

be said. Too much is repeated to-day as to the weakness and deficiencies of savage races. When one adds to the acute misery of perhaps a fifth of any community where public rights to the land are ignored, the constant racking anxiety for the future of perhaps another three-fifths, and the fear of violence and instability which haunts the "Thoroughly Comfortable," we may doubt if the savage or barbarian, take him at his worst, is not better off on the average than we.

When we reflect on the illimitable production of good things which our metal slaves can provide for us, on our facilities for international mutual help by exchange, on the inventive faculties of our young folk now as a rule crushed by poverty and perverted by a lack of decent opportunity for self-expression, we can indeed be grateful for the clear vision which Henry George transmits to every fair and intelligent reader of the natural conditions, where "Progress" and "Poverty" are once and for all separated by the very book which describes them, or perhaps from henceforth to be coupled as Progress and Justice, or Progress and Liberty. Let us take heart. The whole earth gives a verdict which cannot lightly be brushed aside; and the code of every primitive people (and the primitive code of every sophisticated people) is Georgetist in basis, while every attempt to legalise injustice must fail, or destroy those who will submit to it

"Truth struck to earth shall rise again,
The eternal years of God are hers;
But Error wounded writhes in pain,
And dies amid her worshippers."

THE DANISH LEAGUE OF JUSTICE (From the General to the Particular)

At the opening session of the Copenhagen Conference Mrs. SIGNE JÖRNER spoke of the work being done by the Danish association known as the "League of Justice," whose objects she said were to establish the "State of Justice" in place of the "State of Power" or the "State of Force" that now prevailed. The League of Justice stood for complete freedom from taxation and the collection of the whole economic rent of land, with equal and free participation in the government of public affairs—under the (proxy) system of the "free franchise," which came into the picture on the last session of the Conference and could not be explained here except at much length. In the field of economic life, the League of Justice, Mrs. Björner said, would vindicate fully the freedom of the individual and draw a clear and certain boundary around the functions of the State, so that the State would no longer interfere, as it harmfully does to-day, in those activities best performed by the individual. In order to get at the people when they were most awake, namely at election times, the League of Justice had formed a separate political party and were putting up candidates whenever there was an appeal to the voters.

The programme of the Danish "League of Justice" was thus sketched in general terms, but it would have been a help to the Conference if the practical policy for achieving these economic aims had been defined. There are differences of opinion within the League. They are all willing to proceed by the progressive (step by step) repeal of taxes on industry and the gradual adoption of the policy of land value taxation. The question at issue among them is the "all at once" plan on which the Justice League was founded in 1921. It is in their literature and was proclaimed at the last General Election, but the plan is a negation

of the whole principle of land value taxation, because it involves compensation to landowners—at an amount estimated to be equivalent to half the present selling value of the land. It is a scheme which means in effect that the whole economic rent of land would be left untouched in private hands for a period of at least ten years from the appointed day; and the compensation was and is (on the plan) to be obtained partly from a capital levy on all wealth, and partly from the disposal of all State and municipal undertakings—railways, tramways, schools, gas works, etc., etc. This plan is now shelved by the responsible spokesmen only in so far as they maintain that if the "all at once" scheme was adopted, compensation to the landowners from the sources already named, would have to be given. Members of the International Conference are free to form their own opinion of such confusions and contradictions. What it all has to do with the plain and straightforward policy of the Taxation of Land Values and Free Trade, is difficult to see.

A. W. M.

THE STATE AND THE INDIVIDUAL Review of Mr. Maynard Keynes' Book "The End of Laissez Faire."*

By W. R. LESTER, M.A.

Mr. Keynes is a lucid writer and interesting to boot. Nor can his ability be called in question. As a rule he leaves his readers in no doubt either as to his premises or his conclusions, but we rise from a perusal of this small book with a sense of mystification and a feeling that the author has made no serious effort to come to close quarters with the subject he discusses. The impression left is that, while his aim is to discredit those who base their social philosophy on the beneficence and harmony of the natural order, he is at pains to avoid any direct frontal attack on them and, instead, adopts a peculiar method of ironical insinuation which to us is far from convincing. The problem to which he addresses himself is as to what the organized state should take upon itself and what it should leave to individual exertion. The drawing of this line he describes as "perhaps the chief task of economists at this hour" and still, by his own confession, he fails to draw it, finding himself unable to do more than cite a few quite unrelated examples of things which he thinks should not be left to individual enterprise and which should therefore be undertaken by the State. From beginning to end there is no sign that Mr. Keynes has discovered any guiding principle and nowhere does he rise above the mere exponent of expediency. To quote his own words:—

"We cannot settle on abstract grounds, but must handle on its merits in detail what Burke termed 'one of the finest problems in legislation, namely, to determine what the State should take upon itself to direct by public wisdom, and what it ought to leave, with as little interference as possible, to individual exertion'."

Could opportunism go further than this?

Having adopted such a premise, he disqualifies himself for drawing any clear line of demarcation, though later on, seeming to realize how unsatisfactory this is, he ventures on the tentative suggestion that progress may lie in growth of the recognition of semi-autonomous bodies within the State whose criterion of

* The Hogarth Press, London, W.C.1, 2s.