

values so much the better, as land purchase and similar impracticable ideas may be safely left to the oblivion which surely awaits them. The more intelligent of the Socialists are also recognizing our method as the necessary preliminary step, and if, therefore, a Voluntary Union of forces can be looked forward to for securing the taxation of land values, Othello in the shape of the Land Nationalization Society and the Socialist will ultimately find his occupation gone.

F. SKIRROW.

BRITAIN THROUGH COLONIAL EYES.

It is possible that the readers of THE REVIEW—and here I proclaim that every Single Taxer should not only read, but out of his house pay for the excellent result of so many brilliant collaborators—may be glad to hear how Britain strikes a Colonial Democrat. To summarize, with more hope and more honor, than with pretty wide reading had been looked for. For instance, one reads that Royal Commissions report on National Physical Degeneracy; one reads in "Rowntree's Poverty," and such books, that in a prosperous small town half the population fail to get a workhouse minimum of food and warmth in infancy, "prime of Life," and old age; but not until one sees the teeming millions of South London, Glasgow, or the smaller centres—Sheffield, Edinburgh, Bristol—does one know how landlordism rob men of strength and stature, women of restraint and beauty, children of gaiety, age of veneration. The poor are small, ugly and mean in appearance; whereas, the well-to-do appear fully the physical equals of Colonials, though in some cases a life of Hindoo routine results in a lack of mental alertness as to new ideas; in fact, talent is not attained by any class any more than in New York. These impressions are no doubt *naïf* to savagery, but lead to the same conclusions that one had come to elsewhere under other conditions—that the nation will perish unless wealth is more fairly distributed to the earner, in no trifling measure; and that the property and sex qualification with which the franchise is afflicted is an obsolete and dangerous exclusion of the bulk of the national talent from consideration of the best methods of safe and sane social-economic reforms. But there is hope. The insanity of "protection" of industries that do not exist, and the grip that landlordism has on Colonial liberalism by the hateful process of "suicide by purchase" makes the position of a Colonial Single Taxer oft-times very painful. The destructive criticism in advance of proposals which are warmly taken up in a small community is as painful as the attitude of "I told you so" when they fail; but honor leaves one no option as to a "tariff" or "buying-off piracy." Here, if

the horror is full, the hope is bright. I have spoken (besides an unforgettable stay in Glasgow) in Yorkshire, Bristol, Cornwall and elsewhere. I have met many men, from Cabinet Ministers to revolutionist socialists, to almost all I have urged the iniquity of landlordism and almost always the eye has flashed and the lip has set. It is hard to say what will follow after the taxation of land values equally with other property in this country; but I am morally sure that Bills to place all local body taxes on site values, and to recast in some measure the existing land tax of 4 in the 1£ (which is now levied on values of 1690 under a series of amending acts up to 1798) will be passed. I hardly suppose that this levy of forty million pounds annually will be made—it is now about one million—but a great and permanent change in the public mind has occurred. Tolstoy and Kropotkin have enormously reinforced among the cultured classes the blow which George has dealt at the land monopoly idol.

But 'Diana' Kali, the goddess of degradation, despair and destruction, is yet very great. Mr. John Burns the President of the Local Government Board said to me: "What was the exact process of getting 'your Land Tax Act through—you know 'such proposals are mooted here?'" I said: "Our Lower House sent up the Bill, and the Upper House of life nominees of past Premiers put it out of shape. Premier John Ballance demanded that enough members to give a majority should be appointed, and for only a seven year term. The Right Hon., the Earl of Onslow, refused to appoint and resigned the Governorship on Ballance threatening to resign *his* position. The new Governor made the large number of new seven-year appointments necessary, Ballance on his part agreeing not to exempt improvements fully at once and making a secret treaty not to increase the tax, from which we have never yet escaped." Burns said, with his slow, wise smile: "I thought it was something of that kind." But the parallel is not exact. The Lords here are exceedingly able men and will never fight on an issue where success is impossible, and the King who signed the great Housing report of 1885 would assuredly welcome any law purporting to carry out the only piece of controversial politics that he has ever set his name to in real propaganda.

I have great hopes for the movement here. The faithful have much belief in Campbell-Bannerman as a man, and the government papers are all for us. The Australasian position is not so good. The New Zealand premier Ward, and the Australian premier Deakin are hostile; there is talk of Laurensen, nearly a good man, going into the New Zealand cabinet. Caruthers is all right in New South Wales, a true Croasdaler in the saddle.

Here Walt. Runciman, Single Taxer, replaces McKenna as Under-secretary to

Treasury. It looks as if a big move were contemplated, but Asquith, on whom we cannot rely, so far has the last word. Winston Churchill has joined the English League for the Taxation of Land Values. And so the cause moves.

But I am keeping off facts in this report, trying to convey rather my impressions, as I said. Now of these I am perhaps most clearly struck with the reversal of parties since George's trumpet blast. In 1880 the reconstructors of Tory Democracy against the Gladstonites who "left Mr. George to the Duke of Argyll" were Sir John Gorst, Arthur Balfour and Lord R. Churchill. Today Balfour has destroyed the Tory Democrat party, on the evidence of Sir. J. Gorst. The Gladstonite Ministers are exploded—Devonshire, Roseberry, Chamberlain, only provoke a smile. Morley and another lag superfluous in the Cabinet and never speak on politics: Bryce is pigeonholed somewhere where his ideas will do no harm. Their book is closed. The man who represents with, great ability, a troop of kinsmen, and a regiment of fellow converts, the Tory Democrat view of 'Liberty and Empire' (Liberty *first*), is Winston Churchill, the son of Lord Randolph, Chamberlain's enemy. He has been a Conservative M. P., "quit" when his party deserted Free Trade, and after heavily adding to his reputation as Minister for the Colonies in the Commons, has joined us, and is now a Vice-President of our Manchester League and has spoken out most nobly this year even. That is the sort of thing that impresses me, more perhaps than the group of splendid private "commoners" who have never had to tear out personal and family traits to come over. Some I have met. Dr. Dundas White one would take for a 'hanging' judge, and his writings have a similar austere legalism: both are as accurate as George and as warm as Tolstoy, if you have courage to tackle them. Josiah Wedgwood, to whom economic text books are as potter's clay to be shaped to strength and beauty, is more like our New Zealand Single Taxers in his fight against "the enemy that steals away men's brains" as the sister reform. Our own men out of Parliament are only too few, no other serious faults.

Within the last two years the movement for Equity in Elections has made great growth, and I have little doubt that if a system of Proportionalism were set up that fully 100 avowed "Single Taxers first" would be returned to Parliament by various parties; there are now some 400 out of 670 in full sympathy with a *start* being made. Within the last few months the Referendum has for the first time been advocated by the class of people who count for something—J. A. Hobson, Lord Courtney, etc. It is a move toward some similar law to our New Zealand Rating on Site Value by local option, if a compulsory law is too difficult, and so worth recording apart from its in-

trinsic interest as solving the "Lords" question. Before I conclude I must express my very pleasant impression of British Labor. There are hardly any left of the Hyndman sort of socialists to-day; the I. L. P. and Keir Hardie are growing in light and sweetness under the teachings of experience. Their manifesto last fall was thoroughly "well put"—you know what I mean. "Remember not past years." One almost never hears to-day of nationalizing property other than privileges by means of taxation even from avowed Socialists. Anarchy is still believed the Russian way of spelling "bomb," I fancy.

MERVYN J. STEWART.

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"Buy a home. But buy a few lots at the same time. These you can use for a garden, for chickens and other useful purposes. Later their increased value will give you prosperity. Buy good land and then hold on to it." This is the advice of the *New York Journal*, edited by the man who last year ran for Governor, and was enthusiastically acclaimed by many as the Moses who was to lead us out of bondage. Nothing is said here of the economic effects of holding land until it increases in value, and thus profiting by the prosperity of the community. Why does not the *Journal* tell us how to make a prosperous community in which all shall share in the prosperity? It is easy enough to point out ways by which we may benefit at somebody's expense. But is there no such thing as social equity?

As a matter of fact, the opportunity of following the advice of the organ of the late candidate for the governorship becomes more and more restricted to the few who have the means, and even to them it demands the cultivation of a sordid economy which involves the denial to them and their families of much that makes life worth living. "Have life and have it more abundantly," says the Scriptures: In more ways than one way is it impossible for the individual to follow the Scripture and the advice of William R. Hearst's *New York Journal* at the same time.

MR. E. B. SWINNEY'S WORK.

The Single Tax Information Bureau has received during the year that has passed 142 requests for literature, and has sent out 11,009 documents. Its expenditures have been \$108, and Mr. Swinney's services have been rendered without compensation. The work itself is supported by voluntary contributions. The thanks of the Single Tax world are due to Mr. Swinney for his self-sacrificing labors, which have been performed without ostentation and far from the lime light.