

And so it comes that this prime cause of industrial strife at home between man and man quickly overleaps national boundaries, and becomes a struggle between nation and nation. This artificially limited field of opportunity turns what under free economic conditions would be peaceful international co-operation for mutual benefit into the bitter struggle we everywhere see among nations for such markets as are left. We rejoice that freedom of other kinds has been won, but revolutionists limiting their aims to this and ignoring the larger liberty—the equal right of all men to the bounties of Nature—these things are bound to be.

For what is the truth? If we are to measure successful reform by the opportunity it gives to men to live their own lives in their own way, and so to win their road upwards, free from hindrance towards intellectual and spiritual betterment, and to the even greater freedom which lies beyond, it matters very little what kind of government prevails. Unless the economic problem is faced and subdued, progress will only mock at the hope that merely springs from political adjustments. Changes limited to the mere machinery and forms of government cannot by any possibility give us economic liberty. History teaches it to be a false hope. The deeper cut must be taken.

Of course political and personal freedom are great aids to intellectual and spiritual advancement. We are right to be proud of a widened franchise, representative government, religious liberty, and freedom of the person; but these in themselves can never be the ends. The end is the greater freedom which lies beyond—the equal right of all men to share the birthright the Creator has freely given to all. That being still denied, it comes to pass that the stimulus given to men's physical and mental activities by the revolutionary movements of history has but had the same result as all other forms of increased human activity. It has resulted in the hardening against industry of the value of land. The tribute paid by the dispossessed to those who still retain possession of the earth has but increased, and progress been brought to a stand. Therefore until opinion is enlightened to the point of recognising that this is the primary injustice of all we must resign ourselves to seeing the true fruits of revolutionary movements ever receding from the people's grasp. For the tyranny of landlordism is like all other tyrannies. Given personal and political freedom, the only tyrant we have to face is our own ignorance of what are our rights, and landlordism will go the day that ignorance is dispelled. We can therefore but struggle on in our task of enlightenment in the firmest knowledge that, with its coming, the day of true emancipation will dawn.

W. R. L.

TOLSTOY ON THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Being extracts from a letter written by Herman Bernstein from St. Petersburg, July 20th, 1908, and published in THE NEW YORK TIMES of August 9th, 1908.

"At about 9.30 o'clock in the morning I found myself at the door of the little white house where lives and works the most remarkable man in the world to-day—Leo Tolstoy. I was met by Nicholas Gusev, Tolstoy's secretary, an amiable young gentleman, who took me into his room.

"Presently he entered. . . .

"He asked me about my impressions of Russia, and particularly about the popularity of Henry George's works in America. 'Nearly 50 years ago,' he went on slowly, 'the great question that occupied all minds in Russia was the emancipation of the serfs. The burning question now is the ownership of land. The peasants never recognised the private ownership of land. They say that the land belongs to God. I am afraid that people will regard what I say as stupid, but I must say it: The leaders of the revolutionary movement, as well as the Government officials, are not doing the only thing that would pacify the people at once. And the only thing that would pacify the people now is the introduction of the system of Henry George.

"As I have pointed out in my introductory note to the Russian version of 'Social Problems,' Henry George's great idea, outlined so clearly and so thoroughly more than 30 years ago, remains to this day entirely unknown to the great majority of the people. This is quite natural. Henry George's idea, which changes the entire system in the life of nations in favour of the oppressed, voiceless majority, and to the detriment of the ruling minority, is so undeniably convincing, and, above all, so simple, that it is impossible not to understand it, and understanding it, it is impossible not to make an effort to introduce it into practice, and therefore the only means against this idea is to pervert it and to pass it in silence. And this has been true of the Henry George theory for more than 30 years. It has been both perverted and passed in silence, so that it has become difficult to induce people to read his work attentively and to think about it. Society does with ideas that disturb its peace—and Henry George is one of these—exactly what the bee does with the worms which it considers dangerous but which it is powerless to destroy. It covers their nests with paste, so that the worms, even though not destroyed, cannot multiply and do more harm. Just so the European nations act with regard to ideas that are dangerous to their order of things, or, rather, to the disorder to which they have grown accustomed. Among these are also the ideas of Henry George. 'But light

shines even in the darkness, and the darkness cannot cover it.' A truthful, fruitful idea cannot be destroyed. However you may try to smother it, it will still live, it will be more alive than all the vague, empty, pedantic ideas and words with which people are trying to smother it, and sooner or later the truth will burn through the veil that is covering it and it will shine forth before the whole world. Thus it will be also with Henry George's idea.

"And it seems to me that just now is the proper time to introduce this idea—now, and in Russia. This is just the proper time for it, because in Russia a revolution is going on, the serious basis of which is the rejection by the whole people, by the real people, of the ownership of land. In Russia where nine-tenths of the population are tillers of the soil and where this theory is merely a conscious expression of that which has always been regarded as right by the entire Russian people—in Russia, I say, especially during this period of reconstruction of social conditions, his idea should now find its application, and thus the revolution, so wrongly and criminally directed, would be crowned by a great act of righteousness. This is my answer to your question about the future of Russia. Unless this idea is introduced into the life of our people, Russia's future can never be bright."

THE CASE IN A NUTSHELL

BY H. G. CHANCELLOR, M.P.

If land is not used so as to provide our requirements, it must be because those who hold it have not done and are not doing their duty. The Board of Agriculture will seize, if it chooses, small patches of vacant building sites to let for allotments. So far as such sites are used food will be produced, and good will be done. But the area all round which is neither built upon nor half cultivated will not be seized or brought into use except with the owner's consent and presumably at his price. True, the Board will put pressure upon farmers to plough up grass land and bribe them with the guaranteed prices to grow certain crops. That means a subsidy from the unfortunate consumer, who is to be penalised because the owners and users of land have not done their duty. So the consumer first suffers from shortage and the resultant high prices, and then suffers again from artificial high prices perpetuated to reward those who are the cause of his suffering. But the consumer is not the criminal. He is the victim. It is through no fault of his that needed land has lain idle. All this land is owned, and its use or neglect has

been due not to the consumer who wishes to buy, but to the owner who has neglected to supply the products of which his land is capable, and whose non-production has created the trouble. If anybody is to be penalised it should be the authors of this neglect, not the sufferers from it.

This proposition is so simple and just that one would think even statesmen must see it. And its application would have the effect of permanently curing the evil. A tax on the actual value of the land would inflict loss unless it was used and would compel owners to use it.

Had it been in force before the war the land would not have been out of use and our food supplies would have been by so much augmented. But look at the shortage of agricultural labour! Why is it so short? One chief reason has been diversion to better-paid labour in towns. Another, of course, is the temporary conscription of needed men for military purposes. Mr. Chamberlain will try in vain to replace these by enrolling National Service Volunteers, and then sending women, clerks, mechanics, navvies, and others to do badly work, requiring years of training and skill, from which the trained and skilled men have been compulsorily withdrawn who would have done it well. Suppose that even now, instead of this arbitrary interference with the natural course of trade, the just system of penalising the guilty instead of his victim were adopted, by taxing the owner on the value of the land and thus compelling its use. What would follow? Owners would want labour, and advertise for it. Only so could they use the land and pay the tax. Labour would be forthcoming if, but only if, adequately paid. Agricultural work would have to attract labour by paying its value. But if that were offered, neither patriotism nor compulsion would be necessary, nor State interference. Well-paid labour means more efficient labour. Efficient and well-paid labour would lead to better management, and better cultivation. Better cultivation means better produce and more produce, and need not mean increased cost of production or higher prices; for efficient labour at good wages is more economical than inefficient labour at low wages. The pressure of the tax, compelling the continuous use of land, would necessitate the keeping of the workers upon it by the only method possible, viz., the payment of good wages, and the land thus brought into use by the circumstances of the war would by the same simple method continue in use after the war, and thus ensure against such a peril, if war comes again.

Of course, anything so simple and effective will stand no chance with our statesmen until the common people, whose minds are not steeped in legal fictions and