

by the present owners, why should they cease to thrive, merely because the Government occupies the position which the land owners now hold. The cases are rare in this part of the country where the actual users of the land are permitted to appropriate *any* of the annual land value.

Not that Mr. Codman, if I understand him correctly, advocates government ownership of the land. The landlord, when kept in his place, can perform a useful service for the community, by acting as a tax-gatherer, even as the bee-keeper renders service in gathering honey from the bees.

The trouble with our present system is that the land owner as owner is allowed to appropriate too large a percentage of what he gathers, and hence, people are obliged to surrender their private property in the form of other taxes to make up for what he is permitted to keep. Like everyone else he is entitled to the value of services rendered, but not more. That he is deserving of a return for merely owning the land is not obvious, but he *is* entitled to the value of his improvements, if any, and to a commission on his collections. Such a system would convert him from a parasite into an asset, and would be much wholesomer for him, because he would have to indulge in more involuntary exercise.

There are other points in E. W. M.'s critique, which might be traversed. Until he learns the fundamental fact that the confiscation (dreadful word) of annual ground rent or land value does not diminish, but rather enhances, the returns to capital invested in utilizing the land, there is no use in discussing the subtler aspects of the matter."

Why Britain Wanes

RAYMOND TURNER whose work entitled "Ireland and England" contributed, at least to the extent of its circulation, to the misunderstanding of the Anglo-Irish problem during the war, is author of an article in the *Yale Review* on "The Future of Britain." It is gloomy reading to those who regard the downfall of the British Empire as a matter of regret. His forebodings justify the belief that the ultimate defenders of stern and unbending Toryism will be found in the American Universities. He shudders at the prospect that "Labor", which he seems to regard as synonymous with Sovietism, will exercise a powerful influence on the future of Great Britain. No comment is made on the justice of his political views, but his economic shortsightedness is deplorable. He points out that Britain has increased its population to such a degree as to be incapable of self-support by British produce, but he does not emphasize the important fact that this condition of affairs was brought about under the rule of the classes whose downfall he deplures.

England imports 80% of her food supplies and produces 20%. These figures might be reversed if her antiquated and outworn land system had not depopulated her rural

regions and driven her peasantry into mill towns to be turned into raw material for manufactures. Her upper classes pursued this policy with open eyes, because a factory hand could be made a more prolific producer of wealth than a peasant could. Dividends won in the fight with rents, and large areas of the rural sections of England today are as bare of population as some of the parts of Canada to which the population is emigrating. The blight of the landlord is over it all, and if the day should come which Professor Turner predicts when England shall be as "Niniveh and Tyre" it will be due to bloated aristocracy, which wallowing in the wealth of an exploited world, raised no hand to save its own race from extinction on its native soil.

The Single Tax and Nothing But the Single Tax

ARE Single Taxers, Single Taxers? Or are they sectarians holding a complex set of beliefs, all related in a way to each other, in which the Single Tax finds some place in the setting? These are questions not of minor, but of serious importance, as they serve to indicate the central problems of our propaganda work.

Let us define. There are two meanings to the word "Single Taxer." One refers to the man as an individual in which case the thesis of this article does not apply. As an individual a Single Taxer may hold one hundred beliefs as to the relation of the Single Tax to other situations, and as to the "philosophy" upon which it is based. Again the thesis of this article does not relate to the truth or falsity of the beliefs in question. All such discussion is, per se, irrelevant. It maintains that the Single Taxers *acting as such in groups* have but one minimum belief, and only one, viz: the Single Tax. This at once sweeps away all sectarianism as it allows the utmost liberty of personal belief consistent with adherence to the minimal dogma. It is true that the color of a movement is not derived from its minimal belief, but instead from the hundreds of accruals, which make up one's mental picture of a Single Taxer. But this color is interesting only from a literary viewpoint and not from an engineering viewpoint. We are social engineers, who have to do a certain job. Once we recognize this we will be more hospitable to heresy within the ranks. And the more heretics a movement has, the better. Human diversity being infinite, no one can hope to convert the mass of men to a set of one hundred propositions. But they can be converted to one proposition, with liberty to be what they will in aught else.

What is the minimal belief? It is this. The rent of land should belong to the people, because by this means a great improvement will take place in the condition of the overwhelming majority of mankind.