

England's Prim-rosy Path

THE annual visit of Ashley Mitchell of Yorkshire, England, is looked forward to by many members of the school's family because of his forthright representation of Anglo-American economic and political observations. This year the "Flying Yorkshiremen" reached New York after sojourning in the West Indies.

With "good friends in power" in Jamaica he found the political situation different and encouraging. "Something is happening in Jamaica that will be a benefit, but it will be a few years before it will be in effect," he said. "It is a treat to see a place where people are alive."

Mr. Mitchell feels a federation of all West Indies islands will become a reality, making those islands an independent dominion. In such an event, where one island shows a pattern of success, as in Jamaica, others will want to copy.

The Premier, Norman Manley, absorbed enthusiasm for land reform first in England during the land campaign of 1910. Even though there is opposition to the method now in progress in Jamaica, the Premier is "sticking it out." It is certain they will not go back to the old system which was termed "grotesque and unfair to the small people." At present, said Mr. Mitchell, 60 per cent of the small people pay less in taxes; 90 per cent of the rich pay more.

Questions were asked by members of the faculty group which met with the British visitor in Director Robert Clancy's penthouse office at the Henry

George School. Reporting on his own country, Mr. Mitchell, an outstanding Liberal, said England lost its position after the war. There was a good opportunity for the Snowden proposal to be reinstated, but instead Britishers got the Town and Country Planning Act and other "silly Socialist schemes."

The "free trade area" was dismissed as a delusion, with only 14 per cent of British overseas trade going to the six countries in the area. The farmers are not interested, for, like American farmers, they are subsidized and under this agreement they would lose their subsidy. It would have to be made up in tariffs and that would make food prices higher. Mr. Mitchell reported no surplus in England on anything but milk.

A change in the local taxing system seems imperative, he said, since local taxes are so heavy the small communities are nearly bankrupt. It came as a surprise to hear that there is much unused land in England (land is taxed only when it is used). The building industry around London needs land, but the state is not authorized to requisition it for use, and the owners will not *tax themselves*, so "the land waits."

In a somewhat different pattern this injustice exists in New York where buildings are divested of tenants, windows are boarded up, and they are left to stand idle on land that would be assessed high if well used.

It was interesting to learn that the Henry George School in England was well supported with more students enrolled than at any previous time.

Your hosts at the 17th Annual Conference of the Henry George School will be the Hartford extension, Hartford, Connecticut, and the place—Statler Hilton Hotel, July 12-16. Consult your road map—make plans!