

A PRACTICAL JOKE.

For The Public.

Lloyd George: "Here's an order from Special Privilege & Co.—want a budget immediately, with a tariff attachment big enough to cover five Dreadnoughts as big as the German ones."

Herbert Asquith: "Tell 'em we don't make 'em. And send one with an increment tax attachment—and send it C. O. D."

BOLTON HALL.

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TOLSTOY'S LATEST WORD ON GEORGE.

Leo Tolstoy in the Russian Papers of June 19, 1909.
Translated for The Public.

I have just received a telegram from the son of Henry George expressing a desire to visit me. The thought of meeting the son of one of the most remarkable men of the 19th Century forcibly reminded me of everything done by him, and of the stagnation which exists, not only in our Russian Government but in every Government of the so-called civilized world, with regard to that which is the radical solution of all economic questions, and which so many years ago, already was set forth with such irresistible clearness and conviction by that great man.

The land question is indeed the question of the deliverance of mankind from slavery produced by the private ownership of land, which to my mind, is now in the same situation in which the questions of serfdom in Russia and slavery in America were in the days of my youth. The difference is only that while the injustice of the private ownership of land is quite as crying as that of slave-ownership, it is much more widely and deeply connected with all human relations; it extends to all parts of the world (slavery existed only in America and Russia) and is much more tormenting to the land slave than personal slavery. How strange, one might say how ridiculous, were they not so cruel, and did they not involve the suffering of the majority of the toiling masses, are those attempts at the reconstruction of Society proposed and undertaken by the two inimical camps—Governmental and Revolutionary—through all kinds of measures, with the exception of that one which alone can destroy that crying injustice from which the overwhelming majority of the people suffer, which when driven inwards is still more dangerous than when it outwardly appears. All these efforts for the solution of political questions by new enactments without the destruction of the private ownership of land, remind one of the splendid comparison by Henry George of all such enactments to the action of the fool, who having placed the whole of the burden in one of the two baskets that hung upon the donkey's back, filled the other with an equal weight of stones.

But, with or against the desire of those classes who profit by the existence of this injustice, and however much the learned people of those classes may strive against it, hiding the injustice, pretending that they do not understand it, this cruel injustice cannot fail to be—and very quickly—destroyed. It must be destroyed because it is already clearly understood by the whole of the present Russian working classes, the majority of whom never have acknowledged, and do not now acknowledge the justice or rather the violation of justice comprised in the private ownership of land.

And therefore I rejoice at the thought that, no matter how far may be the Governmental and Revolutionary workers from the reasonable solution of the land question, it nevertheless will be, and very soon, solved especially in Russia, and by no means by those strange, groundless, arbitrary, unfeasible and, above all, unjust theories of expropriation, and the still more foolish governmental measures for the destruction of village communes and the establishment of small land-ownerships, that is, the strengthening and confirming of that system against which the struggle is to be directed; but it will and must be solved in one way alone—by the recognition of the equal right of every man to live upon and be nourished by the land on which he was born—that same principle which is so invincibly proved by all the teachings of Henry George. I think so, because the thought of the equal right of all men to the soil, notwithstanding all the efforts of "educated" and learned people to drive that thought by all kinds of schemes of expropriation and the destruction of village communes from the minds of the Russian people, nevertheless lives in the minds of the Russian people of today, and sooner or later—I believe that soon—it must be fully realized.

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HENRY GEORGE, JR., ON THE BRITISH BUDGET.

An Interview Published in the London Daily Chronicle of July 8.

Mr. Henry George, jun., son of the author of "Progress and Poverty" and other well-known works on economics, is in London just now on his way to New York, after an extensive tour, in the course of which he has been studying political and economic conditions in various parts of the world. Mr. George, who is an author and journalist of repute in the United States, is giving some attention to the discussion on the Budget which is now proceeding in this country, and has followed it with the greatest interest.

"I am most interested in it," he said to a "Daily Chronicle" representative, "because, after all, the influence of Great Britain is the dominant influence in the world, and when she carries a great principle into effect, she influences not only British

politics, but the politics of the world, wherever, at least, there is Parliamentary government. When, therefore, a radical change in taxation is proposed, the action of the British Parliament must affect the whole world. Already I have had an experience of that. I was in Japan when Mr. Lloyd George's Budget was introduced, and I was extremely interested in reading the comments in the Japanese papers. The essence of these comments was that, no matter whether this principle of the taxation of land values is good or bad, it must be considered seriously by all thinking men, because a great political party was advocating it in the British House of Commons. There is nothing like taxation of land values in Japan, but the adoption of the principle by the Liberal party, and its inclusion in a Liberal Budget, will, I think, have a considerable influence upon budgets in the early future in Japan. The present valuation of the land of Japan was made more than thirty years ago, and the population of the cities has grown enormously since, so that speculation in land has been rampant. Before I left Japan, Baron Sakitani told me that he was immensely interested in the Budget fight in England, because he thought it would lead to similar action in Japan."

"Have you thought, Mr. George," asked our representative, "what is likely to be the issue of the fight?"

"It may seem unwarranted in a stranger like myself," said Mr. George, "to express too confident an opinion of the conclusions of British politics, but, judging from the nature of the opposition to this Budget, I should say that it will not only pass the House of Commons by an overwhelming vote—that, in fact, goes without saying—but that it must also pass the House of Lords. So far as I have been able to gauge it, public sentiment in the country appears to be entirely in favor of Mr. Lloyd George's proposals. And of all the forms of taxation that exist, or have at any time been proposed, this of the taxation of land values seems to me to be the most just from every point of view. At a time, too, when the masses of the people are bearing tremendous tax burdens, a tax of this kind is a kind which no right-thinking person should resist. But what interests me most in this Budget is the proposed valuation."

"You speak of the nature of the opposition to the Budget; you mean, I assume, that the very nature of this opposition is a recommendation of the Budget?"

"I regard the opposition to the taxation of land values," replied Mr. George, "as coming solely from the landlord classes and those who own landed privileges, and fear taxation of those privileges. I do not think there is any basis for argument on behalf of anybody else for the preservation of the existing conditions of land-ownership.

Whenever in the past landed privileges have been attacked, the landlords have endeavored to base their defense upon broader grounds than the mere preservation of their own privileges; but in this instance I have seen nothing in the debates or in the newspaper arguments that can be construed into anything more than a defense of landlord privileges; and that, I maintain, is fatal to the continuance of these privileges."

"You say valuation of the land is the essential thing, but it is argued that valuation of the land, apart from the buildings and improvements on it, is impossible; do you see any difficulty?"

"None whatever," replied Mr. George. "In America it is done annually. Our practice leads us to believe that the value of land can be more easily arrived at than the value of anything else. In New York city the advocates of the taxation of land values believed they had made very substantial progress five years ago, when they effected three steps. One was the separation of land values from improvements in the assessor's official reports. Another was the official publication of the entire tax list, and the third was the equalization of the value of the land. The discovery had been made that valuable holdings in the larger centers of the city, and speculative holdings in the suburbs, were much under-valued, while the smaller holdings—or homes, as you would say here—of the small shopkeepers, clerks and mechanics, were comparatively high in valuation. Our land tax advocates were, therefore, quite well satisfied to have an equalization of these values, inasmuch as it brought a tremendous increase of revenue to the Public Treasury, and made the rich landowners and the speculators in land bear a very much heavier tax, while, at the same time, it lightened the burdens of the small home owners."

The question of the tax on ungoten minerals was next touched upon, and here Mr. George had something of interest to say.

"That," he remarked, "is a great problem facing us in the United States, and we will watch the proceedings of the British Parliament with great interest. For, if we should apply that principle, say in the State of Pennsylvania, it would not only bring in a great revenue to the State Treasury, but would force into use vast areas of iron, coal, natural gas and petroleum lands, which lands are now, for speculative purposes, held out of use, thereby creating an artificial scarcity of these great national resources, keeping up their prices on the market, and holding out a minimum of opportunities to labor for employment."

As an onlooker and student of politics, Mr. George has been profoundly impressed with the courage of the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer in putting the taxation of land values in the Budget.

"If I may say so, as an American citizen and

one who has given some study to this subject, I think both Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lloyd George have shown magnificent courage in bringing this principle of the taxation of land values into British politics, since they must inevitably face all the opposition that can possibly be urged against any presentation of the principle. They have consciously faced the dangers of this opposition, but I believe their courage will be appreciated more and more in the future, although I also believe it will be appreciated now, and the British people will rally to their support."

"Would you say that the only alternative to this proposal is a Protectionist Budget?"

"I should say so, unhesitatingly. Protection here—or, as you call it, Tariff Reform—has grown, in my opinion, because of the general poverty of the people, which has been accentuated by trade depression. But this proposal of your Government to tax land values—for that, I believe, is the essence of the land clauses in the Budget—has, in my opinion, about settled the agitation for Tariff Reform in your country. I am told by those who are studying the situation that since the proposals of the Budget have been before the country Tariff Reform has rapidly receded into the background. You should know better than I if this is true. In my opinion the taxation of land values has opened up the possibility of a revenue for the Exchequer which is earned by the people as a whole, and, at the same time, makes for the opening up of the land free from monopoly, free to industrial expansion and good trade in every direction. It is, in my opinion, the radical alternative to Tariff Reform."

Asked if Free Trade was making any progress in the United States, Mr. George replied, "Yes; but rather negatively; that is to say, while Protection seems to be stronger than ever, the disintegration of the parties which is now going on, will soon manifest itself in a tremendous onslaught on the Trusts. The attack on the tariff is likely to take the form of an attack on the Trusts, and it will be made, as it has already been made, by putting what we call 'Trust commodities'—such as iron, steel, coal and sugar—on the free list."

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CHRISTIAN PATRIOTISM.

Abstract of a Sermon by the Rev. Halsey Werlein, Jr.,
Preached in St. Andrew's Church, Jackson,
Miss., on July 4th, 1909.

We seldom, if ever, think of Christ as a patriot. Both to those who acknowledge his claims as divine, and to those who in refusing doctrinal allegiance, revere his goodness and wisdom, he is the Universal Man, world-wide in nature and sympathy and consecrated to a mission as broad as humanity itself. His two fundamental doctrines, of a divine fatherhood and of a universal human

brotherhood, would, if consistently followed, tear away in their own revolutionary might the boundary lines of nations. His heart was too great, his mind too high, to be confined to the claims of an accidental birth-land closely enough to win for himself the name of patriot!

But it was this very universality that made Christ the one patriot of history.

Patriotism, the truest, the most self-sacrificing, was the germ in him of that larger love which held the entire world in its embrace. And in the same way his devotion to humanity, his inspired vision of the needs of his fellow men everywhere, his willingness to die in the service of mankind—these uplifted and glorified his whole conception of his duty to his own people, and tinged with a peculiar sadness the last days of his Judean ministry, when the citizens of the land he loved had rejected his message and substituted for its sublime truth the materialism of an age self-centered and self-satisfied. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem," he cried, "thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not."

It was a patriotism so true that it dared to be pessimistic. It was declaimed in no holiday periods. It was too deep for sound or foam. And yet if you will study the map of the journeyings of Jesus, you will find that in his brief ministry scarcely a village of Palestine was unvisited by this friend of his people. He conducted a canvass more thorough for its day than that of any presidential candidate, not because he was a seeker of office, but simply because his heart was on fire with love for his countrymen and because for them he had a gospel to proclaim.

His was a larger patriotism, because of its universal character. He felt that he had a mission to the world. He beheld in his country the sharer of that mission. Judea existed not for itself, but as the sacred medium for the proclamation of God's love and man's to the world. He saw for his nation a larger end than its own aggrandizement. Judea was to become the exponent of that righteousness and freedom in which all men shall be kings and priests and brothers.

The patriotism of Christ is thus not the patriotism of our day. Patriotism, as it is expounded in the legislative halls and on Fourth of July platforms today is either self-gratulation on the part of bombastic individuals for a past in which they had no part, or it is that mercenary scheming by which the financial interests of a certain class of our people shall be upheld against the interests of other classes and of the world. It is the patriotism not of universality, but of self-centredness. Its only mission is the amassing of wealth. It justifies itself by phrases and fireworks. "Right or wrong, my country!" it exclaims, when it would