

elsewhere in this little brochure. We are in doubt, despite the author's vigorous language, what he is really driving at.

"Ignorance of the Law is No Defense," is the title of a 15-page pamphlet by James F. Lincoln of the Lincoln Electric Company of Cleveland, O. It is a review of the present governmental trend by an industrialist. It is full of crackling phrases like bullets out of a gun and is immensely readable. Copies will be sent to any one wishing them from James F. Lincoln, P. O. Box 5758, Cleveland, O.

"The Truth About the Distressed Arrears" by Andrew Maclaren is an examination of the Government's Reports, a pamphlet of 40 pages and cover published by the English League for the Taxation of Land Values, London, England.

We know Andrew Maclaren from his visit to this country some years ago. We know of his competent and devoted work since that time. He has been constantly at it. In this interesting pamphlet he summarizes the recommendations of the government to minimize the evils indicated, and says: "Not one of these proposals will as much as touch the fringe of the problem."

"What to Emphasize in Teaching the Geocentric Philosophy," by Benjamin W. Burger, published in Nov.-Dec. LAND AND FREEDOM, is now ready for delivery in pamphlet form. It is indispensable to teachers and speakers everywhere.

The notable satire, "The Keynote Convention Speech of 1940," by B. A. Partyman, written by Prof. Harry Gunnison Brown and printed in two issues of LAND AND FREEDOM for Sept.-Oct. and Nov.-Dec. is also ready for distribution. It comprises 32 pages with stiff board cover and is sold for 25 cents.

Correspondence

FROM THE DESIGNER OF PORTABLE HOUSES

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Thanks for the mention you gave me in the last issue. When I review my experiences in attempting to get men to consider the possibilities of the portable structure, however, it seems quite unlikely that any of those who read the notice will go to the trouble of making inquiry.

The engineers whom I have approached, seem to consider economics as a sort of guessing game unworthy of their attention. Therefore, I find it impossible to center their attention upon the economic advantages of portability as a housing characteristic. In fact, they are usually inclined to favor a greater degree of stability in construction than is practiced at present. On the other hand, the economist seems quite immune to any suggestion that any relationship exists between the Science of Political Economy and so commonplace a science as engineering. Last spring, I quizzed a professor of economics from Mass. Tech. He was addressing the semi-annual meeting of the American Mechanical Engineers, on the housing problem. He spoke of the unearned increment of the land as one of the leading deterrents of the housing industry. I asked him how he would propose to remove this obstruction. Of course, being not of our faith, he could not give a solution. I then asked him what if any, in his opinion, would be the effect were we to adopt the construction of homes of portable or demountable design. This floored him completely. He hedged about for some minutes and finally said that he had never given thought to the idea. He intimated that he would like to know if I had any idea about it, and of course I tried in the few minutes allotted to outline my theory. The Chief Engineer of the Forestry Department of the U. S., who was present took a hand

in the discussion in a jocular vein, to which I replied somewhat sharply. The net result of it all was that the Chief Engineer sought me out after the meeting and apologized, saying that if he had considered the matter before he would not have been guilty of his remarks. He spent most of the time between then and his departure that night discussing the matter with me. He asked me to correspond with him further, but I have found the government so bound about with restrictions that nothing can be advanced there unless it is done through politics.

What I need is the assistance of some one who understands the land question and has sufficient to start the production of portable structures. I will make such a man rich, and at the same time open up an avenue along which the Single Taxer may advance to the land of his dreams.

Erie, Mich.

ROBERT L. MCCAIG.

AN INTERESTING LETTER

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

The tendency of the white man to want to "correct" that which he does not like in races less advanced in the arts, sciences, and sins of civilization is once more attested to by Miss Grace E. Wills in an article in the December issue of *Asia*. The article is entitled "Heaven-Bursts in Western Samoa."

Miss Wills points out the depredations suffered by Samoans at the hands of the whites until the hurricane in the eighties which tossed the warships of three powers about like straws. The German Adler had just been shelling Samoan villages when the wrath of the Great Creator of mankind struck it amidsthips, and today it may be seen lying on its port side in Apia Bay, a silent tribute to the awful power of natural forces. But one ship escaped, the British Calliope. Hundreds of sailors were either drowned or cast ashore. Did the Samoans wreak upon these the deserved fate of murderers and despoilers of homes? They did not. They forgot and forgave, rescued and nurtured their oppressors. This act, so unusual among Christian races, so moved the powers that they drafted and signed the Berlin Act in 1889, solemnly pledging themselves to protect the autonomy and independence of the Samoan people. This has never been rescinded, but in 1899 the islands were divided among Great Britain, Germany, and the United States. From that time until the World War Samoa enjoyed peace and happiness.

Let us hear what Miss Wills says of the German administration of their trust: "Dr. Solf, the German administrator under the new order, said in effect when he first took office (I quote Lloyd Osborne): 'Samoa is so small and so remote that it has fortunately no commercial future. . . . It is therefore my congenial duty to guard it as what it is, a little paradise, and to keep any passing serpent out of our Garden of Eden.' Dr. Schultz, who followed Dr. Solf, continued the happy understanding of Samoan customs and culture, and the relationship progressed in the same spirit until 1914, after the outbreak of the World War, an expeditionary force from New Zealand took possession of the islands and the powerful German wireless station near Apia."

Trouble developed for the natives and New Zealand at once. Every administrator from New Zealand has been a military man, with no understanding of the situation. New Zealand is a young and vigorous country, supposedly, which has done wonders in winning an empire from nature, and most of its people are probably as provincial in their ideas as most of our people are still. Cheap, small town lawyers, and politicians with war service records but no knowledge of affairs beyond their own bailiwicks, were sent out to administer these happy people. Miss Wills tells us that they interfered with their customs and that the "keenest minds among the Samoans soon detected something deeper behind the autocratic methods—an attempt to upset their ancient social and political system by making the common lands the property of individuals—always the beginning of the end for a primitive people. Eventually, they foresaw, they

were likely to become mere labor for the white man on their own ancestral holdings. They could not believe that they would be so happy under such a consumation, even though the world-wide depression had not then developed to a stage where it was a practical demonstration of the correctness of their reasoning."

Miss Wills goes on to say that the government set up was too expensive for the islands to maintain, too ambitious, and too bureaucratic. It attempted to substitute for the culture, habits, and customs of the islanders, which had been zealously guarded by the German administrators, the system and standards of the West, under which the greatest depression of modern times had been allowed to materialize to knock out some of the conceit of the Western wise men. Assassination by New Zealand police of Tamasese, High Chief and leader, on Dec. 28, 1929, shows how low the New Zealand administration has fallen. This man was not slain in open rebellion but in ambush while unarmed. Today his grave, not far from that of "Tusitala," (the teller of tales), Robert Louis Stevenson, has become a second shrine to the Samoan people. Together with Tamasese eleven Samoans were killed and fifty wounded. At the inquest the presiding judge said that no evidence had been presented showing the necessity for rifle fire.

Some of the things which the New Zealanders tried to enforce among the islanders, and for which the islanders could see no need, were the construction of unnecessary roads, new codes of sanitation, taxation without representation, reconstruction of houses and villages to conform with New Zealand ideas, in Miss Wills' words, "Town planning in paradise!" The presentation of fine mats is an indispensable part of every ceremony in life to the Samoans and yet this was to be restricted by white man's law. Disagreement with preemptory orders or a request for time to consider them became sedition, and imprisonment and exile were meted out to the seditious. Sedition against laws, the making of which was denied them! Exile, Miss Wills points out, is a worse punishment for Samoans than imprisonment. It was at the demonstration over the return of Mr. Smyth, an Apia merchant, from two years of exile that Tamasese was murdered by a police sniper. Tamasese had been exiled for neglecting to obey an order to cut down an hibiscus hedge around his dwelling. Imagine an English ancestor of the New Zealand responsible for that fool order obeying a similar order to cut down the hedgerow about his thatched cottage without some violent argument if not blows. But Tamasese's crime was that he believed in the preservation of the culture and customs of his people.

These customs and standards had begun far back in the history of the islanders. Their value is attested to by the great pains of the learned German administrators to preserve them intact, also by the fact that in American Samoa we merely protect the rights of a sovereign people. But there is greater proof of their value than mere recognition of it by wise administrators. It is in results. Let us listen again to Miss Wills:

"Not physical vigor alone but a simple and joyous naturalness toward all of life has always characterized the Samoans. They can regard even their white overseers with a shrewd and typically Polynesian sense of humor. . . . Time means nothing to the Samoans. A cricket match may last a week, whole villages participating. Money does not mean much either. The family system takes care of its own. Nobody starves. Have they not their food plantations, their forests, their fishing? They have their own crafts and occupations, all needful for their island life—building canoes, caring for the cocoanut plantations, keeping down the rhinoceros beetle, planting and gathering food, harvesting bananas from the forest. Often, when the moon floods the ocean and reef and palm-fringed shore with exquisite loveliness, the Samoans choose these hours to paddle out to sea and sing and fish."

Miss Wills deserves especial commendation for her article in *Asia*, not alone by Samoans, but by all New Zealanders who believe that New Zealand has a destiny to achieve. New Zealand has fallen far

short of that destiny, as is shown by recent labor troubles in the Commonwealth. It ill becomes her to oppress a people, primitive though they be, for being true to their ideals. Miss Wills is a New Zealander and was a school teacher. We have great need of such teachers in our own country, and such teachers in our movement. Let us congratulate her.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

JOHN LUXTON.

DRIFTING FROM THEIR ANCHORAGE

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

I wish to make a plea through your paper for the recognition by our people that the Georgeist plan can not be combined with other proposals for tax betterment. Any other course robs it of all logic. We must substitute for the present system the payment to all people by each person for the site value of the land he occupies and totally abolish all taxes on his industry and capital.

I cannot understand how those who have seen the scientific way can waste their time working for mere palliatives.

In your Sept.-Oct., 1935 issue, in reporting the Henry George Conference I find the following: "Mrs. Johnson laid out present difficulties to lack of purchasing power and strongly advocated the Townsend Plan as a remedy, but stipulated that the pension must be paid by collecting the economic rent." Mrs. Johnson seems to have failed entirely to see what has become of our purchasing power or to realize that collecting the economic rent would restore it and make gratuities to able bodied people unnecessary. She seems to be one of those who doubt the wisdom and goodness of God and think that when he implanted in us the intelligence to evolve machines and other helpful discoveries he implanted in us an intelligence which would compass our ruin. As a matter of fact, although she did suggest to Dr. Townsend the idea of collecting the money for the pensions from a tax on land values, he evidently did not heed her suggestion but proposed a transaction tax. This failed to discourage Mrs. Johnson who is an earnest advocate of his plan which proposes to increase the wealth of our country by cutting down the number of producers.

Mrs. Johnson called my attention to the following excerpt from "Social Problems," Chapter XIX:

"This is the law of rent. As individuals come together in communities, and society grows, integrating more and more its individual members, and making general interests and general conditions of more and more relative importance, there arises, over and above the value which individuals can create for themselves, a value which is created by the community as a whole, and which, attaching to land, becomes tangible, definite and capable of computation and appropriation. As society grows, so grows this value, which springs from and represents in tangible form what society as a whole contributes to production, as distinguished from what is contributed by individual exertion. By virtue of natural law in those aspects which it is the purpose of the science we call political economy to discover—as it is the purpose of the sciences which we call chemistry and astronomy to discover other aspects of natural law—all social advance necessarily contributes to the increase of this common value; to the growth of this common fund.

"Here is a provision made by natural law for the increasing needs of social growth: here is an adaptation of nature by virtue of which the natural progress of society is a progress toward equality, not toward inequality; a centripetal force tending to unity, growing out of and ever balancing a centrifugal force tending to diversity. Here is a fund belonging to society as a whole from which, without the degradation of alms, private or public, provision can be made for the weak, the helpless and the aged; from which provision can be made for the common wants of all as a matter of common right to each, and by the utilization of which society, as it advances, may pass, by natural methods and easy stages, from a rude association for purposes of defence and police, into a cooperative association, in which