

Regardless of the needs of government, production should never be touched until this social earning is taken.

The present terrible times that seem to defy solution have given us pause. Our economists are looking for parallels in the records of the past. We are beginning to realise that if we fail in finding the basic answer, our civilization faces disintegration. For us, the historic past holds the full story of the problem and its solution.

When we read—

“Let men be on their guard against men who flatter and mislead the multitude. Of the tyrant, spies and informers are the principal instruments. War is his favourite occupation, for the sake of engrossing the attention of the people, and making himself necessary to them as their leader. An unbridled democracy is exactly similar to a tyranny. It is always anxious to lord it like a sovereign; it therefore has its flatterers in the shape of demagogues. Ancient customs must be done away with; ancient ties, civil and sacred, must be broken; everything must be changed according to new and false theories; and the result is an assimilation of democratic to tyrannical government, in its habits and modes of action.”

—we wonder who the author may have been. We suspect, perhaps it was Biddle, or Roosevelt, or Wallace, or could it have been Dewey, or Byrd, or Bricker, or someone defending our form of government?

When we are told that the author was Aristotle and it was written in 384 B.C., we are astounded. Thus we learn our problems are not new. We are beginning to realise their seriousness and it has caused us to stop and to look and shortly we shall listen. When we listen we shall learn the simplicity of the solution. And it will have to do with the establishment of justice.

LAND TENURE IN TONGA

The Coronation visit to Britain paid by Queen Salote of Tonga caused considerable interest in her little-known South Sea island Kingdom.

The social and economic conditions which once prevailed in Tonga—and, we hope, still obtain to-day—are incidentally described in the informative and delightful travel book *Two Young Men See the World*, published in 1934 by Geo. Allen & Unwin. Consisting of letters written by the authors, Stanley Unwin and Severn Storr during a journey they made in 1912 to various parts of Africa, Australia and Asia, the book affords an intimate picture of their experiences and of the many places visited. Social conditions were investigated and are recorded in a genial fashion with no attempt to preach or dogmatise, or make propaganda. So we are made familiar with the happy people of the Friendly Islands and the all-satisfying cause of their contentment, indicating how the civilized nations of Europe would be blest a thousand-fold if their peoples, with their vastly greater powers of production, stood in relation to one another as land animals, as do these people of the South Seas; each established with his right to the use of land, each enjoying that “freedom from want” which prevails and can only prevail in the absence of the institution that makes private property of the rent of land:—

“Perhaps the most interesting and instructive thing about Tonga is its land system. No land can be bought, nor can land be sold. Not a single acre in any of the principal islands is alienated. Europeans or outsiders requiring land for any purpose can lease it, but that is all. A lease, in most cases, is for fifty years, but in the

neighbourhood of any town or village it is for twenty-one years only. The land is the people's and they have a very effective way of dealing with it. Nominally it is divided out amongst the King or Queen and the big chiefs, but every youth on becoming a taxpayer (*i.e.*, on payment of the £2 poll-tax, to which every male over sixteen years of age is liable) is entitled to a plot of land from his chief, sufficient to support himself and family. The amount to which he is actually entitled is about $8\frac{1}{2}$ acres, but owing to a lack of proper surveys it has often exceeded this quantity. It has been found that $8\frac{1}{2}$ acres is sufficient to keep a Tongan family in comfort, and if the holder cares to prepare copra (dried coco-nut) he can make a very pleasant cash income besides. Over and beyond this $8\frac{1}{2}$ acres, every taxpayer is entitled to a small plot of land in his village on which to build his *abi* or native hut. Only the surplus lands, above what is required for the foregoing purposes, may be leased by the chiefs, or even the Queen, to outsiders; but there is a slight tendency already creeping in for chiefs to consider their rent roll more than the needs of their vassals. Any abuses of this sort are dealt with by the Minister of Lands, whose duty it is to see that all tax-payers receive the plot of land which is due to them on arriving at the age of sixteen. The chiefs were entitled at the time of our visit to a nominal yearly payment of about 4s. from each of those to whom they allot land, but this is seldom inflicted; its equivalent is, however, often paid in a different way. If, for instance, a chief is going through a district he sends word beforehand and preparations are made for his entertainment (Page 366).

“As we rose to go the most important natives present came and shook hands with us in a most friendly and natural way. Everyone is independent in Tonga, and there is a dignity about the bearing of the people which independence brings (Page 370).

“They had whiled away most of the night in song; in fact, the Tongan is always singing, and well he may, for, as far as we could see, his lot is a particularly happy one (Page 375).

“As our mounted escort led us along the track to the coastal scene of rock and cliff and waving palms, he carried on a long conversation with us. ‘Is it a fact,’ he asked, ‘that there are people in England who have no food nor clothes? How can this be? Is not England a great and wealthy country?’

“To the Tongan mind such a state of affairs is incredible, and such questions are not easy to answer except to point out that in olden times the land of England was held much as the land of Tonga is to-day, but that the kings and chiefs at home have abused their power and kept the land for themselves instead of holding it in trust for the people to use. It made us feel what a lot we have to learn from Tonga.” (Page 385).

Land and Freedom. By Frederick Verinder. A comprehensive treatise on the principle and policy of Land Value Taxation. 3s. 6d.

Henry George on Economic Justice. New edition of the favourite “Gems from Henry George,” being significant passages from his writings and addresses. 3s. 6d.

The Condition of Labour. By Henry George. Open letter to Pope Leo XIII and treating of the rights of property and justice in the distribution of wealth. 4s.

How the English People Became Landless. A brief history that should be in every senior pupil's satchel. 2d.