

education as a means of domination over the "common herd." We say that this kind of education spells destruction to every ideal of a worth-while civilization, that Principal Hummer is a poor kind of educator, though typical of his class, and the pupils of the Binghamton Central High School are unfortunate in having to sit under the ministrations of such a teacher.

AT the open air meetings of the Commonwealth Land party carried on in this city by those two indefatigable workers, M. VanVeen and George Lloyd, one thing has given cause for reflection to both as a gratifying symptom. Whereas questions used formerly to consist of inquiries dealing with the application of the principle to individuals, or in detail, or the usual quizzes intended to "stump" the speaker, the prevalent question now is: Do you think it would be just to take the economic rent for public purposes and thus destroy the selling value of land without compensation?

WE agree with our friends that this shows a distinct advance in the minds of their hearers. Satisfied of the practicality and reasonableness of the proposal the question—and the last question of all—is, is it just to proceed without considering the advisability of compensation? The mind that has arrived at this inquiry is evidently one that has overcome the main difficulties and has travelled far. For such a mind is considering now only the justice of the proposed reform, to which on reflection it can but give one answer. The cause has almost won him. We say that this is both significant and gratifying.

LIEB FLEISHER, a young Jew from a part of Roumania formerly under Czarist rule, finds himself a man without a country, as he waits the decision regarding his case at Ellis Island. He was legally admitted to Canada and smuggled into the United States. Apprehended here as if he were a criminal he was deported to Roumania. That country because of his Czarist passport ordered him to Russia. Russia refused to recognize his pre-revolutionary passport and sent him to Trieste, Italy. The Italian authorities without letting him land sent him back to Canada, which promptly returned him to Trieste.

In enclosing a newspaper clipping containing this information our old friend, Mark M. Dintenfass, says:

"It seems unbelievable that a people of a nation whose forefathers had to leave their native birthplace on account of poverty and hardships, should have so quickly forgotten. Of course, as long as private property in land exists we need not look for any closer brotherly love, but it is incredible that we should observe without protest the working of unjust laws that declare a human being has no natural right to live anywhere on God's earth."

A Glimmer of Intelligence

THE rapid transit subway lines in New York and their elevated extensions, were built by the City with the proceeds of fifty-year bonds, and leased to private operators who furnished the cars; the supposition being that the bonds would be retired, and interest be paid, out of the proceeds from fares.

A five-cent fare being fixed in the contract, the proceeds are not sufficient, after paying the "preferentials" to the companies for their investment, to take care of the bond payments (except the earliest issue) and the city is taking \$10,000,000 annually from tax receipts for interest and sinking fund on the bonds.

Real estate interests and their newspaper allies have been clamoring for a higher fare, ostensibly to relieve the poor tenants from some of their taxes, but really to lessen the burden on landowners and also to help the transit companies to pay higher dividends.

The City is now constructing a new subway system, to cost \$600,000,000, and the present administration is pledged to continue a five-cent fare on the new lines. The Board of Transportation in a report, July 20, says that it will cost a little over three cents to carry a rider on the new system, but if the city issues 50-year bonds and expects to retire them from fares, the cost will be nearly five cents more per passenger, and necessitate an eight-cent fare. The Board argues, therefore, that short-term bonds be issued for 60 per cent. of the cost and paid out of current taxes, which in New York fall almost entirely on real estate. In support of this allocation the Board makes this ingenuous argument:

"Real estate derives enormous financial benefits from the city policy of building the rapid transit railroads beneath instead of above the surface of the streets. Elevated railroads would cost only one-third of the amount it costs to build underground railroads. It would be much more agreeable for the passenger to ride in the daylight on an elevated railroad and the transit would be as rapid. It is for the benefit of the real estate and the beautification of the city that city transit lines are placed beneath the surface of the ground. Hence it seems unjust that the excessive addition of two-thirds in the cost of construction should be imposed on passengers in the form of an excessively high fare and that the owners of real estate should contribute nothing from the remarkable and universal increase in the value of real property that always and inevitably occurs adjacent to rapid transit lines."

Of course this argument fails to distinguish between the value of land, which alone is increased by public improvements, and the value of buildings, which is fixed by the cost of production without regard to the proximity or otherwise of rapid transit lines. Nor does it provide for taxing only those landowners who benefit directly from the new lines, though with regard to this the Board

argues with considerable logic that "real estate owners" throughout the city are benefited. However, it is encouraging to see some thought being given to the ultimate financial beneficiary of public improvements and some effort being made to collect from those benefited instead of charging it all up to the straphanger.

Prosperity?

O PROSPERITY, what crimes are tolerated in thy name! For a long time prudent people have tabooed agitation for social reforms on the ground that the United States was so prosperous that public attention should not be directed to a proposal to alter, in any important particular a social order which had produced such beneficent results. Some were reluctantly compelled to admit that prosperity, abounding and overflowing, had its drawbacks in the demoralization of youth due to inevitable and concomitant luxury, incident to unaccustomed wealth in the hands of parvenus who had not been brought up to the proper use of extravagant fortunes. One had to concede the claim that probably at no time in history had one hundred millions of people in a single nation possessed so much wealth or had so large a percentage of people able to live in moderate comfort.

As companion pictures to this possibly gratifying state of affairs, however, come certain considerations which may well justify the belief that prosperity like beauty is little more than skin-deep. Wages expressed in dollars have risen strikingly during the past ten years, but while in certain avocations they have risen more than living costs, in the majority, especially in unorganized industries, they lag far behind the cost of living. The housing situation in New York is an outstanding illustration; there is no longer a shortage of housing in New York, but the price of the simplest apartments of the new construction is beyond the reach of all but the most highly paid workers.

At a recent Convention of Building and Loan Associations, figures given out by the Secretary indicated that 69% of the wage earners in New York did not receive enough wages to enable them to become home owners, no matter how strenuous the efforts made to keep down costs.

Again in the prosperous City of New York from the best figures obtainable \$90,000,000.—\$15. per person or \$75. per annum per family—is expended annually on charitable relief by public and private agencies. Perhaps some will argue that the raising of such a sum of money is a proof of the prosperity of the Community, but what about those upon whom it is expended?

Recently the city of New York was threatened by a strike which would have paralysed its transportation system. The figures given out indicated that 26,000 men were involved. These men were employes of the big traction companies. In order to be hired these men had

to join the "Company" Union and to declare that they would not join the "free" Union. In doing this they were acting counter to their desires and abandoning their rights as citizens, and yet they did it for the sake of jobs, which, all unbiased authorities agree, do not pay living wages.

The economic plight of the farmer has been held up to the pity of mankind for several years, yet the universal prosperity has left him unaffected. The tariff, which bears with especial severity on all wage earners, leans upon him with especial force for it raises the price of everything that he must buy while leaving him to sell at prices determined by world competition.

From these and other considerations which might be urged, if there were space, we are justified in deducing that our widely heralded prosperity means merely that a relatively small fraction of the total population have been able by the use of special privileges to absorb a disproportionate amount of the admittedly greater wealth produced by invention and organization, but that for the average man the problem of making a living remains the complicated task that it has been since the coming in of the industrial era.

There never was a time when it more behooved thoughtful and patriotic men to consider how the dream of democracy, which has never been more than a mirage, can be brought to realization, nor was it ever more incumbent upon those who have, or who think they have, a remedy for the tragic injustices which are apparent in human relations, to bring their projects before the people by all the means in their power.

The Race Problem An Angle of the Land Problem

I WAS one of many a few years ago that joined in a gold rush to Tierra del Fuego. There was gold aplenty, and Americans, Chinese, Chileans, Hungarians, and Negroes worked side by side without any great friction. Presently the Argentine Government stepped in and granted a land concession to one Julius Popper, who promptly ordered us off the earth, his orders being backed by Remington rifles. We moved to free land, but found ourselves crowded—and then race hatred reared its head; for race hatred is born of greed or fear. And the mildest went first, and after the chasing of the Chink came the chasing of the Chilean, then the hunting of the Hunk and the negation of the Negro, while each in turn gouged the Gringo. Now, clearly, to reverse the order of things, you will have race hatred disappearing with given elbow room. The moral to be pointed out to those disturbed over race antagonisms is to release the land by application of the Single Tax when these imagined problems will disappear, they being not problems in themselves but angles of the land problem.

—CHAS. J. FINGER.