

lence on their part for they would have invaded nobody's liberty by such cultivation. What they wanted of the land was to force someone else to cultivate it on their terms, and population being sparse and unsettled, the easiest method was to reduce the population to slavery. But that circumstance does not alter the fact that the land was taken for speculative and not for legitimate purposes. On the contrary it proves it. So with the Jesuits. Permission to use the land could only be obtained on their terms, and a subjection of the mind was demanded quite as unjust as the enforced subjection of the body demanded by the military conqueror. Surely, no one can say that this is a legitimate condition to the use of land. The land speculation of Francia and Lopez was probably the most inexorable of all, for in this case both mind and body were tyrannized. Francia said, virtually, "Not only shall you live in Paraguay according to my will, but you shall not be permitted to go to the foreigner nor receive anything from the foreigner, nor shall the foreigner be permitted to come to you." It is true that the minds of the great majority of Paraguayans were not in condition to question the justice of these restrictions, but that fact does not justify the restrictions. In the United States to-day, whose citizens are supposed to be the freest people on earth, we see how encroachments made upon the fundamental law of the land, when they are not met by resistance, are made the basis of further encroachments, and such being the case with us we can easily understand how the Paraguayan never dreamed of questioning the justice of his rulers.



SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF GERRARD WINSTANLEY, THE DIGGER, THE HENRY GEORGE OF THE COMMONWEALTH PERIOD ♦ ♦

BY LEWIS H. BERRENS.

SECOND PAPER.

"Our boasted freedom necessarily involves slavery, so long as we recognize private property in land. Until that is accomplished, Declarations of Independence and Acts of Emancipation are in vain. So long as one man can claim the exclusive ownership of the land from which other men must live, slavery will exist, and as material progress goes on, must grow and deepen."—*Henry George*.

The Digger movement seems to have spread far more widely, and to have received far more support, than would be gathered from the perusal of modern histories of the times. Nor can we be surprised at this when we remember the terrible distress prevailing all over England. In May 1649, at the very time Winstanley was inditing his first letter to Lord-General Fairfax, we find the following entry in Bulstrode Whitelocke's "Memorials of English Affairs": "Letter from Newcastle that many in Cumberland and Westmoreland died in the highways for want of bread, and divers left their habitations, travelling with their wives and children to other parts to get relief, but could have none. That the Committees and Justices of the Peace of Cumberland signed a certificate that there were thirty thousand families that had neither seed nor bread corn, nor money to buy either, and they desired a collection for them, which was made, but much too little to relieve so great a multitude." Or again. "Letters from Lancashire of great scarcity of corn, and that the famine was sore among them, after which the plague overspread itself in many parts of the country, taking away whole families together, and few escaped where any house was visited,

and the Levellers got into arms, but were suppressed speedily by the Governor." And again, in August 1649, we read: "Letters of great complaints of the taxes in Lancashire; and that the meaner sort threaten to leave their habitations, and their wives and children to be maintained by the Gentry; that they can no longer bear the oppression, to have the bread taken out of the mouths of their wives and children by taxes: and that if an army of Turks came to relieve them, they would join them." Work there was none; those who stole were "hanged out of the way, as men not fit to live"; relief there was none visible, and those who patiently awaited it died of starvation and plague. The land was there, waiting to be tilled; if they could but obtain its use, they could supply their own wants, and the wants of those dependent upon them. Under such conditions, we cannot wonder that Winstanley's radical doctrines found many supporters, and that even the inherited fear and awe of the "superior classes," the Lords of Manors and Gentry, and of their rights (?) which is still such a characteristic feature of the English peasantry and rural population generally, did not prevent their giving ear to his appeals.

In Kent and in Northamptonshire we have evidence that colonies of Diggers established themselves. In Whitelocke, under date April 1650, we read of: "A Letter sent from the Diggers and Planters of Commons for Universal Freedom, to make the Earth a Common Treasury, that everyone may enjoy food and raiment freely by his labour upon the earth, without paying Rent or Homage to any Fellow-Creature of his own kind, that everyone may be delivered from the tyranny of the Conquering Power, and so rise up out of that bondage to enjoy the benefit of his Creation. The Letters were to get money to buy food for them and corn to sow the land which they had digged."

This entry refers, we believe, to the following petition which emanated from Northampton, and which had been published in pamphlet form the previous month, March 12th, 1650:

A DECLARATION OF THE GROUNDS AND REASONS why we the poor Inhabitants of the Town of Wellinborrow, in the County of Northampton, have begun and give consent to dig up, manure and sow corn upon the Commons and Wasteground called Bareshanke belonging to the inhabitants of Wellinborrow, by those that have subscribed and hundreds more that give consent.

We find in the word of God that God made the Earth for the use and comfort of all mankind, and set him in it to till and dress it, and said, That in the sweat of his brow he should eat his bread. And also we find that God never gave it to any sort of people that they should have it all to themselves, and shut out all the rest, but He saith, The Earth hath He given to the children of men, which is every man.

2. We find that no creature that ever God made was ever deprived of the benefits of the Earth, but Mankind; and that it is nothing but covetousness, pride, and hardness of heart that hath caused men so far to degenerate.

3. We find in the Scriptures that the Prophets and Apostles have left it upon record, That in the last day the oppressor and proud man shall cease, and God will restore the waste places of the Earth to the use and comfort of man, and that none shall hurt or destroy in all his holy mountain.

4. We have great encouragement from these two righteous Acts, which the Parliament of England have set forth, the one against Kingly Power, and the other to make England a Free Common-wealth.

5. We are necessitated from our present necessity to do this, and we hope that our actions will justify us in the gate, when all men shall know the truth of our necessity: We are in Wellinborrow in one Parish 1169 persons that receive alms, as the Officers have made it appear at the Quarter Sessions last. We have made our case known to the Justices; the Justices have given order that the Town should raise a stock to set us on work, and that

the Hundred should be enjoined to assist them. But as yet we see nothing is done, nor any man that goeth about it. We have spent all we have, our trading is decayed, our wives and children cry for bread, our lives are a burthen to us, divers of us having 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 in family, and we cannot get bread for one of them by our labours. Rich men's hearts are hardened, they will not give us if we beg at their doors. If we steal, the Law will end our lives: divers of the poor are starved to death already, and it were better for us that are living to die by the Sword than by the Famine.

And now we consider that the Earth is our Mother, and that God hath given it to the children of men; that the Commons and Waste-grounds belong to the poor; and that we have a right to the common ground both from the Law of the Land, Reason and Scripture. Therefore we have begun to bestow our righteous labor upon it; and we shall trust the Spirit for a blessing upon our labor, resolving not to dig up any man's property until they freely give us it. And truly we have great comfort already through the goodness of our God, that some of those rich men amongst us who have had the greatest profit upon the Commons have freely given us their share in it . . . and the country farmers have preferred, divers of them, to give us seed to sow it; and so we find that God is persuading Japhet to dwell in the tents of Shem. And truly those that we find most against us are such as have been constant enemies to the Parliament Cause from first to last.

Now at last our desire is, That some who approve of this Work of Righteousness would but spread our Declaration before the Great Council of the Land, that so they may be pleased to give us more encouragement to go on, that so they may be found amongst the small number of those that consider the poor and needy, that so the Lord may deliver them in the time of their troubles, and then they will not be found amongst those that Solomon speaks of, who withhold the corn (or the Land) from the poor, whom the people shall curse, but blessings shall be upon the heads of those Rulers who sell Corn, and who will let the poor labor upon the Earth to get them Corn, and our lives shall bless them, so shall good men stand by them, and evil men shall be afraid of them, and they shall become the Repairers of our Breaches, and the Restorers of our Paths to dwell in.

And thus we have declared the truth of our necessity; and whosoever shall come to labor with us, shall have part with us, and we with them, and we shall all of us endeavour to walk righteously and peaceably in the Land of our Nativity.

Though this Declaration is based upon and contains Winstanley's main arguments, it is probably not from his pen. An early copy, however, seems to have reached him; and within a few days of its appearance, on March 26th, 1650, he issued a Broadsheet in support thereof, an abridged version of which we feel impelled to place before our readers. It ran as follows:

AN APPEAL TO ALL ENGLISHMEN, TO JUDGE BETWEEN BONDAGE AND FREEDOM: Sent from those who began to dig upon George Hill in Surrey, but now are carrying on that Public Work upon the Little Heath in the Parish of Cobham, near unto George Hill, wherein it appears that the work of digging upon the Commons is not only warranted by Scripture, but by the Law of the Commonwealth of England likewise.

Behold, behold all Englishmen, the Land of England is now your free inheritance; all Kingly and Lordly entanglements are declared against by our Army and Parliament. The Norman power is beaten in the field, and his head is cut off. And that oppressing conquest that hath reigned over you by King and House of Lords these 600 years past, is now cast out by the Army's sword, the Parliament's Acts and Laws, and the Commonwealth's engagement.

Therefore let not sottish covetousness in the Gentry deny the poor or younger brethren their just Freedom to build or plant corn upon the common waste land, nor let slavish fear possess the hearts of the poor to stand in fear of the Norman Yoke any longer, seeing that it is broken. Come those that are free within, turn your Swords into Plowshares, your Spears into Pruning Hooks; take Plow and Spade, break up the common land, build your houses, sow corn and take possession of your own land, which you have now recovered out of the hands of the Norman Oppressor.

The Common Land hath laid unmanured all the days of his Kingly and Lordly Power over you, by reason whereof both you and your Fathers (many of you) have been burthened with poverty. And that land which would have been fruitful with corn hath brought forth nothing but heath, moss, furzes, and the curse, according to the words of Scripture: A fruitful land is made barren, because of the unrighteousness of the people who ruled therein, and would not suffer it to be planted, because they would keep the Poor under bondage, to maintain their own Lordly Power and Conquering Covetousness.

But what hinders you now! Will you be Slaves and Beggars still when you may be Freemen? Will you live in straits and die in poverty, when you may live comfortably? Will you always make a profession of the words of Christ and the Scripture, the sum whereof is this—Do as you would be done unto, and live in love; and now it is come to the point of fulfilling that righteous Law, will you not rise up and act, I do not mean act by the sword, for that must be left? But come, take Plow and Spade, build and plant, and make the Waste Land fruitful, that there may be no beggar or idle person amongst you. For if the waste land of England were manured by her children, it would become in a few years the richest, the strongest and most flourishing land in the world, and all Englishmen would live in peace and comfort. This Freedom is hindered by such as yet are full of the Norman base blood, who would be Freemen themselves, but would have all others Bond-men and Servants, nay Slaves to them.

The Law of the Scriptures gives you a full freedom to the Earth, and makes mankind free in all its members, for God, or the Creating Spirit, is no respecter of persons.

Well, Englishmen, the Law of the Scriptures gives you a free and full warrant to plant the earth and to live comfortably and in love, doing as you would be done by, and condemns that covetous kingly and lordly power of darkness in men, that makes some men seek their freedom in the earth, and to deny others that freedom. And the Scriptures do establish this law, to cast out kingly and lordly self-willed and oppressing power, and to make every Nation in the World a Free Commonwealth. So that you have the Scriptures to protect you in making the Earth a Common Treasury, for the comfortable livelihood of your bodies while you live upon Earth.

Therefore you Englishmen, whether Tenants or Laboring-Men, do not enter into a new bond of Slavery, now you are come to the point that you may be free, if you will stand up for Freedom. For the Army hath purchased your Freedom; the Parliament hath declared for your Freedom; and all the Laws of the Commonwealth are your protection; so that nothing is wanting on your part but courage and faithfulness to put these Laws in execution, and so take possession of your own Land, which the Norman power took from you and hath kept from you about 600 years, and which you have now recovered out of his hand.

And if any of you say that the old Laws and Customs of the Land are against the Tenant and the Poor, and intitle the land only to Lords of Manors still, I answer that all the old Laws are of no force, for they were abolished when the King and House of Lords were cast out. And if any say that the Parliament made an Act to establish the old Laws, I answer that this was to prevent a sudden rising on the cutting off of the King's head; but that afterwards they made these two Laws, to cast out Kingly Power, and to make England a Commonwealth. And they have confirmed these two by the Engagement which now the people generally do own and subscribe; therefore by these Acts of Freedom they have abolished that Act that held up bondage.

Well, by these you may see your Freedom; and we hope the Gentry hereafter will cheat the poor no longer of their land; and we hope the Ministers hereafter will not tell the poor that they have no right to the land. For now the land of England is and ought to be a Common Treasury to all Englishmen, as the several portions of the Land of Canaan were the common livelihood to such and such a Tribe, both to elder and younger brothers, without respect of persons. If you do deny this, you do deny the Scriptures.

And now we will give you some few encouragements out of many to move you to stand up for your freedom in the land by acting with plow and spade upon the Commons—

(1) By this means, within a short time, there will be no beggar or idle person in England, which will be the glory of England, and the glory of the Gospel, which England seems to profess in words.

(2) The waste and common land being improved will bring in plenty of all commodities, and prevent famine, and pull down the price of corn.

(3) It will prove England to be the first of Nations to fall off from the covetous, beastly government, to set the Crown of Freedom on Christ's head, to rule over the nations of the world, and to be the joy and blessing of all Nations. This should move all Governors to strive who shall be the first to cast down their Crowns, Sceptres, and Governments at Christ's feet, and they that will not give Christ his own glory shall be shamed.

(4) This Commonwealth's Freedom will smite the hearts of all Englishmen together in love, so that if a foreign enemy endeavour to come in, we shall all with joint consent rise up together to defend our Inheritance, and shall be true to one another. Whereas now the Poor see that if they fight and conquer the enemy, yet either they or their children are like to be Slaves still, for the Gentry will have all. This is the cause why so many run away and fail our Armies in time of need. So through the Gentry's hardness of heart against the Poor, the Land may be left to a foreign enemy for want of the Poor's love sticking to them. For say they, we can as well live under a foreign enemy, working for day wages, as under our own bretheren, with whom we ought to have Equal Freedom by the Law of Righteousness.

(5) This freedom in planting the common land will prevent robbing, stealing and murdering, and Prisons will not be so mightily filled with Prisoners; and thereby we shall prevent that heart-breaking spectacle of seeing so many hanged every Session as there are. And surely this imprisoning and hanging of men is the Norman Power still, and cannot stand with the freedom of the Commonwealth, nor warranted by the Engagement; for by the Laws and Engagement of the Commonwealth none ought to be hanged nor put to death, for other punishment can be found. And those who do hang and put to death their fellow Englishmen, under colour of Laws, do break the Laws and Engagement by so doing, and cast themselves from under the protection of the Commonwealth, and are traitors to England's Freedom and upholders of the Kingly murdering power.

(6) This Freedom of the Common Earth is the poorer's right by the Law of Creation and Equity of the Scriptures. For the Earth was not made for a few, but for the whole of mankind, for God is no respecter of persons.

Now these few considerations we offer to all England, and we appeal to the judgment of all rational and righteous men whether this we speak be not the substantial truth, brought forth into action, which Ministers have preached up and all Religious Men have made profession of; for certainly God, who is the King of Righteousness, is not a God of words only, but of deeds; for it is the badge of hypocrisy for man to say and not to do. Therefore we leave this with you all, having peace in our hearts by declaring faithfully to you this light that is in us, and which we do not only speak and write, but which we do easily act and practice.

Likewise we write it as a letter of encouragement to our dear Fellow Englishmen that have begun to dig the Commons, thereby taking possession of their Freedom, in Willenborough in Northamptonshire and at Cars Hall in Kent, waiting to see the chains of slavish fear to break and fall off from the hearts of others in other Counties, till at last the whole land shall be filled with the knowledge and righteousness of the restoring power, which is Christ himself, who will spread himself till he become the joy of all Nations.

Signed by JERRARD WINSTANLEY, and thirty others, and also on behalf of "divers others that were not present when this went to press."

March 26, 1650.

Of Gerrard Winstanley's continuous literary activity our readers will be able to gather some idea from the list of his writings, as far as we have been able to gather them, added as an appendix to this article. His matured views,

however, may best be gleaned from a little book, of some ninety closely printed pages, published in 1652, though probably written some years previously, in which the cry of "THE LAND FOR THE PEOPLE" is advanced and defended in a manner which in our opinion has never been surpassed, and his scheme of Public Community, or Communism, placed before his readers in a clear, forcible and convincing manner. The full title-page of this book reads as follows :

THE LAW OF FREEDOM IN A PLATFORM; or TRUE MAGISTRACY RESTORED.

Humbly presented to Oliver Cromwell, General of the Commonwealth's Army in England, Scotland and Ireland. And to all Englishmen, my bretheren, whether in Church Fellowship or not in Church Fellowship, both sorts walking as they conceive according to the order of the Gospel: and from them to all the Nations in the World.

Wherein is declared, What is Kingly Government, and What is Commonwealths Government.

By Gerrard Winstanley.

In thee, O England, is the Law arising up to shine,
If thou receive and practice it, the Crown it will be thine.
If thou reject, and still remain a froward Son to be,
Another Land will it receive, and take the Crown from thee.
Revel. II, 15. Dan. 7. 27.

LONDON.

Printed for the Author, and are to be sold by Giles Calvert at the Black Spred-Eagle at the West end of Pauls.

We make no apology for reproducing this title page in full; for to us every line is interesting and suggestive. The title indicates the subject matter of the pamphlet; the presentation throws some light on the broad, tolerant, philosophic spirit in which it is written; the poetry, poor though it may be, betrays Winstanley's profound conviction of the truth and importance of the principles he was advocating; if England could accept them, so much the better for her people; if not, then sooner or later some other country would, and obedience to them would advance that country to the foremost place amongst the Nations of the World. Our readers would do well to look up the biblical references; and also to note the name of the printer. Giles Calvert appears to have been a strong supporter of Winstanley, and printed nearly all his works. He also published most of the earlier works of the Quakers, whom we believe to have borrowed most of their fundamental tenets from Winstanley's writings.* Certain it is that Giles Calvert and other of Winstanley's followers were amongst the earliest adherents of the sect.

The pamphlet commences with a, "Epistle Dedicatory" to Oliver Cromwell. After a brief allusion to the victories of the army under his command, and to the fact that he was but an instrument in the hands of God, it continues :

"That which is wanting on your part to be done is this, To see that the Oppressor's Power be cast out with his Person; and to see that the free possession of the land and liberties be put into the hand of the oppressed Commoners of England. For the Crown of Honor cannot be yours, neither can those Victories be called victories on your part, till the Land and Freedom won be possessed by them who adventured person

* The writer intends putting forward strong evidence in favor of this conclusion in the book on Gerrard Winstanley and his times, for which he is still engaged in collecting material.

and purse for them. . . . Now you have the power of the land in your hands, you must do one of these two things: First, either set the land free to the oppressed commoners who assisted you . . . and so take possession of your deserved honor; Or, secondly, you must only remove the Conqueror's Power out of the King's hand into other men's, maintaining the old laws still; and then your wisdom and honor will be blasted for ever; and you will either lose yourself, or lay the foundation of greater slavery to posterity than ever you knew."

A marvelous prophecy, truly! Cromwell could see nothing in Winstanley's demands save that they tended "to make the Tenant as liberal a fortune as the Landlord."* In his blindness he pursued the path against which this seer specially warned him, and thereby, in truth, laid the foundation of greater slavery than ever he knew. Hence it is that in the Twentieth Century England is beset by the social problems as in the Seventeenth; and that to-day Social Reformers here, as in what is still termed the Mother Country, are struggling to secure the very reform advocated by our good Brother Winstanley in the days of the Commonwealth.

Winstanley continues,

"It may be you will say to me, What shall I do? I answer, You are in place and power to see all burthens taken off from your friends, the Commoners of England, You will say, What are these burthens?"

The first remediable evil against which Winstanley complains is that

"the current of succeeding Parliaments is stopped, which is one of the greatest privileges (and people's liberties) for Safety and Peace. And if that continues stopped, we shall be more offended by an Hereditary Parliament than we were oppressed by an Hereditary King. As regards the Commoners, who were called Subjects while the Kingly Conqueror was in power, they have not as yet their Liberties granted them. I will instance them in order, according as the common whisperings are among the people."

THE BURTHEN OF THE CLERGY.

The first burthen he dwells upon is that of the clergy, who interfere, he contends, with liberty of conscience and freedom of speech; moreover—

The burthens of tythes remain still upon our estates, which was taken from us by the King and given to the clergy, to maintain them by our labours; so that though their preaching fill the minds of many with madness, contention, and unsatisfied doubtings . . . yet we must pay them large tythes for so doing; this is oppression.

THE BURTHEN OF THE LAWYERS.

If we go to the lawyer, we find him to sit in the conqueror's chair, though the king be removed, maintaining the king's power to the height. . . . If we look upon the customs of the law itself, it is the same it was in the king's days, only the name is altered. . . . And so as the sword pulls down kingly power with one hand, the king's old law builds up monarchy again with the other. And indeed the main work of reformation lies in this, to reform the clergy, lawyers and law; for all the complaints of the land are wrapped up within them three, not in the person of a king.

THE BURTHEN OF LANDLORDS.

Winstanley then quietly, moderately, but firmly, logically and incisively considers the whole question of Landlordism. He first points out that the power of Lords of Manors still remain over their bretheren; and pertinently asks,

*Cromwell's Life and Letters, Carlyle. Part VIII. Speech II.

"By what power do these still maintain their title over us? Formerly," he continues, "they held title from the King . . . but have not the Commoners cast out the King, therefore in equity they are free from the Slavery of that Lordly Power . . . But if Lords of Manors lay claim to the Earth over us from the Army's Victories over the King; then we have as much right to the Earth as they; for our labours and blood and death of friends were the purchasers of the Earth's Freedom as well as theirs.

"And is not this a slavery, say the people, that though there be land enough in England to maintain ten times as many people as are in it, yet some must beg of their bretheren, or work in hard drudgery for day wages for them, or starve, or steal, and so be hanged out of the way, as men not fit to live on the earth? Before they are suffered to plant the waste land for a livelihood, they must pay rent to their bretheren for it. Well, this is a burthen the creation groans under; and the subjects (so called) have not their birth-right freedom granted them from their bretheren, who hold it from them by club law, but not by right-cousness."

WHO IS TO BE RULER?

He pushes home his argument by pertinently putting the question, "And who now must we be subject to, seeing the Conqueror is gone?" And seizing this opportunity to enforce a lesson that, unfortunately, has yet to be fully appreciated, he continues:

"I answer, We must either be subject to a law or to men's wills. If to a law, then all men in England are subject, or ought to be, thereunto. . . . You will say, We must be subject to the ruler. This is true, but not to suffer the rulers to call the earth theirs and not ours, for by so doing they betray their trust and run into the line of tyranny, and we lose our freedom, and from thence enmity and wars arise. A ruler is worthy double honour when he rules well, that is, when he himself is subject to the Law, and requires all others to be subject thereunto, and makes it his work to see the laws obeyed, and not his own will, and such rulers are faithful, and they are to be subjected unto us therein, for all Commonwealth's rulers are servants to, not lords and kings over, the people.

THE RIGHT TO THE LAND.

Winstanley then proceeds to argue the whole question of the people's claim to the use of the Earth in the following convincing manner:

"But you will say, Is not the land your brother's? and you cannot take away another man's right by claiming a share therein with him. I answer, It is his either by Creation right, or by right of conquest; if by creation right he call the earth his and not mine, then it is mine as well as his, for the Spirit of the Whole Creation, who made us both, is no respecter of persons. And if by conquest he call the earth his and not mine, it must be either by the conquest of the kings over the commoners, or by the conquest of the commoners over the kings. If he claim the earth to be his from the king's conquest, the kings are beaten and cast out, and that title is undone. If he claim title to the earth from the conquest of the commoners over the kings, then I have a right to the land as well as my brother, for my brother without me, nor I without my brother, did not cast out the kings, but both together, assisting with person and purse, we prevailed, so that I have by this victory as equal a share in the earth which is now redeemed as my brother, by the Law of Righteousness.

"If my brother still say he will be Land Lord (through his covetuous ambition) and I must pay him rent, or else I shall not live in the land, then does he take my right from me. And O thou Spirit of the Whole Creation, who hath the title to be called King of Righteousness and Prince of Peace, judge thou between my brother and me, whether this be righteous."

THE QUESTION OF COMPENSATION.

The question of compensation, too, Winstanley faces, and argues in a logical and convincing manner. He says :

"It may be you will say, If Tythes be taken from the Priests, and Copyhold Services from Lords of Manors, how shall they be provided for again ; for is it not unrighteous to take their estates from them ?

"I answer, When tythes were first enacted and lordly power drawn over the backs of the oppressed, the Kings and Conquerors made no scruple of conscience to take it, though the people lived in sore bondage of poverty for want of it ; and can there be scruple of conscience to make restitution of this which hath been so long stolen goods ? It is no scruple arising from the righteous law, but from Covetousness, who goes away sorrowful to hear he must part with all to follow righteousness and peace."

Moreover, he contends that though you take away tythes and the power of lords of the manors to extort rent or tribute for the use of the earth, yet would they not suffer ; for they would be secured equal opportunities with the rest of their fellow citizens, and under his scheme would have equal rights to send to the common storehouses for anything they might need. And here it may be well to emphasize the fact that though Winstanley and his followers, like an ever-increasing number of Social Reformers of the present day, attributed the prevailing system of wage slavery to land monopoly and though they boldly maintained the equal right of all to the use of the earth, yet did they not claim any right to trespass upon or make use of improved or enclosed land. It was their doctrines, not their actions, which aroused the bitter hostility of the privileged classes and their parasites. What they demanded was that the commons and waste land should be set free to the common people, "as freely their own as the inclosures are the property of the elder brothers." They realized that by so doing they would lay the foundation of a new social life ; for when proclaiming their intention "to dig up George's Hill and the waste land thereabout," they gave as their reason "that we may work in righteousness, and lay the foundations of making the earth a common treasury to all, both rich and poor, that every one that is born in the land may be fed by the earth, his mother that brought him forth, according to the reason that rules in the creation."

OF RICHES.

But to return to our pamphlet. On the question of riches Winstanley is as clear and decisive as a Ruskin ; some may even think more clear. He says :

"But shall not one man be richer than another ? There is no need for that ; for riches make men vain-glorious, proud, and to oppress their brethren, and are the occasion of wars. No man can be rich but he must be rich either by his own labours or by the labours of other men helping him. If a man have no help from his neighbours, he shall never gather an estate of hundreds and thousands a year. If other men help him to work, then are those riches his neighbours' as well as his ; for they be the fruits of other men's labors as well as his own. But all rich men live at ease, feeding and clothing themselves by the labours of other men, which is their shame, and not their nobility ; for it is a more blessed thing to give than to receive. But rich men receive all they have from the labourer's hand, and what they give, they give away other men's labours, not their own. Therefore, they are not righteous actors in the earth."

OF TITLES OF HONOR.

"But shall not one man have more titles of honor than another ?" he then asks.

"Yes; as a man goes through offices, he rises to Titles of Honor, till he comes to be the highest nobility, to be a faithful Commonwealth's Man in a Parliament House. Likewise he who finds out any secret of Nature shall have a Title of Honor given him, though he be a young man. But no man shall have any Title of Honor till he win it by industry, or come to it by age of Office-bearing."

Winstanley then proceeds to defend his system of communism, with which we shall deal more largely later on, against possible objections. He contends that, under it, though the earth and the storehouses and their contents would be common to all, yet each family could continue to live separately and independently, as now they do, enjoying the fullest possession of their own private belongings. That it would provide amply for the wants of all; that it would make idle persons become workers, and enrich all—that, in short, there would be "neither beggar nor idle person" in the Commonwealth.

However, Winstanley was too good a Democrat to desire that his system should be forced upon the people, and too far-sighted to hope that their prejudices and old established habits would allow them to accept it in its entirety. Hence he concludes his Dedicatory Letter to Cromwell as follows:

"I do not say nor desire that everyone shall be compelled to practice this Commonwealth's Government; for the spirits of some will be enemies at first, though afterwards will prove the most cordial and true friends thereunto. Yet I desire that the Commonwealth's land . . . may be set free to all that have lent assistance, of person or purse, to obtain it; and to all that are willing to come in to the practice of this Government, and be obedient to the laws thereof. And for others who are not willing, let them stay in the way of buying and selling which is the law of the conqueror, till they be willing.

And so I leave this in your hand, humbly prostrating myself and it before you, and remain

A true lover of Commonwealth's Government, Peace, and Freedom,
GERRARD WINSTANLEY."

TO THE FRIENDLY AND UNBIASED READER.

Winstanley next addresses a short Preface to the friendly and unbiased reader. He first reminds him of the Apostle's advice to try all things, and to hold fast to that which is best. He then very briefly summarizes his proposals, and concludes with the following eloquent and suggestive appeal:

"COMMONWEALTH'S GOVERNMENT unites all people in a land into one heart and mind. And it was this Government which made Moses to call Abraham's seed one house of Israel, though there were many Tribes and Families. And it may be said, Blessed is the People whose earthly Government is the Law of Common Righteousness. THE GOVERNMENT OF KINGS is the Government of the Scribes and Pharisees, who count it no freedom unless they be Lords of the Earth and of their Bretheren.

"Therefore Reader here is a trial of thy sincerity. . . . Dost thou pray and fast for Freedom, and give God thanks again for it? We know that God is not partial; so if thou pray, it must be for Freedom to all; and if thou give thanks, it must be because Freedom covers all people, for this alone will prove a lasting peace.

"Everyone is ready to say, They fight for their Country, and what they do is for the good of their Country. Well let it appear now that thou hast fought and acted for thy Country's Freedom. But if, when thou hast power to settle Freedom in thy Country, thou takest the possession of the Earth into thy own particular hands, and makest thy Brother work for thee, as the Kings did, thou hast fought and acted for thyself, not for thy Country, and here thy inside hypocrisy is discovered.

"But here take notice, That common Freedom, which is the Rule I would have prac-

ticed and not merely talked on, was thy pretence ; but particular Freedom to thyself was thy intent. Amend, or else thou wilt be shamed, when Knowledge doth spread to cover the Earth, even as the Waters cover the Seas. And so Farewell. "G. W."

THE PAMPHLET.

In the opening chapter of this pamphlet Winstanley sets forth and expounds his fundamental doctrine that

"TRUE COMMONWEALTH'S FREEDOM LIES IN THE FREE ENJOYMENT OF THE EARTH."

He says:

"True Freedom lies where a man receives his nourishment ; and that is in the use of the Earth. . . . All that a man labors for, saith Solomon, is this, That he may enjoy the free use of the Earth, with the fruits thereof (Eccles. 2-24). Do not the Ministers preach for maintenance in the Earth? the Lawyers plead causes to get the possession of the Earth? Doth not the Soldier fight for the Earth? And doth not the Landlord require Rent that he may live in the fullness of the Earth by the labor of his tenants? And so from the Thief upon the Highway to the King who sits upon the Throne, does not everyone strive, either by force of arms or secret cheats, to get the possession of the Earth one from another, because they see their Freedom lies in plenty and their bondage lies in poverty?

"Surely then, oppressing Lords of Manors, exacting Laudlords and Tythe-takers, may as well say their Bretheren shall not breathe the air, nor enjoy warmth in their bodies, nor have the moist waters to fall upon them in showers, unless they will pay them rent for it, as to say their Bretheren shall not work upon the Earth, nor eat the fruits thereof, unless they will hire that liberty of them. For he that takes upon him to restrain his Brother from the liberty of the one, may, upon the same ground, restrain him from the liberty of all four, viz : Fire, Water, Earth and Air. A man had better have no body than to have no food for it : therefore, this restraining of the Earth from Bretheren by Bretheren is oppression and bondage ; but the free enjoyment thereof is true Freedom."

Then follows this most suggestive and noteworthy passage :

"I speak now in relation between the Oppressor and the Oppressed ; the *inward* bondage I meddle not with in this place, though I am assured that if it be rightly searched into, the inward bondage of the mind, as covetousness, pride, hypocrisy, envy, sorrow, fears, desperation and madness are all occasioned by the outward bondage that one sort of people lay upon another."

Towards the end of this chapter, Winstanley again alludes to the example of the People of Israel, who "when they had conquered the Canaanites did not sell the land again to the remainder of their enemies, nor buy it among themselves, but made the Earth a Common Treasury of Liveliness to the whole Commonwealth of Israel, and so disposed of it as to make provision for every Tribe, nay, for every particular man in a family; every one had enough, no man was in want, there was no beggar amongst them." And he concludes his chapter by placing the alternatives, between which at all times the people have to choose, clearly before his readers, as follows :

"That which true righteousness, in my judgment, calls Community is this—To have the Earth set free from all kingly bondage of Lords of Manors and oppressing Landlords, who came in by conquest, as a thief takes a true man's purse upon the highway, being stronger than he. And that neither the Earth, nor any fruits thereof, shall be bought and

sold by the inhabitants one among another. . . . For you must either establish Commonwealth's Freedom in power, making provision for everyone's peace, which is Righteousness, or else you must set up Monarchy again. Monarchy is two-fold, either for one King to reign, or for many to rule by kingly principles. For the power of the King lies in his Laws, not in his name. And if either one king rules, or many rule by kingly principles, much murmuring, grudges, troubles and quarrels may and will arise among the oppressed people on every gained opportunity."

ON GOVERNMENT.

In the next chapter, on government, he first defines government as "a wise and free ordering of the earth and the manners of mankind by observation of particular laws or rules, so that all the inhabitants may live peaceably in plenty and freedom in the land where they are born and bred." (A definition which even that past-master in the art of defining, Mr. Herbert Spencer, could not easily improve upon.) There are, he contends, but two sorts of government, a kingly government and a commonwealth's government. The one, he tells us, "may well be called the Government of Highwaymen, who have stolen the earth from the younger brethren by force and hold it from them by force." The other "may well be termed the Ancient of Days; for it was before any other oppressing government stepped in." Moreover, as he eloquently puts it, "If once commonwealth's government be set upon the throne, then no tyranny or oppression can look him in the face and live."

"The situation [site, source, or inspirer] of kingly government," he argues, "lies in the will of kings"; that of a free commonwealth "within the laws of common freedom."

Kingly government, by which he always means the rule of privilege and monopoly, is possible only "by drawing the people out of common freedom into a way of common bondage; for so long as the earth is a common treasury to all men, kingly covetousness can never reign as king."

Commonwealth's government, on the other hand, involves "the free enjoyment of the earth, and whatever law or custom doth deprive brethren of their freedom in the earth is to be cast out as unsavoury salt."

And then follows this most beautiful passage:

"O England, England, wouldst thou have thy government sound and healthful? Then cast about and see, and search diligently to find out all those burthens that came in by kings, and remove them; and then will the Commonwealth's government arise from under the clods under which as yet it is buried and covered with deformity."

A passage which, alas! is as true to-day as it was in the seventeenth century.

In the next chapter, Chapter III., he attributes all laws, either to the desire for *self* preservation or *common* preservation, the one being the root of the tree tyranny, hence the cause of all wars and troubles; the other the root of the tree magistracy, of true commonwealth's government, and the law of righteousness and peace. For, as he puts it—

"The great lawgiver in Commonwealth's government is the spirit of universal righteousness dwelling in mankind, now rising up to teach every one to do to another as he would have another do to him. . . . If anyone goes about to build up Commonwealth's government upon kingly principles, they will both shame and lose themselves; for there is a plain difference between the two governments."

This last sentence deserves to be printed in letters of gold and set up in the gathering hall of every Progressive Association; for it contains a truth yet to be

appreciated, but one which it is very necessary all Social Reformers would do well constantly to bear in mind: a democracy, or Commonwealth, cannot be erected on kingly or aristocratic laws and institutions.

ON THE DUTY OF OFFICERS.

Winstanley then emphasizes the fact that all Commonwealth's officers, magistrates, etc., are to be chosen by the people. It is the necessity for the preservation of the common peace that induces the people to choose officers; and it is the duty of those chosen to preserve and respect the rights of the people, "and to cast out all self-ended principles and interests, which is Tyranny and Oppression, and which break the common peace." He summarizes his views in the following paragraph:

"So that all true Officers are chosen Officers; and when they act to satisfy the necessity of these who choose them, then they are faithful and righteous servants to the Commonwealth. But when Officers do take possession of the Earth into their own hands, lifting themselves up thereby to be Lords over their Masters, the people who chose them, and will not suffer the people to plant the Earth and reap the fruits for their livelihood, unless they will hire the land of them, or work for day-wages for them, that they may live in ease and plenty and not work: These Officers are fallen from true Magistracy of a Commonwealth, and they do not act righteously, and, because of this, sorrow and tears, poverty and bondage are known to mankind."

OF THE WORK OF THE DIFFERENT OFFICERS, ASSEMBLIES, AND PARLIAMENTS.

Winstanley then discusses at length the various duties of the different officers and magistrates he deems necessary, as also of the duties of a Parliament. Into this we need not enter, but we cannot refrain from quoting his broad, philosophic and democratic view of the work of a Parliament. He says:

"So then a Parliament is the Head of Power in a Commonwealth. It is their work to manage public affairs in times of war and in times of peace. Not to promote the interests of particular men, but the peace and freedom of the whole body of the Land, viz., of every particular man, so that none be deprived of his Creation-rights, unless he hath lost his freedom by transgression, as in the Laws is expressed."

CONCLUSION.

Winstanley's scheme by which the free enjoyment of the earth, as well as of the fruits thereof, could be secured to all, may be described as pure communism: From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs. Its details seemed to have been modeled on the lines of the government of the Halls and Companies in London. All children were to be educated in the common schools, and when old enough taught some useful industry or trade. After serving their apprenticeship, they were to settle down as masters of their craft, marry if they desired to, and so become heads of families. At forty, or earlier if of special ability, they are eligible to be chosen as officers or overseers, to supervise the different branches of industry. And at sixty all are to be regarded as general overseers, supervising the particular industry in which they were skilled, and free to dispose of their time and activities as they might deem fit.

The earth was to be tilled and all industries and trades carried out on a collective or co-operative basis. All wealth produced to be delivered to the common storehouses, whence it was to be issued to the different overseers, and

to each individual or head of a family or individual citizen, according to his requirements.

But here we must bid farewell to good Brother Winstanley. Though long dead he yet speaketh to us, inspiring us to renewed efforts on behalf of the cause of humanity and freedom, by bringing us in touch with our brother reformers of the seventeenth century. The social problem of to-day is the same as it was then. And speaking for ourselves and fellow Land Reformers, we may say that on questions of principles we are quite at one with him; we only differ as to the best means by which they can be given effect. But with him we appeal from human laws, from the ephemeral enactments of our fellow men, to the immutable and eternal principles of righteousness, freedom, and justice, and exclaim with him:

“Hear, O thou Righteous Spirit of the Whole Creation, and judge who is the thief, he who takes away the freedom of the common earth from me, which is my creation-rights . . . Or I who take the common earth to plant upon for my free livelihood, endeavoring to live as a free commoner in a free commonwealth, in righteousness and peace.”

APPENDIX.

The following is a complete list of Gerrard Winstanley's political and theological works, as far as they are known to the writer of these articles —

- Jan'y, 1648. The New Law of Righteousness.
- May, 1648. The Mystery of God concerning the Whole Creation, Mankind.
- May, 1648. The Breaking of the Day of God.
1649. A Declaration from the Poor Oppressed People of England: Directed to all that call themselves or are called Lords of Manors through this Nation. (This is probably the first pamphlet issued by the Diggers, and seems to be mainly from Winstanley's pen. Everard's name is not attached to this pamphlet, which is signed by Winstanley and forty-six of his co-workers.)
- Feb. 20, 1649. A Vindication of Those whose endeavor it is only to make the Earth a Common Treasury, called Diggers.
- Apr. 26, 1649. The True Leveller's Standard Advanced: Or The State of Community opened and presented to the Sons of Men. Signed by William Everard, Gerrard Winstanley, and others— “Beginning to plant and manure the Waste Land upon George-Hill in the Parish of Walton, in the County of Surrey.”
- June 9, 1649. A Letter to Lord Fairfax and His Council of War, With divers Questions to the Lawyers and Ministers: Proving it an undeniable equity that the Common People ought to dig, plow, plant and dwell upon the Commons without hiring them or paying Rent to any.
- June 11, 1649. An Appeal to the House of Commons: Desiring their answer whether the Common People shall have the quiet enjoyment of the Commons and Waste Land; or whether they shall be under the will of the Lords of Manors still.
- Sept., 1649. A WATCHWORD TO THE CITY OF LONDON AND THE ARMY: wherein you may see that England's Freedom, which should be the result of all our Victories, is sinking deeper under the Norman Power, . . . so that every one singly may truly see what his freedom is and where it lies.
- Dec. 8, 1649. (Second Letter.) To My Lord General Fairfax and His Council of War.

- Mar. 26 (?), 1650. A New Year's Gift for the Parliament and Army, showing what the Kingly Power is, and that the cause of those they call Diggers is the life and marrow of the cause the Parliament hath declared for and the Army fought for.
- Mar. 26, 1650. An Appeal to all Englishmen, to judge between Bondage and Freedom, sent from those that began to dig upon George Hill in Surrey, but now are carrying on that public work upon the little heath in the Parish of Cobham, near unto George Hill, wherein it appears that the work of digging upon the Commons is not only warranted by Scripture, but by the Law of the Commonwealth of England likewise. (Published as a Broadsheet.)
- April 6, 1650. AN HUMBLE REQUEST TO THE MINISTERS OF BOTH UNIVERSITIES, AND TO ALL LAWYERS OF EVERY INNS. A COURT, to consider of the Scriptures and Points of Law herein mentioned and to give a rational and Christian answer, whereby the difference may be composed in peace, between the poor men of England who have begun to dig, plow and build upon the common land, claiming it their own by right of Creation, and the Lords of Manors that trouble them, who have no other claiming to Commons than from the King's will, or from the Power of the Conquest. And if neither Minister nor Lawyer will undertake a reconciliation in this case, for the beauty of our Commonwealth, then we appeal to the stones, timber, and dust of the earth you tread upon, to hold forth the light of this business, questioning not but that Power that dwells everywhere will cause light to spring out of darkness, and Freedom out of Bondage.
- Nov. 5, 1651. THE LAW OF FREEDOM IN A PLATFORM: Or True Magistracy Restored. Humbly presented to Oliver Cromwell, General of the Commonwealth's Army in England, Scotland and Ireland. And to all Englishmen my bretheren, whether in Church-fellowship or not in Church-fellowship, both sorts walking as they conceive according to the order of the Gospel: and from them to all the Nations in the World.
- 1650 (?). FIRE IN THE BUSH: the Spirit burning, not consuming, but purging mankind.
- 1658 (?). THE SAINTS' PARADISE, or the Father's Teaching the only Satisfaction to waiting Souls.



APPENDIX TO THE "EARTH-FOR-ALL" CALENDAR.

BY

ERNEST HOWARD CROSBY.

(*Expressly for the Review.*)

(Since publishing the Calendar I have collected enough quotations to furnish out another month.—E. H. C.)

AUGUST.

1. The soil was given to rich and poor in common, Wherefore,
O ye rich, do you unjustly claim it for yourselves alone?
—Hildebrand, Pope Gregory the Great.
2. Duke of Suffolk (reading petition): What's here? "Against the Duke of Suffolk for enclosing the commons of Hebford." How now, sir knave?
Petitioner: Alas, sir, I am but a poor petitioner of our whole township.
—Shakspeare, Henry VI., Second Part, Act 1, Scene 3.