

rubbish, spoliation, and robbery. Its advocates simply wanted to get their hands into somebody else's pocket "Mr. Hale spoke in a similar strain.

"On the vote being taken, the resolution was carried by 9 to 7. Several members left the room during the discussion."

The annual meeting of the Portsmouth Single Tax Union was held in the Co-operative Hall, Garnier Street, on 10th January. The chair was occupied by the President, Mr. Erving, who gave a resumé of the work accomplished locally during the year. He urged the members to persevere in the great movement for the uplifting of humanity, and pointed out the wonderful growth of the Single Tax idea all over the civilised world. Mr. Sharp read the auditor's report, which was endorsed by Mr. H. Cole, and, as it showed a favourable balance, was adopted with evident signs of satisfaction. The following officers were elected for the year 1907:—

President—Mr. Erving.
Vice-Presidents—Mr. T. Hardwick and E. Sindupp.
Secretary—Mr. J. H. M'Guigan.
Financial Secretary—Mr. R. Lee.
Treasurer—Mr. E. Cole.
Committee—Messrs. A. Stoakes, S. Cole, and S. Hellier.

Several lectures were delivered during January in addition to those announced in our last issue:—

- Jan. 3. Manchester Young British Liberal Society. A. H. Weller.
- " 9. Limehouse Church of England Men's Society. John Scurr.
- " 15. Skipton Liberal Club. C. H. Smithson and F. Skirrow.
- " 16. Grimsby Literary and Debating Society. G. Lin-skill: "Land and Labour."
- " 21. Bradford. A. Withy.
- " 21. Oakworth Liberal Club. Wm. Thomson.
- " 22. Ealing I.L.P., Town Hall. F. Verinder.
- " 23. Portsea Parish Institute. F. Verinder.
- " 30. Halifax Junior Liberal Club. H. H. Spencer.

- The following lectures have been arranged for February:—
- Feb. 1. Leysian Mission, City Road, London. L. H. Berens: "The Law of Social Life." 6.30 p.m.
 - " 4. Brockwell Literary and Debating Society, Parochial Hall, Talma Road, Brixton. F. Verinder.
 - " 6. Clayton Liberal Club. F. Skirrow.
 - " 7. St. Martin's, Plaistow (Iron Room, Boundary Road). F. Verinder: "The Land Question and the Unemployed." 8.30.
 - " 7. Saltaire Liberal Club. Wm. Thomson.
 - " 10. Lewisham Liberal and Radical Club, 272 High Street. F. Verinder: "Taxation of Land Values."
 - " 13. Undercliffe Liberal Club. F. Skirrow.
 - " 15. Thornton Liberal Club. Chas. H. Smithson.
 - " 15. Raw Nook Liberal Club. A Lecture.
 - " 17. Acton Social Union, Central Auction Rooms, Market Place. F. Verinder: "The Bible and the Land Question." 3.30.
 - " 17. Earby I.L.P. F. Skirrow.
 - " 20. Greengates Liberal Club. F. Skirrow.
 - " 24. Fulham Ethical Society, Fulham Palace Road (opposite the Infirmary). L. H. Berens: "The Relations of Ethics and Politics." 7 p.m.
 - " 28. Cottoingley Liberal Club. F. Skirrow.
 - Mar. 1. Leysian Mission, City Road, London. L. H. Berens.
 - " 3. Bow and Bromley Ethical Society. F. Verinder: Lantern Lecture.

Mr. Skirrow will also deliver a series of lectures in the North Westmorland Division, 21st to 27th February inclusive.

FREDK. VERINDER, Gen. Sec., E.L.T.L.V.

THE DIGGER MOVEMENT IN THE DAYS OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

By LEWIS H. BERENS.

(London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co. 7s. 6d. net.)

The author of this book occupies a high place in the Single Tax world. This is not his first contribution to the literature of the movement, but this is the most unique, though perhaps not the most useful, contribution which he has yet given. He has supplied us with a piece of history which the orthodox historian has denied us.

The hero of his narrative is a reformer of the Commonwealth period. Of this reformer little is known except what can be gathered from his writings, and even this would be yet denied us were it not for the painstaking efforts of Mr. Berens. It is a way the historians have; they only deal with the successful parties, and the most criminal offence a man can perform in their eyes is to propagate a doctrine which fails to find popular approval.

Of those who survive we hear a great deal; the place of their birth and their sepulchre is indicated, and the principal incidents of their life are presented to us in highly-coloured narratives.

Nothing of this kind is to be found in this work of Mr. Berens, although he has succeeded in presenting an admirable view of the democratic movement for a real commonwealth within the Commonwealth of the Protector. The leader of this movement was one Gerrard Winstanley by name. This man had got firmly established in his mind what many since his time have conceived to be a central truth, namely, that the earth had been given as a heritage for the children of men. He was of opinion that the freedom or servitude of the masses of men depended on the kind of recognition they gave to this central truth, and he worked for the equal claim of all mankind to the use of the earth.

Winstanley was a mystic, and he lived in a time of mystics, such brilliant mystics as John Bunyan and John Milton. Indeed, it would appear to have been an age of mysticism. Milton had said,

"I thence

Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song."

and Winstanley had also invoked the aid of his Creator in his adventurous movement.

There is a grand and becoming prayer which has come down to us from John Milton, and there can be no doubt that Winstanley uttered it in spirit if in different words.

"What in me is dark, illumine,
What is low, raise and support,
That to the height of this great argument
I may assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men."

He believed he had been inspired to preach his doctrines. Here are his words:—

"Not a full year since, being quiet at my work, my heart was filled with sweet thoughts, and many things were revealed to me which I never read in books, nor heard from the mouth of any flesh. When I began to speak of them some people could not bear my words. Amongst these revelations, this was one, 'That the earth shall be made a Common Treasury of Livelihood to whole mankind, without respect of persons.'"

The foregoing is a fair sample of the mystical in the writings of Gerrard Winstanley. He taught the fundamental principles of Quakerism, and he was a passive resister. Groping in the dark, he strained his eyes that he might catch the faintest streak of light. Prior to his time the nations of Europe had been shaken by religious revolutions, which had left their imprint on social arrangements. Like other revolutions, these had produced some excesses, and the people had not altogether gained by them. Institutions were crystallising which threatened the liberties of the people. Hard penalties were being imposed on the indi-

viduals who had the hardihood to take a goose from the common, but the rulers of the land, lay and clerical, were joined in a movement to steal the common from the goose.

Winstanley sought to put himself in resistance to this in a way that involved no violence. Along with a little band he began to dig up a Common known as St. George's Hill, in Surrey, and to sow the ground with parsnips, carrots, and beans. Information of this was sent to the Council of State, and the soldiers were called out. After a great deal of squabbling on the part of the Government and passive resistance on the part of Winstanley and his friends, they were finally ejected. Besides, they were assaulted by the minions of the Lord of the Manor and the Parsons, and, finally, they were mulcted in fines and ejected from the Common.

Winstanley then became a pamphleteer, and published several pamphlets, in which he gives his opinions somewhat forcibly regarding laws and lawyers. He issues challenges to debate equity with the lawyers and scripture with the parsons. He also addresses petitions to the rulers, but they have learned the value of passive resistance, and his efforts are for the most part ignored.

That there was a fairly large demand for this literature is evidenced by the fact that pirated editions of his pamphlets were sold under other titles. This Mr. Berens takes as a proof that the movement was a fairly wide one. An instance of the outbreak of the movement in another part of the country is also given.

We might give quotations from the works of Winstanley, but there is a difficulty in making a selection. His works are full of forcible and piquant argument, and one must read the book to get an adequate idea of the nature and scope of what came to be known as the Leveller movement. In his later years Winstanley seems to have become more materialistic, but he still stands for the right of all to the use of the earth.

The following will show the state of mind at which he arrived in later years.

"To know the secrets of Nature is to know the works of God; and to know the works of God within the creation is to know God Himself; for God dwells in every visible work or body.

"Indeed, if you would know spiritual things, it is to know how the Spirit of Power and Wisdom dwells within and governs both the several bodies of the stars and planets in the heavens above and the several bodies of the earth below, as grass plants, fishes, beasts, birds, and mankind."

"I'll appeal to yourself in this question. What other knowledge have you of God but what you have within the circle of the creation? For if the Creation in all its dimensions be the fulness of Him that fills all with Himself, and if you yourself be part of this Creation, where can you find God but in that line or station wherein you stand? God manifests Himself in actual knowledge, not in imagination."

Like a great many other reformers, Winstanley has written a Utopia. The author ranks it as superior to the Utopia of Sir Thomas More. This may be so, but the writer has the same objection to it that he has to other Utopias. It is an attempt to build with unsuitable materials.

It is one thing to haul down an edifice, but a quite different thing to erect one in its place. In designing a social system the designer meets with a difficulty which does not present itself when designing anything else. It is impossible to apportion the materials. In dealing with human beings you cannot arrange them on shelves, as they have a habit of getting down off one shelf and on to another. A state of society cannot be manufactured—it must grow. When Nature wants a new form—as Henry George points out—she takes an old form and develops it.

Mr. Berens is himself co-author of a Utopia that avoids this mistake, and the reader who has not read "The Story of my Dictatorship" would be well repaid by a comparison of this Utopia with that of Gerrard Winstanley.

He wished to make land free, but it has been left to Henry George to demonstrate the method by which land is to be made free.

May Mr. Berens's latest work have a large and profitable circulation.

WILLIAM REID.

And while colleges and universities and similar institutions, though ostensibly organized for careful investigation and the honest promulgation of truth, are not and cannot be exempt from the influences which disturb the study of political economy, they are especially precluded under present conditions from faithful and adequate treatment of that science. For in the present social conditions of the civilized world nothing is clearer than that there is some deep and widespread wrong in the distribution, if not in the production, of wealth. This it is the office of political economy to disclose, and a really faithful and honest explication of the science must disclose it. But no matter what that injustice may be, colleges and universities, as at present constituted, are by the very law of their being precluded from discovering or revealing it. For no matter what be the nature of this injustice, the wealthy class must, relatively at least, profit by it, and this is the class whose views and wishes dominate in colleges and universities. As, while slavery was yet strong, we might have looked in vain to the colleges and universities and accredited organs of education and opinion in our Southern States, and indeed for that matter in the North, for any admission of its injustice, so under present conditions must we look in vain to such sources for any faithful treatment of political economy. Whoever accepts from them a chair of political economy must do so under the implied stipulation that he shall not really find what it is his professional business to look for.—*The Science of Political Economy.*

THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION.—DEPUTATION TO PRIME MINISTER.—The Press Association states that the following is the authorised report of a deputation to nearly 150 Liberal and Labour members which waited on the Prime Minister on Tuesday afternoon, 18th December, to urge the need of early legislation in the direction of land values. The views of the deputation were put forward by Mr. J. H. Whitley, Halifax, who is chairman of the Sessional Committee devoted to this subject; Sir Alfred Thomas, Glamorganshire (East); Mr. F. W. Jowett, Bradford; Mr. C. E. Price, Edinburgh; Mr. C. P. Trevelyan, Elland; and Sir Albert Spicer, Central Hackney. The separate valuation of land values as distinguished from buildings and other improvements was asked for by all the speakers as the first step necessary to the accomplishment of a reformed system. Many instances were given to show how, under the present system, the benefit of every reform, legislative or administrative, was largely absorbed by increased land values, and failed to reach the persons for whom they were intended. The Prime Minister, in the course of a sympathetic reply, expressed a confident hope that a measure for separate valuation of land values would find a place in the Government programme for next session. He fully agreed with the speakers about the unjust and undesirable diversion from public to private pockets of a large part of the results of improvements made in the condition of the people, whether by legislation or by local administration. He pointed out that the full reform desired by the members interested in the question could not be carried out in a single measure, and that this made it all the more desirable that the necessary preliminary of valuation should be undertaken without delay. The President of the Local Government Board, Mr. John Burns, who was also present, added a few words.