

and better live stock." No doubt this is approximately as true anywhere as in Nebraska. But suppose it were done. How much better off would farm "hands" be? How much better off would farm tenants be after their leases expired? And farm owners, what about them? Would they be better off or worse off if they paid increased taxes on all their larger product, as tax laws now require, or only on the raw land value of their farms as the Singletax would require? As the Breeders' Review says, "farming in the United States will never be generally profitable until" farmers "know the difference between profits resulting from actual production and the margins of a speculation." But when farmers know this difference, no farmer who farms a farm will be averse to the Singletax. Every working farmer then will know that taxation of land values means taxation of land monopoly, and that exemption from taxes on production means exemption of farming from all taxation.



### LAISSEZ-FAIRE.

In considering concrete applications of abstract principles, one is sometimes tempted to doubt the principle because of failures in the application. Still, George's answer to Garrison, when the latter questioned the efficacy of the Singletax as a panacea for all social ills, "Nor do I believe it a panacea, but freedom is," should lend us heart.

A particular application of liberty may be followed by bad results. A particular denial of liberty may be followed by good results. But if a full and careful analysis be made, it will still be found that the good results were due somehow to liberty, and the bad to tyranny.



When the principle of laissez-faire was propounded, a wave of enthusiasm swept over the world. Many thought the economic problem had been solved. But somehow it would not stay solved.

England established free trade; but poverty persisted, and business depression followed prosperity.

And then, as though that were not enough to give the lie to liberty, Germany began her tariff orgy. She protected everybody, by turns. She taxed farmers for the benefit of manufacturers, then manufacturers for the benefit of farmers, and then both for the benefit of sailors. And strange to say, her restrictive legislation was followed by as remarkable results as was England's policy of freedom.

What was the reason?

Was the principle of laissez-faire wrong? Or had there been a mistake in the application?



The laissez-faire doctrine, liberally interpreted, embraces two points:

- (1) Clear the way.
- (2) Let alone.

The Manchester school succeeded in getting the government to let trade alone, but it would not clear the way.

By removing restraints upon trade, the wealth of England was increased to a marvelous degree; but that wealth, instead of going to the people in general, went to the particular persons who owned the land upon which Englishmen worked, and out of which they got their materials. Wages increased but little; but incomes from land—whether from factory sites, city lots, or mining rights—increased beyond all precedent.

In Germany, the reverse was true. That is, the restrictions placed upon trade were followed by an increase of business, an advance in wages, and a raising of the standard of living.

Does this mean that freedom has been found wanting? that the following after liberty is a vain pursuit?

By no means. A careful analysis of German conditions will make the reason of their apparent success as plain as the failure in England.



Germany was peculiarly conditioned. The youngest of western nations, and the least influenced by Roman thought and customs, her people had retained in largest degree their primitive individuality, and their inherent virility.

This tremendous latent force was quickened into life by the scourgings of commercial restrictions; just as the same force in England was quickened by freedom.

Bounties wrung from farmers will stimulate manufactures; and manufacturers in their turn can contribute to the prosperity of farmers; while both together may aid the shipping. But let no one suppose for a moment that this process can be carried on indefinitely.

Just as the dishonest bookkeeper who covers a shortage in one account by borrowing from another, and balances the second shortage by still further borrowing, must fail in the end, so must the nation fail that seeks prosperity by taxing one industry to stimulate another.



Lest apparent facts lead us to doubt a cherished principle, let the real facts be borne in mind.

The benefits of English free trade have been absorbed by English land owners; but when the principle involved in the Lloyd-George Budget shall have been carried to its logical conclusion, the benefits that heretofore have been intercepted by the landowners will be distributed among the workers.

So Germany, when she had completed the circle of special privilege exploitation, and was on the point of inevitable decline, turned to the taxation of ground rent. Thus there are two forces at work in the German Empire: (1) Commercial restriction, which must lead ultimately to business stagnation; and (2) the taxing of the unearned increment of land, which with equal certainty will lead, if perceptively pursued, to permanent prosperity.

It is peculiarly providential that Germany should have turned to the taxation of rent at the very moment when she had reached the limit of expansion by the exploitation of special privileges. But for that, her decline would have been as dramatic as her rise. Her remarkable progress has been in spite of commercial restrictions; its continuance will depend upon the taking of ground rent for public use, and the freeing of industry from the burden of double taxation.

Were it necessary to choose between a protective tariff and the taxation of ground rent, on the one hand, and free trade and the taxation of industry but without taxation of ground rent, on the other, the former were far preferable.

German conditions, so far from disproving the doctrine of laissez-faire, may be destined to establish its validity.

STOUGHTON COOLEY.

## CONDENSED EDITORIALS

### THE NEW PARTY.

Louis F. Post, in the Chicago Daily Press of Aug. 10.

The first new party of staying qualities and national size in fifty years, seems to have come. No other was national in size; and although all came to stay, none stayed.

There was the Greenback Party. It won elections in a few States, and then petered out—"Benbutlered" out, as folks said.

Then the Populists. They also won in spots; and though they still have a committee for their party, there is no party for their committee.

Labor parties also there were in those historic fifty years, but they were short-lived and their successes few and local.

There is still a Socialist Party—two of them. But the Socialist vote, 5 per cent, gives poor promise of size, however long the stay. This party doesn't set up to be a new party, either; it sets up to be a new nation.

Since the days, then, of Fremont, when the Republican party was born, no new party with staying qualities has come into American politics until now—if it has now.

Ex-President Roosevelt says, "Let there be a new party of staying qualities and national size!" and, lo! there seems to be one.

This party has more "higher-ups" in its leadership than any other since 1856. Even ex-President Van Buren, who led a new party before that, hadn't the support of such leaders from old parties as ex-President Roosevelt has.

But is Roosevelt's Party here to stay?

Only political prophets can answer that question, now. And political prophecy usually springs from wishes more than knowledges.

Nevertheless, this new party has a tremendous meaning with reference to democracy.

Not party democracy, but fundamental democracy. The democracy of principle. The democracy of the Declaration of Independence, where it says that "all men are created equal." And not that this new party stands up straight for democratic principle. It does not—not straight.

Yet it has tremendous meaning with reference to democracy. It is a product of democracy. As bread (poor, good, better or best) is a product of yeast working in flour, so this party is a product of democracy working in American politics.

It may prove to be the product for our country and generation.

Or it may not. It may be dog-day politics and wither with the frost.

Whether it does or no, here is a bit of advice about it. The advice of a clear-headed American democrat of principle, it is as good now as when he uttered it: "How you vote doesn't make much difference, but how you think does; for if you think right, you will vote right."



### WHY WOMEN SHOULD VOTE.

Newton D. Baker, Mayor of Cleveland, in The Woman Voter for August.

Ohio women should vote because Ohio is now recognized as one of the most progressive States in the American Union. Its legislation is beginning to represent the real vital interests of its people. This can never be fully realized until all of its people participate in making and approving its laws. This is not a man's government, but a people's government; and as nature has made emotional and intellectual differences among people, that aggregate of the public conscience and intelligence which is the basis of all sound law ought to include the varying opinions and feelings of all the people.

## EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

### REACTIONARY NEW HAMPSHIRE.\*

East Jaffrey, N. H.

The sixth New Hampshire Constitutional Convention passed into history when it finally adjourned at 11 o'clock on Saturday, June 22. Although the

\*See Public of June 23, page 609.