

NEWS—FOREIGN.

GREAT BRITAIN.

THE BUDGET GIVING LIFE TO THE LIBERAL CAUSE — BUDGET-PROTEST MEETINGS FAILURES—THE GREAT HYDE PARK DEMONSTRATION—LLOYD GEORGE'S GREAT SPEECH AT LIMEHOUSE, LONDON —VISIT OF HENRY GEORGE, JR., OPPORTUNE.

The political situation in Britain is brighter and more encouraging than at any previous time in the lives of men now taking a part in the reform movement. Henry George used to say that once the landlords could be forced to fight, in defence of their privileges, the day of victory would not be far off. Here Lloyd George has forced them in a way that will make it difficult for them to retire.

Thanks to the Finance Bill with its Land Taxes and the promise of a complete valuation of all the land in the country, our privileged classes are fully alive to the fact that their power and special privileges are in danger.

Having fully realized that the Taxation of Land Values is what the Radicals of the country are after, and that valuation is the first practical step towards this reform—that, in fact, Lloyd George is laying the foundation of a system which strikes at the very root of their power—the landlords are now fully alive to the situation. In self defence the landlords are organizing Budget protest leagues and similar societies under other names, with a view of creating a public opinion against the land clauses in the Budget. "Tax the foreigner instead of your own land" is one of the cries one has often heard. They are issuing leaflets and pamphlets by the million. Meetings are being held all over the country to teach the people the "iniquity" of the proposals of Lloyd George.

Only a few short months ago it looked as though the Government had lost the confidence of the country and that it must soon be hurled from office and power. By-elections to fill Parliamentary vacancies were being lost right along the line. Ministerial candidates were being defeated one

after another with almost uninterrupted regularity.

At the end of April the Chancellor of the Exchequer made his Budget statement. A few weeks later the Finance Bill to provide the necessary machinery was brought in. This proved the turning point in the tide of disaster which had overtaken the Ministerial party. The forces of reaction were thoroughly awakened up and there rapidly followed the organization of Anti-Budget Leagues and similar organizations. Had Henry George been alive to-day he could hardly have wished for anything better than the political situation as we have it here.

This organization of Budget Protest Leagues to defeat not only the Budget but the Government, roused the friends of the Government and they found it necessary to organize a Budget League to defend and explain their policy. Liberal members of Parliament and their supporters promptly took up the challenge of the landlords and to-day a Budget League has its speakers by the score in all parts of the country, while large quantities of excellent leaflets and pamphlets are widely distributed through many agencies. Many of these leaflets and pamphlets are so straight on our lines that they might be the work of our own writers. The people are being taught what the Taxation of Land Values is and what it will do. With Winston Churchill, M. P., as Chairman and Henry Norman, M. P., as Hon. Secretary, the Budget League soon became a great force in the fight for the Budget. It has been mainly around the question of Valuation and the Taxation of Land Values that the fight has so far been waged.

The new organization being able to command the services of men of Cabinet rank from the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer downward, the Members of the United Committee and the Leagues for the Taxation of Land Values are now having the satisfaction of listening to arguments from these men which are almost in the very words of Henry George. Whether they know it or not, the position they have taken up, logically followed, leads to the taxation of Land Values to 20s. in the £. The course of events will

probably drive them further than they intend going at present. Many of these men have no sympathy with Henry Georgeism and they do not hesitate to say so. They merely stand for the principle that as land values are created by the community, the community has a right to "some" share in them.

Again we realize how wide and deep was the vision of the "Prophet of San Francisco" who told us that the principles for which we stand would ultimately be carried by politicians who would avow that they had no sympathy with us or our methods.

Only a little while ago, as already pointed out, the enemies of the Government and its policy were gaining ground. Today they are hardly a force to be reckoned with. Free Trade and the Taxation of Land Values have the sympathy and support of the people to an extent which is full of hope for the future. Where Parliamentary vacancies have occurred since the Budget Campaign set in, Ministerial or Progressive Candidates have won the fights. Budget Protest League Meetings are a complete failure. Hardly anywhere can they find an audience to carry their resolution against the Budget. At these meetings amendments are frequently put and carried to the chagrin of the promoters. On the other hand meetings in support of the Budget are large and enthusiastic, and in no case, so far as I know, have they failed to carry their resolutions.

On Saturday, July 24th, a large demonstration in support of the Budget was held in Hyde Park, London. Amongst those who co-operated in promoting the demonstration were the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, and it is not too much to say that a large measure of the success achieved was due to the splendid help rendered by its staff of willing workers. The number of people present was very large, estimates varying from 60,000 to 200,000 make it appear that not less than 100,000 were present. It was not the size of the gathering which impressed one most. It was the sober, earnest character of the demonstrators. There was nothing of the holiday crowd which one so often sees at similar gatherings.

As *The Daily News* in its leader on Mon-

day July 26th said, "No one who saw these crowds which had tramped to the Marble Arch from distant suburbs and sacrificed a rare holiday for the purpose, could doubt their enthusiasm. The Budget has fired the imagination of the country and rallied the forces of the Progressive Party."

From a dozen platforms speeches were delivered by speakers drawn from all parts of the country including many well known Single Taxers. At seven o'clock the following resolution was put at all the twelve platforms and enthusiastically carried:

RESOLUTION.

"That this meeting heartily welcomes the important provisions contained in the Budget for taxing monopolies and socially created wealth, and particularly for securing a complete valuation of all land in the United Kingdom, holding this to be essential to any policy of land and social reform. It further hopes that the Government will firmly resist any mutilation of their proposals dictated by selfish interests, and will seek an early opportunity for so extending them as to secure the best use of the land, which must result in increased employment, better housing for the people, and greater prosperity for our national industries."

The great popularity of the Budget has brought into line most of the Liberal Members of Parliament who had at the outset ventured to oppose the land clauses.

Lord Roseberry still plays the part of a "Croaking Raven on a withered branch." He has denounced the Budget as "a revolution," but he is no longer a force in political life, and many of those who were his greatest admirers and strongest supporters are now out in defence of the Budget.

We Single Taxers have no great enthusiasm for any of the three land taxes. In our opinion they are not economically sound, and the amount of revenue that they will raise is paltry. But, as Mr. Verinder pointed out in a memorandum he wrote some weeks ago: "The one wholly satisfactory feature of Part 1. of the Finance Bill, 1909 ('Duties on Land Values') is that it embodies an obviously honest at-

tempt to redeem the pledges given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget Statement of April 29th, 1909, to provide machinery for a complete valuation on a capital basis of the whole of the land in the United Kingdom."

Whatever concessions the Chancellor may make, or whatever false steps he may take, he has done a great service to the cause of progress. He has raised a fight which is likely to continue until the people are thoroughly educated as to what the land question is and what it involves. From a thousand platforms and innumerable leaflets, etc., facts and arguments are being given to interested people. Landlords have actually threatened to commit suicide in order to avoid the land taxes, and have only been deterred by fear of the death duties that would have to be paid on their estates when passing to their heirs! Other landlords have threatened to leave the country, whilst others are threatening to close some of their numerous houses and dismiss large numbers of their servants. The people, however, are wholly unimpressed by these threats and often turn Budget-Protest meetings to Budget-support meetings, carrying a resolution of support and ending by hearty cheers for Mr. Lloyd George.

With men of the ability and standing of Asquith, Grey, George, Churchill, Ure and others defending the land taxes and valuation we are full of hope for the future. Even from Tory-ridden Ulster come reports of revolt on the part of Secretaries of Tory organizations who refuse to take any part in the work against the Finance Bill, believing it to be on right lines. Some of us have often said that the raising of the land question as a political issue would bring many surprises and this is one of them. The REVIEW could hardly do a better service to its readers than to publish the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer delivered at Lime House, London, on July 30th.

The United Committee of the League continues its good work, and no part of the country is without its educative agency. Splendid platform work is being done by Messrs Mc'Ghee, McHugh and many others, and the newly elected President of

the English League (Mr. Hemmerde, K. C.) has consented to speak at Preston on Sept. 27th. Preston is the constituency of Mr. Harold Cox, who once was a strong supporter of our cause and a correspondent of the *New York Standard*. He is now one of our bitterest opponents. We are rousing the Preston liberals against him, and along with Mr. Mc'Ghee, I have just concluded a week's campaign in the town. The few Liberals who are against us are being effectively opposed. Sir Thos. P. Whitaker was President of the Huddersfield Junior Liberals, but his attitude towards the land question not being favorable a resolution was passed which caused him to resign his position. Mr. Mc'Hugh has been speaking every day for a fortnight in the Huddersfield District, and has received fine encouragement. The meetings have been large and most appreciative.

At the beginning of July Mr. Henry George, Jr., gave us a call on his homeward journey from Japan. The visit was opportune, as it gave him a chance of seeing on the spot how things were going over here. The visit unfortunately was only very short, but we were able to get together a good gathering of stalwarts. Judge Edward Osgood Brown, of Chicago and Mr. Jos. Fels were among the speakers.

Your readers will perhaps be wondering what the House of Lords will do with the Budget. Nothing, most likely, but if the Lords should throw it out the fight will still go on and probably their action would give the movement for taxing values an additional impetus.

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LONDON, Eng.

VICTORIA.

The second session of the 22nd (State) Parliament of Victoria opened on the 30th June. The Governor's Speech contained the following paragraph:

"My advisers recognize the urgency of effecting a fundamental alteration in the incidence of land taxation, and a bill will be submitted for your concurrence by which means it is believed the settlements and cultivation of the arable lands of the