and toured the country speaking in its interests. His public addresses were well-attended, and in many places the workers were keen to remain behind after his talk and discuss matters more fully with him.

(8) An ex-member of the Ward Cabinet who had lost his seat to a Labour man, J. Payne, in 1911.
(9) The "Lyttelton Times" November 12, 1912.

The year 1912 was a notable one for the New Zealand Federation of Labour because of its participation in the Wellington Tramways strike in the early part of the year, and in the great Waihi strike, lasting over the winter months. It was a trial of strength for militantism, and when the latter strike failed and 69 members of the Waihi Workers' Union were imprisoned Federation officials realised that their organisation was in need of repair. Their grievance was that bogus unions had been formed during the strike, and the Labour Department utilised to assist the employers in destroying Labour solidarity. Their remedy consisted in a complete re-organisation of the industrial forces of Labour, involving a stricter set of rules regulating membership. Accordingly, it was decided by the Executive, at a meeting held on November 24, 1912, that a conference of representatives of all unions in the dominion should be called to consider "the grave position which existed in the Labour movement". The date was fixed for January 21, 1913, and circulars were despatched periodically to the unions, urging them to join a vigorous campaign which would "end the power of a party frankly hostile to Labour".

The publicity given to the proposed conference during the period of preparation was enhanced by the attitude of the United Labour Party, which was openly hostile to this move of its rival organisation. It could see no reason for another unity conference other than an intent purpose on the part of the Federation to keep the ranks of Labour divided. But the whole atmosphere was changed when, after some progress had been made at the Conference, a reso-

olution, moved by Mr. H. Hunter of Christchurch was passed, inviting the United Labour Party to send two representatives. From being purely industrial in character the Conference broadened its scope to include politics, and the United Labour Party sent Professor Mills to advocate its cause. The advent of Mills created a good deal of disturbance, for he was regarded by the Federation as reactionary of the most dangerous type. His subsequent actions, however, typified the general desire to terminate the seemingly endless wrangling in the movement. He spared no effort to arrive at a mutually satisfactory basis of unity, and when the Conference concluded did his utmost to further the decisions arrived at. The deliberations were again remarkable for their amicable tone, a feature due largely to the knowledge and tact of the chairman, the Hon. John Rigg, whose quiet words of advice had a magical effect when the atmosphere became heated.

The decision of the conference to establish a united industrial organisation and a united political party ended the feud which had existed in the Labour movement since 1906. Political opinion was voiced in the following motion, submitted by Mr. R. S. Ross:

"Recognising that political action is necessary and inevitable in the working-class movement, we agree to the formation of a political party for the enacting of legislation to better the condition of the working-class and ultimately to achieve its economic emancipation."

The motion "was carried with much applause. "The delegates, to the number of over 100, rose and cheered and cheered again .... It did one good to see Mills, Webb and Semple shaking hands."

(11) From the Minutes of the Conference.
In order to give effect to the decisions of the Conference it was agreed that a special committee be set up to outline a constitution based on the decisions arrived at and submit it to the Conference; and that after the Conference rose the committee work out a constitution and rules to be submitted to a combined conference to be held at some future date. The election of a committee of 12 resulted in the following delegates being chosen: Messrs. R. Simple, W. E. Parry, P. Fraser and P. C. Webb (four members of the Cabinet 1936), R. S. Ross, H. Hunter, W. T. Young, W. Belcher, H. E. Holland, W. T. Mills, E. Tregear and P. H. Hickey. It came as a great surprise to all that in regard to the really essential things for which all were struggling there was substantial agreement upon method as well as aims. They held an all-day sitting and arrived at unanimous conclusions for the industrial and political unity of the working class.

Mr. Webb, on behalf of the committee, submitted its reports to the Conference. The report on political organisation read as follows:-

"That this Conference recommends the following outline as indicating the lines along which a constitution should be drawn up by the sub-committee set up to draft a constitution to be considered, amended if necessary, and adopted by the joint congress of unions to be held in Wellington, commencing on the first Tuesday in July, 1935. Your committee also recommends that the proposed conference to be held in July shall forthwith inaugurate the new body as a going concern."

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(13) From the Minutes of the Conference.
The socialisation of the collectively-used means of production, distribution and exchange.

**COMPOSITION.**

The party shall consist of unions, local branches and individual members prepared to endorse the foregoing and pledge their support. This party shall be distinct from any other party or parties, and its attitude towards that of any other party or parties shall be that of that of independence."

The report further stated that the sub-committee be instructed to draft a declaration of principles and prepare a platform which would include the usual legislative proposals of organised labour in the country. In regard to existent parties it was recommended that the respective executives of the New Zealand Federation of Labour, the United Labour Party and the Socialist Party be invited, while not in any way abating their own activities, to utilise their existing machinery and organisers to push forward the work of organisation on the lines agreed upon at the Conference.

The proposals of the Committee were greeted favourably by the delegates, who adopted them without amendment, and the Committee was thus empowered to make arrangements for the Unity Congress in July. No effort appears to have been spared to make the organisation as thorough as time and circumstances would allow. The period between January and July was marked by agitation in which meetings...

(14) From the Official Report of the Conference.
were held all over the country, pamphlets circulated to unions and individuals, and public appeals printed in the columns of sympathetic newspapers. P. H. Hickey, secretary of the Committee, states that they not only received thousands of communications, but sent out 50,000 bulletins and over 6,000 letters and circulars. "Day after day we sat and drafted, amended, and rejected rules, platforms, constitutions and declaration of principles. Discussion at times seemed endless." The draft constitution was prepared in good time and distributed, together with a circular calling on the workers to support the earnest efforts of earnest men. The organisers firmly believed that their proposals would be the clarion call which would rally Labour together in glorious solidarity, and lead ultimately to complete economic emancipation. Certainly they created a great deal of interest and enthusiasm, and by the time preparations were completed had received advice from 247 organisations intimating that they would be represented at the Congress.

(V.) The Unity Congress 1913 - its significance for the future.

When the Unity Congress assembled in Wellington on July 1, 391 delegates were present, representing 61,000 organised workers. The Congress lasted ten days, and from it issued two duly constituted labour organisations - the United Federation of Labour and the Social Democrat Party. It cannot be recorded, however, that the spirit of harmony which had prevailed in the two previous unity conferences dominated the third and most important one. The Congress

(15) "The number of meetings held in support of unity must have been one thousand at the very least" - P. H. Hickey, op. cit. p.69.
(16) From the Minutes of the Conference.
(18) The "Lyttelton Times" February 8, 1913.
had not been long in session before it was realised that representatives of the United Labour Party, were not prepared to accept the Unity Committee's recommendations. Three of the Party's leaders, Messrs. G. Fowlds, D. McLaren and A. Withy respectfully withdrew from the Congress which they considered too revolutionary in tone for them to support. At the conclusion of the proceedings they endeavoured to reorganise the United Labour Party as a separate entity; but they were not at their full strength; the organising genius of Professor Mills had been lost to them in favour of the Social Democrat Party, and the future was to prove that from July 1913 the real Labour element in politics consisted in the men who had first organised the New Zealand Federation of Labour in 1909.

The name 'Social Democrat' was given to the party "in recognition of the bond which holds civilised people together and of the fact that every man and woman has a right to a voice in the matter of government." Suggestions that the name should be the New Zealand Labour Party were rejected on the grounds that the name Labour Party had never ruled or governed, but indicated the party of the slaves. The principles of the Party, expressed in 18 clauses which bear the imprint of Professor Mills's capacity for logical thinking, affirmed the right of the worker to organise and abolish industrial exploitation forever. Organisation was vested in a National Executive and District Councils, and supreme authority over all matters given to the Annual Conference, to meet in July of each year.

The Platform was substantially the same as that adopted by the

(19) From the Official Report of the Congress.
Labour Party of 1910, with the addition of a few notable points.

Plank 5 advocated the right of unions to register or not to register without the loss of legal standing, and, evidently in view of the Waihi strike, protection against bogus competing organisations of Labour. Plank 8 claimed direct representation of the workers on any governing boards in departments of the Public Service and of local government authorities. The last plank (12) concerning defence, read as follows: "The repeal of the present inadequate Defence Act, and the creation of a citizen army on a volunteer basis, democratically organised with standard wages while on duty, which shall not be used under any circumstances in time of industrial disputes, together with practical measures for the promotion of peace."

In moving the clause Professor Mills stated that it was for the purpose of declaring definitely that Labour was in favour of any necessary defensive organ for use against foreign foes, but not for purposes of creating an army to be used to defend exploiters against the organised activities of the industrial forces of their own country. Evidently in the minds of Mills and the larger part of his followers the compulsory system of defence was merely a governmental means of forcing conditions on the workers which they would not otherwise tolerate. The issue was debated at great length, and several members spoke in favour of compulsory training; but on the vote the clause was passed as it stood by the overwhelming majority of 198 votes to 44.

Such were the conditions in which the present New Zealand Labour Party was born. Men who in the past had fought each other at a distance, with a bitterness amounting almost to hatred, were brought into close personal contact and made to realise that they were seek-
ing a common ideal. Those members of the United Labour Party who withdrew from the Conference had given the impression, by their speeches and actions, that they had not fully realised the standpoint of the working classes; and even they left the Congress in the belief that a saner Labour movement would emerge from it. Labour's unity, although only partially successful, dissolved many doubts and misunderstandings, and the political atmosphere was all the clearer for their disappearance.

(20) Statement by Mr. G. Foulds after the Congress.
The impartial observer, when he is surveying the condition of New Zealand between 1880 and 1913, cannot but question the wisdom or the necessity of forming a Labour Party in a country which was comparatively new, thinly populated, and had never known that degree of industrial strife which characterised the older states of Europe. In order to make the position clearer, therefore, it is necessary to outline the economic developments which combined with the instinctive desire of Labour to exercise its voice in politics regardless of circumstances: the explanation is both economic and political, but at bottom psychological.

The germ of the unrest culminating in the events of 1890 is to be found in the pernicious system of land tenures which commenced when the government waived its right of pre-emption over native lands in 1862. The provinces, eager for wealth, threw large tracts of land on the market, and these, instead of being broken into small holdings, were seized by wealthy squatters. The dangers of the system were made apparent during the period of assisted immigration in the seventies, when poorer colonists who had been attracted by the prospect of owning land were compelled to work for a wage. The influx of population caused an immediate rise in prices which soon put the land beyond the reach of the majority. "The speculation was intoxicating and many smaller men raised money on mortgage and bought at high prices in the hope of selling at an early profit. The market was closed absolutely to the genuine small settler, and
there was a rapid aggregation of land in the hands of the few. (1)

Further, the manufacturing industries, which Vogel had planned to go hand in hand with the land settlement scheme, could not generally escape from their precarious infancy while a non-protective tariff continued. Those industries in existence depended on the phenomenal activity of the period, and had no solid foundation on which to weather a depression.

The slump which began in New Zealand in 1879 was caused by the low prices of wool and other products, part of a world-wide fall in prices lasting from 1873 - 1893. It found the country quite unprepared to meet such a contingency. During the seventies economic progress had been marked by a general improvement in farming methods, the opening up of the countryside by public works, the organisation of transport, commerce, banking and secondary industries, and, above all, an increase of numbers and an improvement of human welfare. With the depression, underlying flaws in the system came to the surface. The collapse of the expenditure of borrowed money on public works put an end to the existence of many local industries. The failure of local enterprise in turn ruined the hopes of many immigrants who were town dwellers and had expected employment in infant industries. The trade unionists and radicals among their number introduced the "typical labour reaction" to the manufacturing industry and were largely responsible for the trend of political development in the ensuing generation.

But the urban workers could not have placed the Ballance govern-

(1) G. H. Scholfield: "New Zealand in Evolution" page 163.
(2) J. B. Condliffe: "Short History of New Zealand" page 143.
ment in power without the alliance of the small farmers, who were more than eager to destroy the system of land tenures. Reeves has stated the case clearly:

"Whilst the country was just fitted for working farmers, and lying empty and waiting for their hands, men in hundreds and thousands, farmers' sons and country labourers, were growing up and working on other men's land, albeit they had the skill, knowledge and strength to manage holdings of their own. The cry for land in New Zealand in 1890 was no mere urban sentimentalism ...... In the main it was a genuine hunger for land, coming from the landless among the rural population. Distress in the towns strengthened it, and an exodus to Australia in the years 1886-91 pointed the moral. A colony, when its population is deserting it, is like a child that shrinks instead of growing."

Accordingly, in 1890 the city worker had the support of the small farmer. It is worthy of note, however, that once the latter had obtained land his attitude changed, and thence forward he has remained convinced that an alliance with Labour would do him more harm than good.

Another economic fact which helped to guide political activity prior to 1890 was the distribution of population. The Maori troubles and the looking up of rich North Island lands until the late eighties diverted the flow of settlement to the South Island, which as a consequence received the lion's share in Vogel's public works scheme. The increase thus given to the population of the southern cities, particularly Dunedin, explains their dominance in labour movements at the time. Wherever numbers were greatest and indust-

(5) State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand, vol. 1. p.270:
ries were struggling to gain a foothold there were the best opportunities offered for radicals to make their voices heard. Hence Dunedin and Christchurch continued to be Labour's strong arm until well on in the twentieth century.

It will be seen, therefore, that three economic factors explain to a great degree the turn taken by politics in 1890 - the locking up of the land, the failure of urban industries to gain a foothold and the uneven distribution of population. This combination produced temporary stress which in the succeeding decade was relieved less by political regulation than by a widening basis of industry, the opening up of new lands, and more favourable external markets. The breaking down of the land monopoly so obnoxious to the small farmers was due mainly to the efforts of John Mackenzie on their behalf. As Minister for Lands he had by 1894 procured the following legislative remedies:

A graduated land tax designed to burst up large estates; a well-considered tenurial system substituting the lease in perpetuity for the sale of Crown lands; the use of State power to purchase large estates and cut them up for closer settlement; and an Advances to Settlers Act which provided for small farmers to secure cheap credit in order to develop their farms.

The entry of the small farmer into his rights coincided with a general return to prosperity which alone made the legislative measures of the nineties possible. From 1895 prices were rising, again as part of a world-wide movement caused by the pressure of population in industrial countries. An increasing demand for animal products and foodstuffs caused the price level of New Zealand's

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staple products to rise more quickly than the average. The higher prices meant better returns for the colony's exports, and the farmer was able to meet his liabilities more easily and spend more money on improved methods. The development of the frozen meat industry from 1882 was a primary cause of the general increase in wealth, and by bringing overseas markets relatively close, it was largely responsible for rescuing the country from an almost hopeless position. Towards the end of the century, also, dairying began to occupy a prominent position, and led to a rapid increase in the population of the North Island, where the best pasture lands were situated. The influx of population together with a higher protective tariff enabled local urban industries also to be sure of their position for the first time, and altogether a general feeling of optimism prevailed. This return of economic prosperity explains, quite as much as the legislation of the period, why Labour remained comparatively inactive in the decade 1895 - 1906.

The unrest which developed between 1906 and 1912 had a specific cause in the rising cost of living, which the average worker was unable to comprehend. Its causes, many and varied, were investigated by a Commission appointed for the purpose in 1912.

Naturally, the rise was a corollary of the increasing prosperity of the time. The increased supply of money and the increased velocity of its circulation apparently outstripped the increase in the volume of goods and services exchanged against them. The diminishing natural fertility of the soil increased the cost of production of farm products, and rural depopulation abroad, reducing the export of foodstuffs from countries such as the United States, increased the demand for foodstuffs produced in New Zealand Local
combinations, monopolies and trusts raised prices directly to the consumer, and tended also to discourage initiative and self-reliance. Other general causes were, a relatively higher increase in the cost of distribution, national waste involved in the devotion of an increasing proportion of wealth to non-productive uses, the operation of productive tariffs and trusts abroad in raising the cost of imported articles, and failure to attain that national efficiency which can be secured only by the operation of a well-considered and properly co-ordinated scheme of education.

Bound up with general causes were the particular. The labour legislation had encouraged, on the one hand, the formation of workers' Unions, whose operation, by securing higher wages and better conditions, added to the cost of production except where increased efficiency followed. On the other hand it was met by combinations of masters and employers bent on meeting the increased cost of production by increased prices; but the Commission agreed that prices generally were not arbitrarily inflated by the legislation.

Population movements showed a distinct tendency on the part of the people to shift from rural districts to the urban. The unsuitable nature of education and the lower standard of life in the country, the increasing demand for labour and higher rates of real wages in the towns, were primary causes of this tendency. Its chief result, a most important one, was the increase of house and land rents in the towns.

(7) Commission's report, page 86.
(8) Report, page 84.
(9) Report, page 49. In relation to the influence of the gold supply the Commission stated: "If we take into account the considerable rise in rent, it is therefore clear that the cost of living in New Zealand has risen much more than the increase in the supplies
The clue to much of the labour agitation lies in the pressure of high rents, which compelled the workers to persist in their demands for higher wages. As early as 1904 Mr. E. Tregear, as Secretary of Labour, had drawn attention to this fact in a memorandum to the Prime Minister:

"There is a third hand in the game besides the employer and the employee, and it is the third man, the non-producing ground landlord of the city and suburban property - who alone will rise a winner in the end. The chief devourer of the wages of the worker and of the profits of the employer is excessive rent." (10)

It was round this problem that warfare over the Arbitration Court centred. The provision in the Act forbidding the appearance of lawyers in the hearing of cases before the conciliation boards led to the entry of a new figure in the labour world - the professional union secretary. This unique specimen developed into "the most bitter and withal ignorant pleader", and often urged his union to pursue unreasonable demands so that he could collect the fees of an advocate. Such demands the Court naturally refused to concede, and the workers' loyalty to it waned as soon as its decisions ceased to give them the material benefits to which they had become accustomed. (11)

The inability of the workers to understand the causes of the increased cost of living blinded them to the fact that they were really sharing substantially in the general prosperity. A later judge of the Court has argued this point very clearly:

(9) Cont. of gold and of money generally would explain. But the country has been more than compensated; for while the goods we export have risen about 40%, the goods we import have risen only some 3 or 4%, and have therefore come into the Dominion in a rapidly increasing volume." (10) Scholfield: "New Zealand in Evolution" p.231. (11) Scholfield: "New Zealand in Evolution" p.233.
"Admitting that the award rates did not in every case keep pace with the rising cost of living, there were many factors beneficially affecting the real earnings of the workers. Employment was plentiful, and there was a great diminution of the casualness of employment. The award rates were true minima, and very many workers received substantially higher wages ... Hours of work were shortened and conditions of employment were improved. Unskilled and semi-skilled workers were often able to command skilled workers' rates of pay ... When we make proper allowance for these factors we cannot say that the real earnings of the average worker did not keep pace fairly well with the increased cost of living during the period of rising prices except, possibly, for a few months at the peak of prices."

In his struggle to keep the wage rate commensurate with the cost of living the worker was fighting a losing battle; but this struggle was both the foundation and the explanation of a broader movement whose attack was not so much upon the Arbitration Court as upon the whole capitalist system. Discontent with the Court provided the opportunity for militant workers to emulate the example of Labour in other countries, although conditions in those countries were far different. What influenced Labour in its actions as much as the apparent stagnation of wage awards was the introduction of doctrinaire revolutionary theories into its ranks. Obviously the direct actionists depended a great deal in their arguments on the example of other countries; and their followers, blinded to economic truths, were led to believe that they were not so well off as they should be

(12) F. V. Frazer, Judge: "Pronouncements of the Court re Cost of Living and General Order Amending Awards" May, 1932. p.11.
under a truly democratic system. This at once explains the attitude of the 'Red' Federation, who wanted a reversal of the capitalist system, and of the more moderate Labour Party, which aimed primarily at defending the privilege of skilled craft workers. The economic forces operating behind the labour movement were not strong enough to warrant the formation of a third party as an immediate necessity. But they were sufficient to make the worker believe that unless he began to organise with his eye turned to the future, conservative politics would in the long run rob him of all that had been won in the glorious nineties.
APPENDIX 1.

Labour laws Prior to 1890.

From

G. S. Maloney's "History of the Ballance Ministry".

At a very early stage of the economic history of New Zealand legislation, enactments were designed for the protection of wage earners and the amelioration of social conditions. A Master and Apprentice Act of 1855 had regulated the indenture of apprentices and had given protection to them under a clause whereby an employer might be fined for ill-treating them. A section of the Offences against the Person Act of 1867 gave a similar measure of protection to apprentices and servants.

In 1873 the first of the so-called Factory Acts was passed. Under the name of the Employment of Females Act, female workers were to work not more than eight hours a day, and only between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. They were also to receive a half holiday on Saturday. A clause very briefly required that "every workroom shall be properly ventilated". The appointment of inspectors was also provided for. An amending Act of 1874 made the starting time one hour earlier; and further amending Act of the following year brought boys under the jurisdiction of the Act. No person under ten years of age could be employed at all. No person under 16 was to work for more than four and a half hours without a rest, nor for more than a half day at a time except with the alternative of one full day in every two. In 1881 the previous Acts were consolidated and slight changes made. The age at which one could start factory work was raised to 12 years; no female was to work between 6 p.m. and
8 a.m. or for more than eight hours a day; and no person was to remain in the workroom during mealtimes. Proper ventilation was again stipulated.

In 1882 protection was afforded to workers among machinery by the Inspection of Machinery Act. Provision for compensation in case of accidents was made by the Employers' Liability Act of the same year.

Two years later, workmen's wages received the consideration of Parliament. Under the Workmen's Wages Act, workmen were given the right to claim money from the employer of his own employer if the latter could not pay him; and any wages outstanding to workmen were to be a first charge upon any moneys received by the employer. Even the welfare of seamen had received the attention of Parliament as early as 1877 under the Shipping and Seamen Act. The right of workers to form a trade union had also been recognised as early as 1878, when a Trade Union Act was passed.
APPENDIX II.

Chronological Summary of the Chief Labour Legislation

passed during the period 1891 - 1906.

1891 Truck Act.

This Act provided that all wages should be paid in cash, or by cheque if agreed to by the worker, at a maximum of monthly intervals. It was directed against requiring the taking out of wages in goods, a practice hitherto frequently adopted by employers.

Employers' Liability Amendment.

This amendment somewhat extended the general definition of "workman" to whom the 1892 Act was to apply, and specifically included seamen. It also empowered the Court in which an action for damages was being heard to increase the maximum compensation to more than the equivalent of three years' wages, but with a maximum of £500.

Factories Act.

This, the first Factories Act, provided for registration and inspection of factories, and for ventilation and general cleanliness in factories. It also stipulated that females and boys under 16 should not work more than 48 hours per week.

1892 Shops and Shop Assistants' Act.

A weekly half-holiday for each assistant was provided for; but there was to be no closing of shops and no half-holiday if there was a public holiday in the same week.

Contractors' and Workmen's Liens Act.

This Act gives the right to a worker, a contractor and sub-
contractor to liens of the property of the principal on which the work might be done. The worker's lien is limited to 30 days' wages. He is also given the right, when work is done upon a chattel, to have the chattel sold in order to pay his wages.

Servants' Registry Offices Act.

All registry office keepers were required by the measure to register, and registration was to be granted only to persons of good character; maximum fees were provided for.

1893 Workmen's Wages Act.

This Act provides that manual workers shall be paid weekly.

State Farm.

The Levin State Farm was established in this year to provide for the unemployed, who were then numerous. Many of them were thus assisted and trained to farm employment.

1894 Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act.

See Appendix III.

Shops and Shop Assistants' Act Amendment.

All shops in towns except in six trades were to close on one half-day each week, the day to be fixed by local authority. Shorter working hours for women and boys were also introduced (52 per week).

1895 Servants' Registry Offices Act.

Administration was placed in the hands of Inspectors of Factories.

Shops and Shop Assistants' Amendment.

The provision enabled shopkeepers to fix closing hours; it
was, however, limited to cities and boroughs and to Saturdays between 9 and 10 p.m.; a three-fifths majority was required.

### 1899 Wages Protection Act.

Premiums for accident insurance policies were not to be deducted from wages.

### Employment of Boys and Girls without payment prevention Act.

A separate Act, later incorporated in the Factories Act, providing a minimum of 5/- per week for boys and 4/- for girls.

### 1900 Workers' Compensation Act.

This was the first Act in New Zealand to recognise and establish the principle of compensation for industrial accidents generally, as distinguished from the liability of employers for negligence, provided in the Employers' Liability Acts from 1882 onwards. An amendment in 1902 extended the Act to agricultural workers and placed New Zealand ahead of other countries in this respect.

### 1901 Factories Act Amendment.

Hours of labour were again reduced: 48 hours per week, with 9½ per day, was extended to all males except in certain trades, and females and boys were restricted to 48 hours per week and 8½ per day, the daily hours to be worked between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. One whole holiday (Labour Day) was added.

### 1905 Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Amendment.

Strikes and lockouts of workers and employers bound by awards and industrial agreements were specifically made illegal. (Although apparently intended in the original Act, the provision was not
Workers' Dwellings Act.

The first Workers' Dwellings Act enabled the Government itself to acquire or set apart land and build workers' dwellings thereon. Workers were eligible if their earnings did not exceed £156 per annum. (increased to £200 in 1906.)
APPENDIX III.

Notes on the Industrial Conciliation and
Arbitration Act.

(From "The Labour Laws of New Zealand" - 4th Edition 1905.)

General Principle:

Societies consisting of two or more employers, or of seven or
more workers, may be registered and become subject to the provision
of the Act under the title of "Industrial union". Any such union
may bring a trade dispute before the Board of Conciliation, which
Board may proceed to investigate the dispute, or, on requirement
of one of the parties, may refer the case direct to the Arbitration
Court. If the dispute is left to the Board, after taking evidence
etc., the Board may make a recommendation, which, if accepted by
the parties, is put into the form of an industrial agreement and
has the force of law. If the Board's recommendation is ignored
for a month it automatically becomes law, but if rejected the dis-
pute is carried to the Court of Arbitration. This Court, consist-
ing of a President, who is a Judge of the Supreme Court, and two
other members - one elected by the employers' unions, the other by
the workers' unions - has wide powers, and against its decisions
there is no appeal. Inspectors of Factories are Inspectors of
Awards under the Arbitration Act.

The need for continuous amendment was thrust upon the Legisla-
ture through the principle of industrial arbitration of a judicial
character being entirely unique and without statutory precedent.
Law on the subject had to be kept flexible to meet the continual
necessities of change and growth. The later amendments of the Act were mostly in the direction of giving wider notice of Court sittings, of arranging for permits being given at lower rates than the minimum wage mentioned in the award, and of greater strictness in matters threatening to bring about a strike or lockout.

Chronology, 1894 - 1905.

1894 August 31 : Original Act passed.
1895 October 18 : Amendment to original Act passed.
1896 October 17 : Amendment to original Act passed.
1898 November 5 : Amendment to original Act passed.
1900 October 20 : An Act was passed consolidating all previous Acts, which were re-enacted with amendments.
1901 : Amendment passed.
1903 : The Arbitration Court Emergency Act passed.
1904 : Amendment Act.
1905 : The "Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Acts Compilation Act 1905".
APPENDIX XV.

Platform of the Political Labour Party, as adopted by the

Immediate Nationalisation of Monopolies.

(a) The establishment of a State Ferry Service and State Collieries.
(b) The establishment of Competitive State Factories.

Land Reform.

(a) No further sale of Crown Lands.
(b) Leasehold tenure, with the right of renewal and periodical re-
  valuation every 21 years, except for heavy bush and swamp
  lands.
(c) Tenants' absolute right to their improvements.
(d) Limitation of area, based on value, to ensure an equitable
  distribution of our lands.
(e) Resumption of Native and other lands for closer settlement on
  renewable lease.
(f) An increment tax on all land sales to secure to the State all
  socially created values.
(g) The retention and direct operation by the State of sufficient
  land to meet the demands of the National Food Supply.
(h) An increased graduated Land Tax.

Currency Reform.

(a) The establishment of a State Bank having the sole right of
  note issue.
(b) The cessation of public borrowing, except for the redemption
  of loans and the completion of works already authorised by
  Parliament.
Electoral Reform.
(a) Abolition of the Legislative Council.
(b) Proportional representation on a single transferable vote.
(c) Initiative and Referendum.
(d) Parliamentary franchise to apply to the election of all local bodies.

Industrial Reform.
(a) A Right to work Bill.
(b) Insurance against unemployment.
(c) The extension of State Labour Agencies and the abolition of private registry offices.
(d) A maximum eight hour day and a six day week, with a gradual reduction to a 40 hour week.
(e) Statutory preference of employment to unionists.
(f) Equal pay for equal work for male and female workers.
(g) An amended Workers' Accommodation Act.
(h) An amended Workers' Compensation Act.
(i) An amended Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act.
(j) A legislative minimum wage.

Taxation Reform.
(a) A graduated income tax based on scientific principles, with a super-tax on unearned incomes.
(b) A graduated absentee tax.

Education Reform.
(a) The maintenance of a free, secular and compulsory State Education system, from primary school to university.
(b) Uniform school books, printed by the Government and supplied free of cost.

Social Reform.
(a) Pensions for widows and orphans, and State assistance in maternity.
(b) The right of the people to restrict or abolish the liquor traffic by a bare majority vote at local and Dominion option polls.
APPENDIX V.

Votes Cast for Labour in the 1911 Elections.


Otaki: second ballot, J. Robertson (Labour) 3517, W. H. Field (Liberal) 2496.

Wellington South: second ballot, A. H. Hindmarsh (Labour) 3999, R. A. Wright (Reform) 3344.

Wanganui: W. A. Veitch (Labour) 4115, J. T. Hogan (Liberal) 2959.

Wellington East: second ballot, Dr. A. K. Newman (Reform) 3730, D. McLaren (Labour) 3715, F. C. Bolton (Labour) also stood for this seat and secured 1242 votes in the first ballot.

Chinamari: second ballot, H. Poland (Liberal) 3341, P. H. Hickey (Federation candidate) 2134.

Wellington Suburbs: second ballot, W. H. Bell (Reform) 3060, F. T. Moore (Labour) 2661.

Avon: second ballot, J. McCombs (Indep. Lib.) 3563, G. W. Russell (Liberal) 3354. For this seat R. Smith (Labour) secured 793 in the first ballot.

Among the Labour candidates who made a first appearance at this election were M. J. Savage, now Prime Minister, standing as a socialist, who polled 1800 in a field of four at Auckland Central, and P. C. Webb (Federation Candidate), now Minister for Mines, who lost in a straight out fight at Grey to the Speaker, Sir A. Guinness.

(1) On the death of Sir A. Guinness in 1913, Mr. Webb, after a strenuous campaign, won the Grey seat, and retained it until his incarceration for his pacifist attitude during the War.
and Railways, this time stood for Riccarton, but was eliminated in the first ballot with 1518 votes. E. J. Howard (Socialist), now Chairman of Committees, was bottom at Christchurch South with 540 votes, H. G. Ell (Liberal) 3690, defeating G. R. Whiting (Labour) 3059 for this seat. J. W. Munro, standing on this occasion as a socialist, was bottom at Dunedin West with 778 votes, the other two candidates polling nearly 4,000 apiece.

Other Labour candidates were A. Withy, who polled 2,490 votes for Auckland East, being defeated by A. M. Myers with 4,485; H. T Mill with 2,856 for Napier, J. Reardon, second for Hutt with 1,540 votes out of a total of nearly 7,000; R. J. Carey, bottom of the poll for Wellington North with 1,185; F. F. Munro (Indep. Lab.) 2,993 for Buller as against J. Colvin’s 3,143; D. McPherson, bottom for Dunedin Central with 1,452 out of a total of 8,075; J. E. Hanus, 3,426 beaten by T. K. Sidey, 4171 for Dunedin South; W. A. Morris who polled 152 votes at Avarua; M. J. Mack (Parnell) wit 1,537 votes; G. S. Clapham 940 and E. Lane 401 votes for Hawkes Bay; W. T. Young 1,372 and F. Freeman (Socialist) 180 for Wellington Central; H. Hunter, 2,356 and F. R. Cooke (Socialist) 418 votes for Christchurch East; J. Reader, 1,636 votes for Timaru; A. P. Mc Carthy (Chalmers) 578 votes; W. J. Paul (Waitaki) 1,572 votes; H. Farrant (Invercargill) 2,043 votes, and J. E. Petherick (Democrat), 727 votes for Christchurch North.