

den of taxation upon thrift and industry is very great. Whether it will be sufficiently aggressive to secure the enactment of the local option measure remains to be seen.

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NEWS—FOREIGN.

GREAT BRITAIN.

ENGLAND MOVING SLOWLY, BUT MOVING—
JOS. FELS WRITES OF THE MOVEMENT IN
GREAT BRITAIN—THE PROBLEM GROWING
EVER MORE ACUTE.

England, being closely bound up with traditions which make the solution of the land question a most difficult one, moves very slowly indeed towards the light. In fact, it is only during the last five years, and in the last year particularly (in the opinion of those who watch matters closely) that the taxation of land values has come much more plainly to the front than at any time within the previous ten years. It is especially noticeable that there has been a considerable number of people who evince a decided interest in pushing for land reform, particularly so in Scotland, whose people are called the Yankees of the north. I attended a conference on the taxation of land values at Dumfries last Saturday, and in the evening there was a well-attended public meeting held in a large hall there.

The Press Bureau of the United League for the Taxation of Land Values (whose headquarters are in London), presided over by Mr. John Orr, of Glasgow, is doing splendid work in getting information regarding the movement into the papers of Great Britain. About 150 papers here now accept taxation of land values matter from this Bureau, and the number is being added to weekly.

The Labor Party on this side is becoming interested in the land question, the solution of which is the necessary precedent to getting the reforms for which they are fighting in the industrial world. Every Labor and Socialist member in the House of Commons is in favor of the taxation of land values. I know of no exception; and

about 250 Liberal M.P's are also pledged to it over their signatures, though what this pledge will amount to can only be determined when the taxation of land values, as a public measure, is included in the Budget Bill of the present session of Parliament. Land reform is certainly making headway on this side; it is another matter however to get it through Parliament, and "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick."

The proportion of unemployed and hungry people, in comparison with those at work and self-supporting, grows year by year. The English are proverbially a patient people, and, in spite of hunger of the most acute kind, we hear nothing of riots and general violence; but how long they will remain patient under the abuses committed against them by the rascally land laws which are in force can only be determined by how long they will be content to endure the conditions which abuse them and bring about their starvation.

The Irish Land Purchase Bill passed by the Government must sooner or later make the trouble more acute. Whenever there is a disposition on the part of local authorities to buy land for the purpose of dividing it up among small cultivators, the landlord comes along and puts up prices to impossible heights. Again, the majority of the county councils, especially in the agricultural districts, are composed mainly of the landlords of the district—consequently land purchase acts are defeated and the wished-for results in re-peopling the country delayed.

England has natural advantages and rural beauty unsurpassed by any country in the world, but she is fast losing her agricultural population, numbers of whom are being drawn to the towns to help fill the vast workhouses, infirmaries and poor asylums.

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BEHIND politics there is economics: behind economics, philosophy; and when it comes to a philosophy of values, optimism with regard to our present plane of experience, can only be regarded as an attractive form of mental disease.