

# Designed To Be Read Politely

By Joseph Dana Miller

Secretary of State Cordell Hull on Dec. 12 and Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace a month before singled out one book as "the most powerful book of all the ages." Mr. Hull said it was "the most complete and satisfying compendium of moral and ethical principles" which "have emerged triumphant from the test of centuries as the most constructive basis of human relationships" and warned "history records too many instances of the downfall of civilizations consequent upon moral and spiritual decadence." Mr. Wallace said it was one "which had proved itself more potent by far than any decisive battle or army or empire." Mr. Miller presents below a review of this work.—The Editors.

We have received a recent publication from the American Bible Society which has interested us very much. It is not a new book. Indeed it is a very old book, a translation from the ancient text into the English vernacular. One of the first translators, William Tyndale, was burnt for his labors by King Henry of England. Since that time the book has been widely read but little understood.

Besides being an exposition of the religious spirit, an historical resumé of the wars of the early Hebrew tribes, a vade mecum of a variety of moral injunctions, it is a work on

political and social economy of some value. Around it has grown a world-wide cult of disciples who instead of trying to build it into a body of coherent doctrine has split into various groups, who fight and quarrel among themselves on minor points so that the phrase, *odium theologium*, has become fairly descriptive of the conditions prevailing among the adherents of the philosophy expounded in this book.

From one part of the book we extract the following passage; "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof."

It lays down the right of property and seems to indicate that neither government nor landowner has any right to the products of labor, that

labor must first be satisfied before the state can intervene, for it says: "The husbandman that laboreth must be the first to partake of the fruit."

But there is another product, another value that arises, and this is indicated in the passage: "The profit of the earth is for all." That is, "The rent of land belongs to the people."

The authors of this book seem to reject the Malthusian theory or have never heard of it. For they say: "God himself that created the earth and made it, he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited." And again one of these early economists has this to say: "And God blessed them and God said unto them, "Be fruitful and mul-