

NEWS—FOREIGN.

GREAT BRITAIN.

CHAMBERLAIN'S PROPHECY—URGING THE HOUSE OF LORDS TO REJECT THE BUDGET —LORD ROSEBERRY'S BOLD UTTERANCE OF A FEW YEARS AGO—EVEN TORY-RIDDEN ULSTER YIELDING TO BUDGET ONSLAUGHTS.

Now that we have a government of the people by the people, we will go on and make it a government for the people, in which all shall cooperate in order to secure to every man his natural rights, his rights to existence, and to a fair enjoyment of it. I shall be told tomorrow that this is socialism.

Mr. Chamberlain at Warrington, Sept. 8th, 1885.

I may think Tariff Reform or Protection an evil, but Socialism is the end of all, the negation of faith, of family, of monarchy, and empire. The deep . . . subtle, and insidious danger which underlies the budget is the danger of socialism.

Lord Roseberry at Glasgow, Sept. 10th, 1909.

That a newer and better spirit now pervades the public mind of this country is clear to any ordinary observer of the trend of social and political movements. As a general rule the House of Commons is prorogued by the 12th of August in order that our legislators may be free to journey north to join the shooting parties who commence operations on the moors on that date. But the House is still discussing the Finance Bill. So far as one is able to gather it may be several weeks yet before they are free from their parliamentary duties. It has been almost entirely due to the Land Clauses in the Budget that the Government has been kept in harness so much beyond the ordinary time. The opposition has been determined to wear the government out by a long and strenuous fight. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, with the splendid backing he has had from many of his colleagues in the Cabinet, has been equally determined to carry the Bill. During the progress of the Finance Bill through the House of Commons a great many concessions have been made. In fact, it is stated that one word in every three has been changed. As the main thing in the Bill is the Valuation, and as that is to be secured, we feel highly pleased and gratified with the result, for the fight raised by the pro-

posed valuation still goes on with increasing vigor.

At the moment the two great questions are—What will the House of Lords do with the Finance Bill, and, when will the general election take place? Both press and politicians appear to be divided in opinion on both these questions. What will happen I will not venture to prophesy. In this connection it is interesting to note what Mr. Chamberlain had to say on the question of the House of Lords in his radical days.

"Are the Lords to dictate to us, the people of England? Are the Lords to dictate to us the laws which we shall make and the way in which we shall bring them in? Are you going to be governed by yourselves or will you submit to an oligarchy which is a mere accident of birth? Your ancestors resisted Kings and abated the horde of Monarchs, and it is inconceivable that you should be so careless of your great heritage as to submit your liberties to this miserable minority of individuals who rest their claims upon privilege and upon accident."

On September 17th, the Prime Minister went to Birmingham, where, in Bingley Hall, he delivered an address in reply to Lord Roseberry. Some of our friends declared that the speech was one of the boldest and most democratic ever delivered by a Prime Minister. A few days later Mr. Balfour went to the same place to reply to Mr. Asquith. He denounced the Land Taxes of course, but like Lord Roseberry he failed to point out any alternative.

Mr. Chamberlain now urges the House of Lords to reject this popular measure—a measure passed by the people's representatives. If the Lords act on Mr. Chamberlain's advice we shall see very lively times. Mr. Chamberlain is now more tory than the tories. As he was once an extreme radical, so he is now an extreme tory.

As Single Taxers we are full of hope, for in any case the fight will go on. The Lords themselves can hardly decide what to do. The wiser ones will very probably urge the passing of the Bill in the hope that the enthusiasm now so manifest for Land and Taxation Reform may cool down. In this I venture to think they will be mistaken, for the injustice of our system of Land tenure and taxation is now understood in a manner

that is at once cheering and amazing, when compared with a few short months ago. Many politicians and press men are of opinion that so many of our hereditary legislators will object to the land clauses that we shall be at once forced into a general election. The issues will then be—**SHALL THE LORDS OR THE PEOPLE RULE? AND THE LAND QUESTION.** With these issues to fight on there can hardly be any doubt that the progressive forces will be returned to power with an effective majority. Personally I do not share the opinion of those of our friends who think that the acceptance by the Lords of the Finance Bill will be followed by a slackening of political interest and enthusiasm. The facts that the valuation will bring out will, in my opinion, strengthen the interest in the Land question, and strengthen the demand for the taxation of Land Values.

It is most interesting to look back for a few years and note the changes that have taken place. On March 21st, 1894, when he was Prime Minister, speaking in St. James's Hall, London, Lord Roseberry, referring to the work of the London County Council, said:

"It has laid down some principles which will not be allowed to die until they are carried into effect. The first of these is the taxation of ground values. That is a principle which is becoming universally established, because I think at the last election, when the other party held their meeting in this very hall, the judgment of that meeting acknowledged that that was a sound and just principle. It is not a very easy principle to carry justly and simply into effect, but I have little doubt that with the brains now devoted to the application of it we shall soon arrive at a working result. The other principle to which I allude is the principle of betterment You need not be very much afraid if for a Session, or even for two, those large principles do not have immediate effect; and you may be quite certain that as long as Her Majesty's present advisers are in power you will meet with very unflinching support in any honest and honourable proposal you have to make with reference to betterment or the taxation of ground values."

His Lordship is now an opponent of this

just principle. About the end of August the political world was moved by a report that his Lordship was to speak against the Budget. It was arranged that he should address a mid-day meeting of business men in the City Hall, Glasgow, Sept. 10th. The meeting was a very large one—the Hall which holds about 3000 being packed. There was some talk of the Chancellor of the Exchequer replying to him. This was not arranged. The Lord Advocate (Mr. Ure) was slated to address a meeting of Glasgow business men in one of the smaller halls. The demand for tickets was so great that within a couple of days before the appointed time the same City Hall which was used for Lord Roseberry's meeting was booked for Mr. Ure's reply Sept. 17th. When he stepped on to the platform at 1-30 p.m. he faced a packed hall of the finest body of men I ever saw. Mr. Ure's reply was brilliant, and the audience appreciated the speech in a manner that showed that Mr. Ure had satisfied them that the Budget was on right lines.

It is interesting to note that the chairman for Mr. Ure was Mr. Cameron Corbett. In 1902 the Scottish Single Tax league held a bazaar. Amongst those invited to become patrons was Mr. Corbett, whose reply to the request was as follows:

"I have just as much sympathy with stealing umbrellas and watches as with the stealing of land, and I believe that precisely the same sort of benefit would accrue to the community from the one course as to the other." Mr. Corbett was eloquent and enthusiastic in his defence of Land Clauses in the Budget.

Great demonstrations are still being held all over the country. At Manchester the Budget Protest League has had audiences of ten and fifteen thousand and their resolutions were defeated. On the other hand, the Budget League and other associations have been having demonstrations, and have had up to one hundred thousand persons present. In every case they have carried their resolution in support of the Budget almost unanimously. The Budget League have held meetings everywhere and their speakers are reported to have addressed over five million people. The literature they have turned out has been

in many instances all that Single Taxers could desire. In fact, I think they must have written much of it.

The United Committee and the Leagues for the Taxation of Land Values, through their Organizers, Speakers, Press Bureau and *Land Values*, are still doing excellent work. Richard M'Ghee, Edward M'Hugh and others have been carrying the war into divisions which are represented by liberals who are opposed to our principles. The results were most gratifying. In one case the member has become a convert. In another he has been cast aside.

From Tory-ridden Ulster come reports of Secretaries of "Unionist" Associations refusing to organize or work against the Budget because they believe in the Valuation and Taxation of Land Values. The Lord Advocate paid a return visit to Ulster Hall, Belfast, on Sept. 25th, where he received an enthusiastic welcome from an audience which packed every part of the large hall.

I have given a few of the many evidences of the widespread interest in, and sympathy for our principles. Before the REVIEW calls for another news letter we may possibly be in the midst of a general election. Whatever happens, Single Taxers here may be depended on to spare no efforts to carry on the work to a successful issue. It has been pointed out that the Liberal party was almost destroyed by the Home Rule Bill, the Tory party by Chamberlain's Tariff Reform adventure, whilst the Liberal party has been recreated by Lloyd George's Budget.

F. SKIRROW.

LONDON, Eng.

THE BUDGET FIGHT IN ENGLAND.

STUDY OF THE CONTEST ON THE GROUND
BY MR. GEORGE WALLACE, OF JAMAICA,
NEW YORK CITY.

(For the Review.)

For three or four weeks I have been on the ground, a deeply interested student of the budget fight in England. Intelligent Englishmen tell me there has never been such a contest on in this

country since the great battle for ballot reform in 1832. Of course, none of those now living were in that struggle, but they explain that no contest has since been waged having a closer relation to the uplift of humanity. Before that time Parliament was not a representative body except for the wealthy classes. In 1832 the franchise was greatly extended, and in the latter part of the century a large number of additional voters were taken in in the election of members of the Commons. But the country is still far away from the universal manhood suffrage which prevails in the United State.

The two features of the Budget introduced by Mr. Lloyd George, Chancellor of the Exchequer, with the approval of the Liberal Ministry of which he is a member, are a tax of a half-penny in the pound on undeveloped land, and a twenty per cent. tax on the unearned increment in land values. Both are halting, feeble steps in the progress of mankind towards natural justice in land taxation, but they have caused a great *furere* in this "tight little island." Never before has land been taxed in this country, and the landholders are aghast at the prospect. They have by their privileged holding of the land held the vast population at their mercy, reduced millions to abject poverty, and constantly blocked useful enterprises which would greatly benefit the people. They are now fighting both tax propositions with great vigor and fanaticism, and many of the nobility exhibit an utter lack of "nobility" of character.

There would be little objection to the small tax on land values but for the fact that it makes necessary an official valuation of the land. In England this will mean a conscientious attempt to fix the value accurately, not by the slipshod methods of assessment so common in America where undeveloped land is so frequently assessed at less than a tithe of the holder's estimate of selling value. The dukes and other big landholders do not want their land valued at all; they hate the prospect of having the value revealed to the country. Further, they