

After pointing out that in speaking of the land monopolist, he was dealing more with the process than with the individual landowner, that he was not holding any class up to public disapprobation, that it was not the individual he was attacking but the system and it was not the man who was bad but it was the law which is bad, Mr Churchill said: "We see the evil, we see the imposture upon the public, and we see the consequences in crowded slums, in hampered commerce, in distorted or restricted development, and in congested centres of population, and we say here and now to the land

monopolist who is holding up his land: 'This property of yours might be put to immediate use with general advantage. It is at this minute saleable in the market at 10 times the value at which it is rated. If you choose to keep it idle in the expectation of still further unearned increment, then at least you shall be taxed at the true selling value in the meanwhile'."

He had gone to Scotland to exhort the people to engage in this battle for freeing the land. Will Mr Churchill now go to Carnlough in Antrim and deliver himself there of the same sentiments?

TOLSTOY'S ESSAYS AND RECOLLECTIONS

With the appearance of Volume 21 the Centenary Edition of the works of Leo Tolstoy reaches its conclusion. Thanks to the labours of Mr Aylmer Maude as general editor and translator there is now available in uniform shape a much more complete and accurate version of Tolstoy's writings than has before been available to the English reader. The Oxford University Press is also to be congratulated on making this undertaking possible. The volumes are only to be obtained as a set (price £9 9s.) and are so unfortunately beyond the purse of most readers, but they should certainly be in all public libraries.

The present volume is of particular interest to us for it contains *A Great Iniquity* and the two *Letters on Henry George* in which Tolstoy expresses his considered opinion upon the land question and his unqualified approval of George's solution. As Mr Maude says in his introductory note this was "a matter on which Tolstoy felt very strongly. He sympathized with the peasants' grievance at having to go short of land while men who did not work on it owned large estates which some of them had never even seen. Henry George's plan for the taxation of land values seemed to him to be by far the most just and practicable way of dealing with the matter; and looking back now, we can see how much the adoption of that plan would have done to mitigate the worst evils of the Revolution that was then approaching." He adds: "This was, I think, one of many instances in which Tolstoy saw further and more clearly into a complex problem than the 'practical' men who refused to listen to his advice."

It is also appropriate that this volume should have an introduction by Mr Hamlin Garland who refers to his first interest in Tolstoy's writings as a student in Boston in 1884. "My interest in Tolstoy was deepened by the report of his expressed agreement with Henry George's land theories, of which I was an earnest advocate, and in the great Russian's sketches and essays I soon found many points of agreement with him."

One is tempted to make many quotations. The essay on *Non-acting*, for instance, deserves thoughtful reading in this day when the cult of ceaseless activity has become almost a religion, culminating in the worship of force. How apposite are these sentences: "No one doubts that if men continue to snatch from one another the ownership of the soil and the products of their labour, the revenge of those who are deprived of the right to till the soil will not much longer be delayed, but the oppressed will retake with violence and vengeance all that of which they have been robbed. No one doubts that the arming of the nations will lead to terrible massacres and the ruin and degeneration of all the peoples enchained in the circle of armaments. No one doubts that if the present order of things continues for some

dozens of years longer it will lead to a general breakdown. We have but to open our eyes to see the abyss towards which we are advancing."

A few sentences later is a passage which will recall a well-known passage in *Social Problems*: "All the great revolutions in men's lives are made in thought. When a change takes place in man's thought, action follows the direction of thought as inevitably as a ship follows the direction given by its rudder."

It should be added that the translations are clearer and in many cases reveal a deeper meaning than some of those previously current. A number of useful notes on matters of fact have been added, and the edition is free from those disconcerting comments which were added by former editors who thought that they could explain Tolstoy better than he explained himself.

BRITAIN'S BROKEN WORD

The Rev A. G. Fraser, Principal of Newbattle Abbey College, speaking at a conference of the Scottish Division of the Young Women's Christian Association at Balrossie, Kilmalcolm (*Glasgow Herald*, 16th April) said:

"We could not have peace so long as we had injustice, and in this modern world we could not confine our justice to one continent only. We talked about the sanctity of treaties and we said that Hitler breaks his word. There was not an African who believed the word of a British Governor, because we had broken our treaties with the Africans by the score, whether it was in Kenya, Rhodesia, South Africa, or West Africa."

"Once upon a time we thought it was right for a man to own another man. Now the conscience of the people held that slavery was not justified. No more was the possession of another nation justified."

"The only empire which could last was that which was based on service, not an empire that was based on exploitation. The reason why every empire had died had been that it had been based on exploitation."

"To-day through companies we had more exploitation than ever we had through individuals, because companies had no conscience. If we were going to have peace in Europe, we had to have a sense of international righteousness, and we could not get that except by showing it where we ourselves had the power."

*

This was strong meat for the organizers of the Conference. Without denying the truth, they wished to be disassociated from its expression. Next day the *Glasgow Herald* published a letter from Marjorie Wilson, President of the Y.W.C.A., Scottish Division, she writing: "The address given by Principal Fraser, of Newbattle Abbey College, on 'The World in which we live' in no way reflects the opinion of the Y.W.C.A. of Great Britain, Scottish Division, from whose platform he was speaking."