

that time comes; but the intermediate period through which we are now passing is one in which the democratic movement is to be hindered rather than helped by rough and tumble debates within its own lines. They only afford diversion for an idle hour or two, at the best; and they easily excite bitterness where there should be co-operation.

* *

Mothers and Their Citizenship.

One of the arguments before the New York legislative committee last week in behalf of the association for opposing women's suffrage, was altogether too robust. It would rule women out of all public activities, and even out of the sphere of public intelligence. To say that women are too frail to be burdened with the vote is sheer nonsense, unless it means much more than the burden of going to the polls and dropping a ballot into the box, for that would be no burden at all—not as much as going to prayer meeting or playing bridge. Unless it means that the voting right would impose a duty to take a vital interest in public affairs, the argument falls flat. But if this is the gist of the argument, then it is a plea for exemption of women from taking any vital interest in public affairs; and the woman who in fact takes no vital interest in public affairs is unfit for mothering citizens in a democratic republic. What kind of citizens could we expect from mothers who took no vital interest in citizenship?

* *

Unemployment in the United States.

It will come as news to our British friends of "tariff reform" (protection) proclivities, that in this highly protected country of ours there is any unemployment. But it is not news to our workmen. They all know it, and sometimes it gets into our statistics. Here, for instance, is the Bulletin of the Committee on Congestion of Population in New York, which, in the issue of March 7, reports a very considerable lack of employment. "In September, 1908," it says, "out of 288,181 wage earners in various lines of industry, 22.5 per cent. were unemployed; out of 88,009 in the building trade, 33.5 per cent. were unemployed; out of 22,829 (reporting) in the clothing trade, 30.4 per cent. were unemployed; out of 21,547 in the printing trade, 12.7 per cent. were unemployed; out of 8,250 tobacco workers, 14.2 per cent. were unemployed; out of 7,843 wood workers, 21.1 per cent. were unemployed." And from reports of the State department of labor, this issue of the Bulletin shows that in 1909 the average unemploy-

ment due to trade conditions and not to strikes during the last six months of that year in the State of New York, was 18.9 per cent.

* *

British "Rates" and "Taxes."

A correspondent who is bothered by the confusing use of such terms as "rates" and "taxes" in Great Britain, asks for information which may be in demand by others besides himself. He observes that "there seem to be 'rates' and 'taxes' which may be alike except in their purposes and disposition," and ventures the supposition that "there is a tariff on several things." By way of explanation of his difficulties, he says that sometimes he sees "statements in *The Public* from which it appears that there is no tax on agricultural lands, and then again as though there was a tax on a nominal appraisalment of lands and also that the government pays half of that." Our correspondent is wrong in his inference that "rates" and "taxes" are alike except in purpose and disposition. "Taxes" is the term applied to exactions made by the Imperial Government through Parliament, whereas "rates" is the term for local taxation. In the main, "taxes" are imposed upon real estate hardly at all; whereas, in the main, "rates" are hardly imposed upon anything else. On incomes, for instance, "taxes" are paid to the general government, but on occupied real estate, "rates" are paid to the local authorities on a percentage of the rental. In some circumstances the general government makes expenditures out of the Imperial treasury "in aid of rates," which slightly resembles the custom of Congress in paying half the expenses of the District of Columbia, and it is probably from this that our correspondent infers that the Imperial Government pays half the tax on land. His confusion about there seeming to be no tax on agricultural lands, and yet a tax on a nominal appraisalment of land, doubtless arises from a condition which we have tried often to explain. At the beginning of William and Mary's reign, a tax of 20 per cent. on the rental value of land was imposed, and a remnant of this exaction remains; but through fixing the rental values on the basis of 200 years ago, and through subsequent commutations in respect of numerous holdings, the income from this source is now inconsiderable. The "unearned increment" tax of Lloyd George's Budget would be essentially but a partial restoration of this tax to its original vigor, by estimating it upon capital instead of rental value. Land "rates" are as a rule imposed upon tenants, being about one-third of the rent they pay to their landlords. The

occupant of a \$75 tenement, for instance, would be subject to \$25 in "rates." Sometimes real estate promoters, intending to erect several buildings for renting, agree with the local authorities to pay the rates themselves, whether the premises happen to be occupied or not. They do so in consideration of a discount of 25 per cent on the "rates." In such cases, to use our former illustration of a \$75 occupier, the landlord would charge him a rental of \$100—the real rental value, obviously, no matter who pays the "rates,"—and would pay in "rates," out of that \$100, the sum of \$25 less 25 per cent, or slightly less than \$19. The difference to the locality is that it gets its "rates" easier by making the landowner the collector, and gets them whether the premises are occupied or not; the difference to the landlord is the possibility of a profit on the "rates"; the difference to the tenant is nothing. It is true that Great Britain imposes a tariff on several things—chiefly alcohol and tobacco. These come under the head of "taxes" and not of "rates."

* *

Self-Reformation in the House of Lords.

Moved by the popular fury rising against the House of Lords, that antique body is proposing to reform itself. And what a revelation of American Toryism the comments upon it by our own newspapers do make, to be sure. They are exceedingly anxious to preserve the second chamber, although the history of second chambers, including our own Senate, is a history of the creation and conservation of privilege; and on that basis they welcome the news of this proposed self-reform of the Lords. They even welcome the plan, which, stripped of its prettily worded disguises, is simply that the House of Lords shall consist of selected peers. This plan would make that chamber more formidable than ever as a buttress for privilege. With all the self interest of a privileged class to serve, it would have the appearance of a representative body, and all the power of a legislative chamber.

* *

The Growing Army of the Poor.

"My work has carried me all over the world," said the international secretary of the Salvation Army to Chicago reporters last week, "and almost everywhere I find *extreme poverty is increasing.*" Pretty good testimony that, and pointed. Shall we do nothing about it but amiably afford occasional relief to individuals? Is there no explanation of its cause, other than the convenient one that the victims themselves are responsible for their poverty?

Social Wealth for Social Use.

Dr. Hamilton, president of Tuft's College, made an address recently in Boston, in the course of which he disclosed his comprehension of the present strong tendency of American thought—indeed, of the world's thought—with reference to public finance. According to the report of the Boston Sunday Globe of March 6, "Dr. Hamilton in closing advocated a system by which social expenditures would be met by social wealth, somewhat along the line of the German land value tax."

* *

Conservation of Natural Resources.

A clearer vision than many statesmen, or even the regular run of professional economists, has the Episcopal bishop of Alaska, regarding the conservation of natural resources. He rises above the secondary question of individual criminality in gathering this common inheritance into private hands—a question that inevitably raises doubts,—to consider only the primary question of a communal responsibility regarding which there can be no reasonable doubt. "The sale," he says, "to the Guggenheim interests of land rich in coal and copper, with even great possibilities for agriculture, at \$10 an acre, was a barter for a mere song. I do not say the transfer was fraudulent. For all I know, every step was legal; but the laws must be wrong when so great an injustice is possible. Those natural resources belonged to the whole Republic. It is wrong to dispose of them at any price, much more at that ridiculous price. I favor government ownership of natural resources. Privileges for short periods and under careful supervision can be let at sufficiently liberal terms to attract capital, and the country can be developed without being exploited." Can any one raise the slightest objection to that policy, and support his objection in good faith and with sound reason? No one ever has yet.

* *

The Single Tax in Vancouver.

The cities of the Canadian west are in the lead in promoting the single tax policy. Vancouver is the latest to be heard from. It was long ago the taxation policy of this progressive city to value land at full capital value and improvements at only 50 per cent, thereby taxing buildings only half as much ad valorem as sites. So satisfactory did this experiment prove that in due time a further step was made in the same direction; the valuation of improvements being reduced to 25 per cent, so as to tax the capital value of improvements only one-quarter as much as that of sites.