

speaking, £3,450,000; but take it at only 50 per cent. of the total rateable value, the annual land value of Glasgow would be £3,875,000. A tax of 2s. in the £1 on this value would yield £287,500, and as the total taxation in Glasgow for all purposes is £1,396,000, a tax of 48 per cent. on the land value would produce a sum sufficient to pay the whole of the city's taxation. That is to say, that if all the revenues necessary for the upkeep of the city government were taken from land values, the present owners would still retain 52 per cent. of this value, which, in the language of the Royal Commission of the Housing of the Working Classes, 1885, 'is no recompense for any industry or expenditure on their part, but is the natural result of the industry and activity of the townspeople themselves.'"

Mr. Burt cited the experience of New Zealand, quoted at some length from Senator Bucklin's report, and reviewed some of the land legislation of the past.

#### GERMANY.

##### PRUSSIAN SURVIVAL OF THE FORMS OF COMMON LAND RIGHTS—CONSEQUENCE OF THE LOSS OF SUCH RIGHTS IN MISERY AND SUFFERING — GERMANY AWAKENING TO THE NEED OF LAND REFORM.

In my report, published in the Summer number, two items have been misquoted which I think it right to mention, so as to avoid misconceptions. The one is, that the tax on land values in our towns was started at 3 to 4 *per mille*, and *not per cent.*, and that not only some communities of the old imperial city of Vienna have joined our league, but that city itself as represented by the town council and the mayor.

As I mentioned last, we have in Germany a great many forms of land tenure still reminding us of the time when land was public property. So have some of our mining laws kept that character up to a comparatively late period.

Whilst in some parts the owners of the surface soil are by rights likewise owners of all underlying mineral, coal or salt deposits, in ancient Prussia these were kept under government control, and the great Frederic, who was not only a great warrior, but also a man of enlightened ideas upon political economy, specially insisted upon the prerogative of the crown in disposing of such mineral wealth. Up to the year 1865 the Prussian government had the right to open any mine on anybody's estate by a simple decree, the owner of the soil being simply recompensed for the land necessary to put up the machinery and to work the mine; and, in case the government granted these rights to private persons or corporations, it kept the seignory, and the grant was subjected to a royalty of 1-10 to some-

times 1-5 of the output, besides the strictest state supervision. All mines not properly worked, or abandoned, fell back to the state. Thus it could not happen, as it has done frequently of late, that some mines are kept idle, which it would pay to work, and which yet are closed, so as to limit the output and to enhance the rents of the larger holdings.

In some mining districts a great deal of misery has been caused by this policy of the coal trust. Many small holders, tradespeople and miners, who have founded their homesteads near such laboring centers, in the firm conviction that in reasonable time they would not cease to exist, found their little investments suddenly and almost totally depreciated, with no chance of recovery as long as the self-willed trust is allowed to exercise its sway.

Fortunately, public feeling has been roused pretty strongly on this point, and as the existing mining laws led to other abuses even more glaring, the Prussian Diet has suspended some for two years, during which time a new law is to be prepared.

Hitherto, anybody had the right to prospect on anybody's property for coal, minerals, salt, oil, etc., against a payment of \$12.50 and a stamp duty of 37 cents, and any deposits being discovered, a claim was granted to him of over two millions of square meters in area, subject to no conditions whatever as to exploration. At the time these regulations were made the legislators thought to promote the discovery and increase the output of coal, minerals, etc., trusting to the influence of free competition as a safeguard against any abuse of the powers thus granted.

No wonder that, when competition was killed by the big trusts, they found a splendid opportunity of monopolizing the hidden treasures of national wealth. Powerful boring companies were formed, which prospected wherever there was a chance of discovering anything, and these companies claimed enormous areas underground, so that they now control the bulk of our coal deposits, which are said to be the largest in the world. About a year ago the International Boring Company sold claims to the extent of \$9,000,000 to the coal trust, and distributed a dividend of 500 per cent to its lucky shareholders.

Now the horse is stolen, they try to look the stable. A great many voices throughout the country are raised in favor of nationalizing the whole mining industry, a step that would have been comparatively easy as long as free competition kept values on a normal basis, but which would mean an enormous sacrifice to the public now that a monopoly value has been created. However, something will be done in the direction of checking the power of the trust, and that, we have every reason to hope, will lie in the line advocated by us land reformers. Some of the minor German states have pro-

ceeded already with laudable energy in this direction. Württemberg has declared all salt deposits and mineral springs public property (there being no coal deposits in that part), and Hamburg and Bremen have done the same as to mineral salts, oils, bitumen, etc.

The duchy of Anhalt, where there are large deposits of mineral salts, has passed a law subjecting all grants to a tax of \$1 a year for each claim of 4,000 square meters, and it is hoped that this will stop the monopolist from holding idle their claims, and thus obstructing the development of the country.

In this little duchy we have a splendid example, not only of the direct, but also the indirect value of state ownership. It derives its principal income from a big salt mine, and consequently peoples' incomes there are taxed very lightly, with the effect that from the neighboring parts well-to-do people cross to Dessau, the pretty capital of the state, adding to its prosperity, while the neighborhood is drained and groaning under increasing taxation.

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#### GERMANY.

##### VALUABLE DATA FROM ADOLPH DAMASCHKE.

How far the revenues from land would suffice to pay all present (and future) public needs is demonstrated by Adolph Damaschke in the August number of *Land and Labor* (London, Eng.).

Mr. Damaschke addressed, in 1892, an inquiry to many German municipalities and districts for information concerning the relation of the revenues derived from lands and utilities publicly owned. Fifty-nine districts answered. Curiously enough those districts from which no reply was received are among the largest and richest. Babenhausen, and Langenseebold in Hesse, Mixstadt in Posen, Martinroda in Thuringia and Ebern in Unterfranken, all districts in which the returns from the public land are said to pay for all local rates and taxes, returned no answer.

The 59 districts which answered belong to fifteen different German provinces—Brandenburg, Pomerania, Schlesia, West Prussia, Westphalia, Hesse, Nassau, the Rhein Province, Hohenzollern, Saxony, Bavaria, Württemberg, the Grand Duchy of Hesse, Baden, Mecklenburg-Schweren, and Alsace.

The number of inhabitants of these districts varies from 800 to 69,000.

The examples of single places obtain increased importance because they may be considered as typical for a large number of districts in their provinces. This is expressed clearly in some answers. The Burgomaster of Treis, on the Moselle, writes: "The Burgomastery of Treis consists of an

area of 25,000 acres. Of these more than 12,500 acres belong to the parishes. All local needs are met from the common purse. Then each burger receives his firing on payment of half or one third of its value and 25 to 30 acres of cultivable land for his lifetime. On this public land the class without means finds work and support through almost the whole year. As the parish only takes from the produce of its possessions as much as it wants for its common needs the laborer gets almost all the produce of his toil. Such are the circumstances of almost all the lower Moselle."

D. W. Kobelt writes from Schwanheim, on the Maine (Hesse-Nassau): "In the region of Wiesbaden, the number of districts which levy no local rates and taxes, or only very low ones, is so large that this arrangement seems to us the normal one."

Philippsburg (Baden) with 2,400 inhabitants, has 1,017½ acres of wood and 1,295 acres of meadow and cultivated fields.

On the other side of the form of inquiry the Burgomaster has made the following instructive note; "Beyond the above-named duty in connection with the public land no taxes are raised here, but all—local rates, state taxes, river and weir dues—is covered by the return from the common property and common undertakings. The total amounts to from £2,350 to £2,450 a year.

From Hagenau (Alsace), a town of about 12,000 inhabitants, I received the following particulars: "In 1891-92, Hagenau obtained £14,256 from its public land. To this add the produce of the water system, £1,075, and the gas, £850. 'Local rates and taxes practically negligible on account of these possessions.'"

Gorlitz (Schlesia) takes the most favorable place of all German towns of over 50,000 inhabitants with regard to local rates and taxes. The total local rates for each inhabitant came, in 1890-91, to 8 marks, 85 pfennigs; in 1891-92, to 8 marks, 2 pfennigs; in 1892-93, to 7 marks, 28 pfennigs.

The reason lies in the circumstance that this town has obtained a landed property of 77,127½ acres, from which, in 1892, £38,028 went to the common chest."

This is a demonstration of how abundant are the sources of revenue to a people, and how much wiser than we these Germans have been in their social economics. Carried to its ultimate application, this principle renders unnecessary all these taxes upon improvements, all creation of bonded indebtedness, and makes it possible for the city to do—as some German cities have begun to do—the things that would give all the people of every self-governing municipality the advantages of leisure, comfort, and art which our one-sided civilization now gives only to the few.

Mr. John Z. White is recovering from his indisposition and will resume his lecture work at an early date.