

Those who remember the old New York *Ledger*—and those who do are a rapidly disappearing element of our population—will recall the weekly homilies or sermons of Rev. Dr. John Hall, which were a valuable feature of the story paper founded and successfully conducted for so many years by Robert Bonner. Dr. Hall was one of the best known of New York's clergymen; Bolton Hall, his son, has inherited the preacher's instinct and perhaps the preacher's habit. Sermons, too, come from his pen, but they are a different sort from those once heard by the fashionable congregation over which the late Dr. John Hall presided. But they are perhaps not less effective. Single Taxers will believe they are much more so—as instruments making for social righteousness. For what the father told in homilies the son has pointed with sharpened wit in fable and satire which are gathered together in his books, *Even as You and I, Things as They Are, and the Game of Life*. And in the full intellectual consecration that comes to those to whom our philosophy grows a moral conviction he is helping to bring about a condition when the traditional religion he learned in his youth may become the habit of daily lives, and where in our social relationships it may be possible to practice its precepts.

Idealist as he is, Mr. Hall is, nevertheless, of a keenly practical turn of mind. This practical bent is curiously exhibited in his latest book, "*Three Acres and Liberty*," in both the conception and the methodical method employed in presenting his facts and arguments. A reviewer has called this work "The first serious attempt to show the productive capacity of the earth when satisfactorily used." In the making of this work he was aided by his experience as one of the chief promoters of the cultivation of vacant lots by the unemployed.

The early incidents in the life of the President of the National Association may be briefly set down. He was born in 1854, in Ireland, and received his early education in Dublin. In 1875 he was graduated from Princeton, and in 1878 received the degree of A. M. In 1884 he married.

Almost from the time the Single Tax movement began until the present Mr. Hall has been unremitting in his labors for its advancement. When the history of the

movement shall be written his name will be associated with those of George, McGlynn, Post, Croasdale. His selection as head of the National Organization is a fitting recognition of real service.

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JOHN J. MURPHY.

(See *frontispiece*.)

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Mr. John J. Murphy, to whose initiative is due the late Single Tax Conference and the organization begun there, was born in Dublin, Ireland, forty-two years ago. He came to New York in 1882. In 1884 a copy of "*Progress and Poverty*" fell into his hands and was read with keen interest. In 1889 Mr. Murphy joined the Manhattan Single Tax Club.

During a residence of nearly a year in Chicago Mr. Murphy was a member of the club in that city, and when he returned to New York in 1897 he became an active propagandist, throwing himself into the agitation with all that earnestness for a great cause which characterizes him when aroused. The open air meetings carried on by the local club in Madison Square heard Mr. Murphy expound Single Tax principles until with constant practice he became one of the most eloquent and finished speakers, as already he was one of the best equipped scholars in our ranks.

In 1900 and 1901 he was assistant editor of the *National Single Taxer*, the predecessor of the Single Tax REVIEW. Since 1901 he has been assistant secretary and secretary of the Citizens Union.

The positions he has occupied are evidence of the unceasing intellectual activity of the man. He has been chairman of the Lecture Committee of the Municipal Art Society, First Secretary of the National Society of Craftsmen, Chairman of the Historical Section of the Gaelic Society, and First Vice-President of the People's Institute Club A.

The REVIEW has before had occasion to regret that Mr. Murphy's activity in so many departments has interfered with his devoting a greater amount of time to independent literary work. He has given us a sample of his excellence in this field in a few economic writings and occasional letters to the press, and in the preface to the *Wisdom*

of Benjamin Franklin, which he edited last winter, in which we may express the regret—with no desire to unduly compliment our friend—that there was not somewhat less of Franklin and more of Murphy.

Mr. Murphy has not refused his help to many lines of social effort, regarding some of these as useful and some as preparatory to the great reform. But he has held that most of these subsidiary reforms are palliative or anaesthetic. He holds, too, that many of the institutions which we now decry are not bad in themselves, but are made so merely because of conditions in which they flourish, and that logic, justice and humanity unite in demanding equal opportunity and no special privilege.

In an article in the *South Side Observer*, published at Rockville Center, N. Y., George Wallace, computing that it takes the yearly wages of 20,000 men to support Mr. Astor in England, writes as follows:

“The evil results arise from the fact that this land rent, which comes into the hands of private parties, is not earned by those who receive it. It is all earned by the working people of the city, who by this means are forced to contribute hundreds of millions yearly from their wages to make up the unearned wealth of the New York aristocracy. That is a cruel injustice, and widespread poverty becomes just as certain under such conditions as that daylight comes with sunrise.

It seems strange that although no one who studies this proposition disputes it, the relation of the facts to the distressing conditions which result therefrom are so little studied and understood. We clearly regard it as a crime worthy of state prison punishment if one individual forcibly takes part of the earnings of another; but we take a different view when one man reaches out and takes part of the earnings of a whole community. That is simply because we have become accustomed to it, and because the laws of the land make it a crime in the first instance, while the laws provide for wrongful taking in the other case. One wrongful taking is contrary to, and the other authorized by, state law; both are contrary to natural justice.”

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## News—Foreign.

### GREAT BRITAIN.

RADICAL REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE—  
GRAND DEMONSTRATIONS AT GLASGOW CITY  
HALL AND BELLEVUE, MANCHESTER, TO  
HEAR SOLICITOR GENERAL URE—DECLA-  
RATION OF THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR  
ENGLAND.

The year 1907 is one which British Single Taxers can look back upon with great satisfaction. The progress made since the news letter for your last January issue was penned has been of an encouraging character. Twelve months ago the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the land values taxation (Scotland) bill issued its report after examining some thirty witnesses consisting of Solicitors, Valuers and other experts, the committee recommended:

1. That the bill referred to the committee be not further proceeded with.
2. That a measure be introduced making provision for a valuation being made of the land in the burghs and counties of Scotland apart from the buildings and improvements upon it, and that no assessment be determined upon until the amount of the valuation is known and considered.

The bill referred to, though falling far short of these recommendations of the select committee, had served a most useful purpose, having provoked discussion which had a very valuable educational effect. Without this bill the committee over which Mr. Alex Ure, K. C. M. P. (Solicitor General for Scotland) presided, would not have been appointed. In that event it is conceivable that apart from the value of the report, the event of greatest importance to the land values movement in Great Britain might not have taken place.

The report of this select committee, drafted and signed by the Chairman, was the strongest and clearest demand for the application of the Single Tax principle to local taxation which had hereto been made by any responsible body of politicians. The following quotations show the radical nature of the report.

“The most valuable economic advantages of this Reform follow from the change of the basis of rating. We have already referred to the nature of these advantages which may be thus summarized: