

leavening the whole, an impulse of love, however brief, a stress of duty however circumscribed; that a sap is flowing through wood that seems so dead; and that the faint and flickering lamp of the ideal is lit from fire that burns at the heart of the world. That fire kindles history. Natural facts, economic facts, instincts, needs and desires are the fuel it transmits into a spiritual essence. Always, even in times called of peace, it is gnawing at the roots of society. For it is the never-satisfied; and one of its names is Justice. It is the greatest of all energies; and men of the world call it a dream! It made the French Revolution; it is making revolution now in Russia; it is undermining the whole fabric of western society. One by one it is detaching from the building the buttresses of conviction, and leaving the mere walls of fact that strain and crack to their fall. It is not only, not even chiefly, the working classes that are the strength of that great movement of revolt we call broadly Socialism. Its strength is the weakness of the ruling class, the scepticism of the rich and the powerful, the slow, half-unconscious detachment of all of them who have intelligence and moral force from the interest and the active support of their class. Nay, those who deny Socialism are most under its power; their hollow cries of rage and desperation, their intellectual play with the idea of force, betray their bitter sense of a lost cause. Justice is a power; and if it cannot create it will at least destroy. So that the question for the future is not, shall there be revolution, but shall it be beneficent or disastrous?

* * *

THE CRUX OF THE BRITISH BUDGET.

Herbert Adams Gibbons, Writing From London to the *New York Independent*. Published in the *Independent* for January 20.

The only innovations in the Budget are the taxes on land values, etc., and on petrol, involving hardly £1,000,000 in the estimates. The additional yield is in the increase of existing taxation. Particular interests are opposed to the increased taxation. The liquor trade declares its additional burdens are more than can be borne, and will end in an enormous reduction of revenue. Protest against other increased duties is merely such as generally meets a Budget, and does not have great political importance because the increases are not such as affect the bulk of the electorate. The most bitter and widespread opposition to the Budget, the real ground upon which the general election is to be fought, is reduced to the £600,000 which the Chancellor of the Exchequer asks to be provided by a tax on land values, reversion of leases and mining royalties. There is no question but that the House of Lords would have passed the Budget had it not con-

tained these obnoxious provisions. Indeed I believe the reversion of leases and mining royalty taxes could have passed the Upper House. As far as the Budget of 1909 goes, the real struggle is over an amount hardly in excess of £400,000.

The "nigger in the wood pile" is the land taxes. The money accruing from them this year is insignificant. Mr. Lloyd George could have found his millions to meet this year's deficiency without them. Those upon whom they will fall can pay them. It is as absurd to think that the Budget of 1909 would seriously embarrass a landed proprietor as it is to suppose the tobacco tax would deprive a man of his after-dinner cigar. Every time I talk to a British elector on the Budget, the boiled-down result of the conversation is either "I believe in land taxes" or "I think the land taxes are wrong." We may have discussed the danger to revenue of imposing an additional burden upon beer and spirits, the justice or injustice of making automobilists pay for road improvements and the discrimination against the gasoline-driven cars, the grading of death and inheritance duties, the circumventions of income taxes, but we always end by saying, "Well, now, about those land taxes." . . .

England seems to be drifting inevitably toward land taxation. The people have to choose between the land, the food, and the imports. Everything else is almost "up to the hilt" now. A Conservative and Unionist Cabinet cannot stay long in power, unless they devise temporary expedients and refuse to meet the issue of a constructive and permanent financial policy. Mr. Lloyd George may not be a great statesman, or even a skillful politician, but he has pointed out the necessary, even if unpalatable, taxation policy for England.

* * *

THE BREWER AND THE FEUDAL LORD.

(With Apologies to the Late Lewis Carroll.)

C. J. Hogarth in *Liberal Opinion*, of London, for [December 18, 1909.

The Brewer and the Feudal Lord

Were walking hand in hand.

They wept like anything to see

Some Liberals in the land.

"If these were only cleared away,"

They said, "It would be grand!"

"If Tory vans, with gramophones,

Spouted for half a year,

Do you suppose," the Brewer said,

"They'd make the people hear?"

"I doubt it," said the Feudal Lord,

"Unless you add free beer."

"O voters, come and drink with us,"

The Brewer did beseech.

"A pleasant talk on Chinese pork

Will show you what we teach—

That since your food will cost you more

There'll be more food for each."