

without warrant and without right, and the newspapers ejaculate "hurrah!" But when the courts determine that it was not the woman speaker but the police that were criminal in the matter, the newspapers pass silently by on the other side.

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FIRST INSTALLMENT OF LAND REFORM IN GREAT BRITAIN.

One of the seven measures to get safely through the British Parliament at its first session under the management of the Campbell-Bannerman ministry is the "Land Tenure Bill" (p. 850). It is so small an installment of the program which that Government has laid out for itself that some of the supporters of the ministry thought it bad policy to expend much effort on it. "The great land reform before the Liberal party is not this bill but something far larger," says the London Tribune. "The imagination of the party has been caught by the hope of a great regeneration of the country to be effected by a wise and determined statesmanship which will create and foster a population of small holders and restore life and romance to our empty villages. Any energy spent on other objects is grudged as energy wasted on objects that are ancillary or perhaps even injurious to this great aim." Still the land tenure bill that is passed does get rid of the worst conditions surrounding the English farmer,—the insecurity of tenure, the danger of confiscation, the risks to his investment of capital and labor; and the provision in the bill for compensation for damage done by winged game is a new principle, proposing that it shall be considered henceforth that home-making takes precedence of feudal power and what is called "sport"—which will have a great effect on the British land policy of the future. The Prime Minister assured a deputation of 150 Liberal and Labor members of Parliament just before the adjournment, who had waited on him to urge legislation in the direction of taxation of land values, of his sympathy, and expressed a "confident hope" that a measure for the separate valuation of land values would be part of the government program at the next session. The separate valuation of land values as distinguished from buildings and other improvements, was asked for by all the speakers of the deputation as the first step necessary to the accomplishment of a reform system.

The taxation of land values is one of the burning issues of British politics. It has been kept very much alive by the sitting of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the taxation

of land values (Scotland) bill. The principle of this bill consists in the separation of the land from the value of the buildings and the placing of taxation on the value of the land, to the relief, pro tanto, of the taxes levied under the present system. The argument of the advocates of the bill is that the land owner should not be encouraged to keep land out of use by having no taxes to pay on it; that the owner contributes no benefit to the community by holding the land but rather helps in this way to force up the price of land; the growth of the population and the outlay of the municipalities are always increasing the value of the land. But a secondary problem has arisen in the question as to whether the tax which is meant to absorb future betterment and unearned increment should go to the national or to the local treasury.

Land values for the purposes of taxation J. A. Hobson would divide into "old unearned increment" and "new unearned increment," the "old" to be regarded as having become national property in the sense that national taxation may to a gradually increasing extent be properly imposed upon it; while "new" unearned increment chiefly the direct result of local expenditure, local energy and local growth shall be regarded primarily as a source of local revenue. Mr. Hobson thinks that the town, district and county are going to play an increasing part in taxation in the near future. He instances the new problem of transportation to the suburbs of cities, the displacement of the present systems of poor relief, the probable early organizations of public supplies of electric energy for lighting and industrial purposes, and other practical issues involving large drains on public expenditure will force a new division of revenues. It is interesting to see how Mr. Hobson meets the criticism that the income of ground values will be voted away by majorities of citizens who pay little or no taxes themselves while imposing heavy burdens on a few large taxpayers. "Is it just or reasonable that the body of citizens should impose taxes upon ten per cent. of their numbers, the other ninety per cent. paying nothing?" asks Mr. Hobson, to answer the question by pointing out that the income upon which the tax on land value falls is not to be regarded rightly as the property of him who receives it, but as "publicly created income which, by custom or obsolete convenience has been permitted to remain in private hands."

The state or city would take only as much as necessary of the value which is constantly being added to the land by public enterprise. This he

insists, is not confiscation but the taking by the public of a portion of the income earned by the public and needed for the uses of the public life. The checks which will come into operation against public extravagance or misuse will be the discontent evoked, and the reforming energy of intelligent citizens, when the draughts upon the income earned by general improvement of the municipality go beyond demands just and safe for the general interest. "It is no more reasonable to deny to a municipality or state the right to collect and administer its publicly created income on the ground of alleged liability to abuse of this right, than for a similar reason to deny the full use of his income to an individual who has earned it," says Mr. Hobson. The value of land depends on the presence and communal activity of the population around it. A new public improvement, a better road for instance, improves the value of unused land as much as it improves the occupied land in the neighborhood, but under the present system the latter bears the brunt of the taxation paying for the improvement. The present English reform contention on the land value question is that taxing land value is taxing a monopoly value.

E. H. CLEMENT.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

THE MODERN SMALL-FARMER MOVEMENT IN DENMARK.

Hong, Denmark, November, 1906.—The social class in Denmark on which the single tax idea has made the deepest impression and where it is best understood is somewhat remarkable, and is peculiar to Denmark. It is the lower order of farmers—the so-called "housemen." These are the men who have no more land than they can till with help of wife and children.

In Denmark there are 160,000 of these small farms. Of the middle sized farms (from 30 to 90 acres) there are approximately 70,000. The possessors of these are called "gaardmen" (freeholders). Of larger properties there are approximately 2,000. Denmark numbers 2,500,000 citizens, 1,250,000 of whom are farmers.

The "housemen," then, form the most numerous class, and their number will gradually increase, because this form of agriculture has shown itself to be the most advantageous, as well for the individual as for the whole community. The "houseman" with his family cultivates his field more intensively and with greater net gain than it is possible to get out of the larger estates with hired labor. Moreover, by their co-operative system of dairies, egg-exporting, hog slaughtering, etc., it is possible for the Danish small farmers to engage in the most advantageous forms of production in modern agriculture. The

"housemen," therefore, especially the more advanced, are the leaders in Danish agriculture.

Even in the political life of Denmark the numerous housemen are obtaining an increasing importance. The middle class farmers—the "gaardmen"—are now in political power, and their representatives are predominant in the government and the "Folkething" (lower house). They are, however, believed to be secretly in accord with the conservative party (Højre, the party of "the right"). The "housemen" who have contributed their part to the political supremacy of the "gaardmen" who obtained control of the government in 1901, are justly feeling themselves wronged. The first of the "gaardmen's" more important governmental acts was a tax reform which entirely abolished the old tolerably large land taxes (formerly well based in the land). This was a gain for the present holders, but a loss for the nation. The question involved is one of taxes and revenues to the amount of no less than 10 million kroner yearly (over two and a half million dollars) in a community of two and a half million inhabitants.

As this tax reform soon made the price of land rise, and as a former promised tariff reform in the direction of free trade was deliberately neglected, the exasperation of the "housemen" against the ruling "gaardmen" has constantly increased. This indignation is all the greater because in the year 1902, before the tax law was passed, a meeting of representatives was held in Koege (Zealand), where after an address upon the subject by the present writer, a resolution opposing the law was read and carried by the assembly. This resolution should be known more widely because of its strict and unconditional adherence to the single tax doctrine, without condition or reservation. Such a declaration has perhaps never been made elsewhere.

The "Koege Resolution of 1902."

The assembly of representatives of small farmers declares:

Since the small farm agriculture in independent holdings is the most advantageous form of agriculture for both the individual and the community, and it is therefore to be expected that this will in the future be the most common, and perhaps the only form of Danish agriculture, the solution of the small farmer problem is not essentially based upon support from the state or from the other classes of the community, but only in the full recognition of the small farmers having the same civil and legislative rights as the other classes in the community.

The small farmers, therefore, do not demand that they be especially favored by tax legislation, as, for example, by the abolition of the old land taxes and tithes, which were taken into account when possession was obtained, and are compensated for by abatement in the purchase price. The abolition of land taxes, by diminishing the public funds and exposing those who held no land to unjust loss, would give to a part of a single generation an advantage, and especially to the larger landowners.

Wherefore, the small farmers make this demand: the speediest possible abolition of every tariff, impost and tax, direct or indirect, upon articles of consumption, that is, upon foods, clothing, furniture, buildings, farm implements, tools, machinery, raw materials and income gained by labor; because all such burdens are resting with undue weight on labor and the poor man.

Instead of taxes upon those articles, the small farmers demand that for obtaining the public revenue, that value of the land be taxed which is not the result of the work of a single individual, but is caused by the growth and