

the disappearance of liberty itself. Our housing troubles began with the early Housing Acts as long as seventy years ago. Those Acts have led to some hundreds of amending Acts, every one of them purporting to "house the working classes." Restrictions upon building by legislation lead easily and naturally to restrictions upon building labour by trade unions. The next step, even easier—for every slippery slope becomes easier the further we descend—is the formation of trade rings. Having a market limited by legislation and a capacity limited by union restrictions, it becomes almost a necessity for the suppliers of materials to make arrangements for the regulation and limitation of their contributions to the scheme. All this failing to act, we now have joint councils and are threatened with an extension of the idea of joint responsibility. Responsibility is perhaps hardly the word, for none of these monopolists are in practice responsible to the rest of us who want the houses. The result of it all is a dwindling industry with an ever-growing shortage. This condition of affairs will remain as long as the public rests under the impression that houses can be built with votes, and forgets that the attempts at Socialism which have actually been made in our own time have inevitably failed to produce the goods.