

News—Foreign.

GREAT BRITAIN.

INFLUENCE OF HENRY GEORGE'S TEACHINGS
RECOGNIZED IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS—OP-
POSITION OF THAT BODY TO THE NEW
SPIRIT MAY MEAN ITS DESTRUCTION.

The event of leading interest to Single Taxers in Great Britain since the last issue of the REVIEW, has been the rejection by the House of Lords of the Land Values (Scotland) Bill. This measure which was introduced into the House of Commons on May 18th, was merely a Valuation Bill. Its object was to secure solely a valuation of the land of Scotland apart from improvements. In itself it was a small proposal: yet, carried into effect, it would have opened the way for the first instalment of the great reform which English Single Taxers are striving ultimately to achieve. Valuation, as the Prime Minister remarked a few months ago, is "an unexciting word," yet it indicates the foundation upon which our great reform must be built. Our opponents recognize this fact no less clearly than we do, hence the Bill met with the bitterest opposition, both in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The champions of privilege have seldom been so energetic and alert as at the present time. The first effort, however small, that may be made towards establishing a just land system will meet the strongest opposition. The history of the Scotch Valuation Bill proves it. The name of Henry George has now become a name of dread to them, and it will gratify Single Taxers all the world over to know that the work of the great master is receiving recognition of a kind it has never received before. Members of Parliament now see clearly that they have to combat the influence of Henry George's teachings in the House of Commons itself, or fail in their defence of privilege and land monopoly. Thus it was asserted again and again during the debates in the Commons that the real promoters of the Bill were the followers of Henry George. Let us quote the remarks of one of these clear-seeing gentlemen, Mr. Remnant, M. P., for Finsbury. Mr. Remnant condemned the Bill as "little more than a reproduction of the crude fallacies expounded by a solitary Edinburgh advo-

cate (Mr. Adam—a photo and sketch of whom appear in this issue of the REVIEW) whose chief qualification appears to be belief in the views of Henry George, and whose views were dressed up by the distinguished chairman, the Solicitor-General for Scotland. Again, said Mr. Remnant, "the system of valuation which the Bill proposed to introduce offered such unattractive results for a waste of money that the proposal could be explained only as a first step towards carrying out a programme of confiscation of all rent by taxation, as advocated by the late Henry George. Henry Georgeism was much less deserving of respect than the most extreme socialism. Socialism was a considered theory defended by some learned economists and affecting all forms of property equally. The Single Tax, on the other hand, was a wild proposal for confiscating only capital invested in land, put forward by Henry George, a half-educated fanatic, whose views had been condemned by every competent economist who had condescended to examine them." Even Mr. A. J. Balfour, the leader of the Tory Party, denounced the Bill because "the doctrine on which it was founded was the doctrine of Henry George." Even so! The graceful allusion to George as "a half-educated fanatic" will seriously offend no one, but this unstinted recognition of the influence which George's teachings have wrought among the English people will bring joy to the hearts of all enthusiastic disciples, not in America only, but all over the globe.

The bill was carried for its third reading by 172 votes to 33, a majority of 139. The division was taken after an all night sitting, a big batch of amendments having to be disposed of. One of the chief amendments came from Mr. Harold Cox, who is professedly a Liberal, but whose position in English politics is unique and beyond definition. This gentleman who, by the way, was formerly Secretary of the Cobden Club, moved a new clause to make the adoption of the Bill by local authorities optional. Mr. Cox has distinguished himself as a bitter opponent of the taxation of land values. The House signified their sense of the importance of his amendment by rejecting it by a majority of 190. As for Mr. Balfour, the leader of the opposition, the prospect of

legislation threatening the interests of the party of privilege gave him a much needed opportunity of rehabilitating himself to some extent in the eyes of the Tory Party, and he shook himself for the time being out of his characteristic pose of aristocratic languor and became quite a lion in the way. Though powerless in the House of Commons he has friends ready to do his bidding in the House of Lords and it was in the Upper House that the fatal blow was delivered to the Bill. Lord Robertson moved its rejection, which motion was carried by 118 votes to 81. Lord Robertson occupies his seat among the Peers by virtue of holding a salaried judicial position, and his action in taking the lead in the rejection of the bill was sufficiently open to criticism on this account. But what can be said of a gentleman who delivered himself of the following flash of oratorical brilliance. "There were certain quack remedies that wanted the semblance of authority, and it was to be given in this way by putting in the eighth column some nostrums of the Radical party to accustom the people of this country to deal with them as if they were realities. To this he strongly objected. He had had a long acquaintance with the valuation roll and had a sort of affection for it. It came of a respectable Whig family, and he would be sorry to see it in its old age become a sandwich man for advertising the theories of Mr. Henry George, and do the dirty work of Scotch Radicalism."

The action of the House of Lords has raised, this time in a more acute form, the Constitutional issue in Great Britain. "What," all persons interested in reform are asking, "is to be done with the House of Lords? How much longer is the will of the people to be thwarted by a body of men whose functions, in theory, is revisory, but whose practice is obstructive to all genuine reform?" This is the issue that the people of England must soon decide for good or ill. The Lords have forfeited all claim to be considered a true revisory body. Their action in regard to the Scotch Valuation Bill alone condemns them on this head. The Bill was the initial step, and truly but a little one, towards a settlement of the land question. But as Viscount Ridley, speaking at Newcastle-on-Tyne on January 12th of this year said: "Not far from a third of

the land of the country is owned by the House of Lords in one way or another." This admission offers the real explanation of their Lordship's action in smashing the Bill. "The House of Landlords is fighting for its own." There is still need for the educative work of Single Taxers in this country. When "the man in the street" has recognized the importance of the land question he will compel some Government to deal with the House of Lords. When the Lords have to fight for their existence as a legislative body the Single Taxers of Great Britain will see to it that the fate of the Scotch Valuation Bill is not forgotten.

LONDON, England. FRANK APPELBY.

TAXATION OF LAND VALUES CAMPAIGN.

The United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, whose headquarters are at 20 Tothill Street, Westminster, are mapping out a number of meetings for the recess. Mr. Alexander Ure (Solicitor General for Scotland) will speak for the Committee, along with Mr. Trevelyan, M. P., at a demonstration on the Land Values Question at Leeds, October 4th; at Saltaire along with Mr. Percy Illingsworth, M. P., October 26th; at Partick, November 15th, and later at Chesterfield and Bradford. The Committee hope also to arrange meetings at Anddersfield, Greenock, Aberdeen and other centres. Mr. Winston Churchill will speak for the Committee at Newcastle-on-Tyne on the 3rd of February, and the Lord Advocate has promised to speak for the Committee at Hanley about the same time. Open air speakers, under the auspices of the Committee, have been at work during the summer months in various places throughout the country, and much new explanatory literature on the question is being circulated.

LONDON, England. JOHN PAUL,
Secretary.

HUNGARY.

Excuse me for my long silence, but I would not write you before I could show your readers a sign of some activity here.