

# THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

## Communist Successes in Scottish Miners' Union.

By J. K. Campbell (London).

The recent results of the elections in the Fife mining area in Scotland illustrate the growing influence of the Communist Party over the Scottish miners. Seven posts were open for election, two permanent officials (or agents) and five representatives from the Fife miner's Union to the Scottish Miners' Executive. The results of a series of ballot votes, in which the majority of the workers participated, show that two Communists have been elected to the permanent officials' posts and four Communists and one Left-winger to the post of Fife representatives on the Scottish Executive.

This result is due to a very considerable extent to the excellent work performed by the Party in this area during the miners' lockout, when the actual leadership of the workers in the struggle was in the hands of the Communist Party and sympathetic left-wing workers, the right-wingers cutting no figure in the struggle at all.

The voting for those posts commenced last June, and during the close of the first vote the right-wing launched their usual attacks on the Communists for fraction work and intrigue within the Union. A copy of a Communist fraction circular containing instructions to delegates attending the County Monthly Delegate Meeting was circulated and it was claimed that this circular showed quite clearly that the Communists were obeying the dictates of a political party and not the dictates of the rank and file of the Union. The various questions raised by the circular were, however, questions in which the miners themselves were interested and of which they approved. So far from the production of this circular having a bad effect it helped the Party, inasmuch as it showed that the Party representatives were working in an organized fashion to carry

through the policy on which they were elected. The result of the first vote that was taken showed that the Communists headed the list of votes for the two permanent officials, and three Communists headed the list for the five posts on the Scottish Executive.

At this stage it was decided that the Party vote should be transferred from the Party member having the lowest votes amongst the five who were standing for Executive posts, to the Left-wingers and a new list went forward for the Executive consisting of four party members and one left-winger. This list received considerable votes in the second ballot but not sufficient to get them elected. In the third ballot the results showed that the Communists had been elected for the two permanent officials' positions and that the complete Communist and left-wing list had been elected as representatives on the Scottish Executive.

The right-wing has at the moment however, a slight majority on the Monthly Delegate Meeting of the Fife Miners' Union itself, and under the influence of the General Secretary of that Union, Mr. W. Adamson, M. P. Secretary for Scotland in the MacDonald Government in 1924, the Fife Miners Monthly Delegate Meeting refused to declare the Communists and Left-Wingers elected, because they had engaged in a campaign during the time that the vote was being taken. After considerable argument at this meeting it was agreed by a considerable majority to submit the question to the Branches as to whether the results of the ballot vote should be accepted. Meantime those results were not declared and no-one knew officially which side had actually come out on top. The belief of the right-wing was that the Branches would vote in favour of annulling the ballot owing to the propaganda that had been indulged in by the Right-wing. The result gave the Right-wing the surprise of their lives. No less than 48 Branches decided that the ballot should be accepted and only 6 votes against. Amongst the 48 Branches which voted in favour of the ballot being accepted there were quite a number of right-wing Branches who generally always voted against the Communist Party. Thus the workers in Fife have not only declared in favour of Communists and Left-Wingers fighting on a straight left-wing programme, but they have also declared against attempts to refuse recognition to democratic decisions, which attempts might have led to the splitting of the Union. The results in Fife will hearten the C. P. G. B. in its struggles to win over a majority of workers in the mine-fields.

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