

his creation, until he sells his share in it. That he is generally forced to sell his share in advance and for less than it is worth is true. That is because he is under some subtle coercion which puts him at a disadvantage relatively to the buyer. But private ownership of tools is not what coerces. It is private ownership of legal power over natural opportunities to produce tools. The ownership of machinery is in truth not essentially monopolistic. It is made so only by some arbitrary exercise of legal power, such as patents which forbid its duplication, or taxation and land monopoly which interfere with its production and use.

To demand, as the platform does, that "the making of goods for profit shall come to an end," is to deny one of the most natural of rights—the right to trade one's products without obstruction, upon terms mutually agreeable to buyer and seller. "Profit" is another vague term covering a multitude of loose thoughts. It includes both earned and unearned incomes. Many a worker gets his earnings in the name and form of "profits."

And how shall we interpret the demand that "all opportunities shall be open and equal to all men?" It does not mean this literally. That would be absurd beyond characterization. What it doubtless does mean is that not only natural opportunities for production but also certain artificial opportunities for production—business establishments with their machinery—shall be open and equal to all. But what justification is there for drawing the line of opportunity to use at a particular class of artificial implements? To draw it between the natural and the artificial is to distinguish a logical and natural difference; but the line that this platform draws distinguishes no such difference. It draws the line arbitrarily; and if it may do that so as to treat produced machinery as collective property, it may as well do it so as to treat all products as collective property. If society may rightfully appropriate some kinds of products it may rightfully appropriate every kind, and so put an end to all individual ownership of individual earnings.

Nor would the platform be deemed from these weaknesses by its miscellaneous minor demands, even if minor demands could redeem fundamental faults. Although it calls for public ownership of "the means of transportation, communication and exchange," it does not distinguish between such of these as are dependent upon grants of legal power and such as are not; and while it demands taxes on "land values," it does so in a manner that shows that the builders of the platform hadn't the faintest conception of the economic influence of such taxes nor of the vital importance of associating them with exemptions to production and trade. For the purpose of strengthening the Socialist vote all these demands may be advantageous. Some of them are good in themselves, and if the party could possibly succeed in the election—or come within telegraphic distance of succeeding,—they might make its pledge regarding them of value to voters. But none of them modify the faults of the essential parts of the platform. They only tend to confirm the conclusion that it proposes a policy thoughtlessly at variance with economic laws of production and distribution, and in equally thoughtless disregard of the moral law of mine, thine and ours.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

INDIA.

Anchor Line, S. S. Circassia, Red Sea, March 10, 1904.—What is the secret of a few office-holders controlling the destinies of 300,000,000 Indians? is a question that will never down. While some attribute it to the centralization of government, some to internal native revolution directed by the English, some to the peculiar introspective, retrogressive Hindu mind, some to the conflicting fanatical opinions as to the nature of God fomented and continually fanned into vigorous action by a people whose dominant religious tenet is "love"—while all these views undoubtedly represent some of the causes, I feel that far too little significance is attached to the land tenure systems of the country.

This failure of outsiders to find in the land tenure systems the cause of tolerance of an alien master may be due to the facts, first, that no general system prevails; secondly, that the systems are exceedingly complicated and

involved, and, thirdly, that attention is rarely bestowed thereon by tourists or even by British residents. The latter fact may again be explained by the temporary residence of all Englishmen in India, but perhaps more particularly by the fact that, generally speaking, India has not been thrown open to the rapacity and greed of land speculators. The dealing in land is not exalted to the high business standard it has attained in Europe and America; and the comparative absence of this species of power of levying tribute on the Indian people by exacting a yearly payment for the use of God's gifts, compels the enlistment of the brain and energies of the white man in real and competitive fields of industry.

I do not mean to say that the Englishman does not look for and get special privileges, opportunities or franchises; but I do mean to say that he does not secure such extensive rights in land in India as are encouraged at home. I speak, of course, generally. India is really a continent, as much so as Europe. There is a greater variety of dress, of language, of customs and of religion in the former than the latter. However, before the advent of the English the landlord system was hardly known. In the year 1765 the ruler of every state in India was the superior landlord of every acre of land. There was but one landlord, and he the ruler under whatever name. There was but one rent, and that went to him; but one occupant, and that the tenant; but one tenure, and that so long as he paid his rent to the government. The ruler received about 50 per cent. of the net product, or eight per cent. of the gross product, at first in kind, but later in money. And this is generally speaking the ruling rate to-day. Even under the laws of Manu, at the commencement of the Christian era the share of the ruler was one-sixth of the gross product. No other tax was necessary, and none other is known to have existed.

But in the year 1793 Lord Cornwallis, reared and educated in England, where the right of private property in land had for over 150 years been most exalted, for various reasons established the same species of "property" in the province of Bengal. The assigned reason for this departure was to save the government much trouble in the collection of its rents, and also more particularly to create a class of people, who, by receiving governmental grants whereby they might live without working (and others might work without living), would be more loyal to the government, and render it more stable.

In that year, 1793, he recognized the right and title of certain claimants called zemindars, who were mere official rent collectors theretofore. The land rental was fixed in perpetuity, never to be increased or diminished. The cultivator still gets the same produce,

but pays a higher rent; the government gets the same old rate, and the idle zemindar gets the difference. So extortionate have the zemindars become, and so reduced the cultivators, that the government has passed a law, as in Ireland, fixing the conditions for enhancement of rent or ejection of the tenant. Railroads, telegraphs, irrigation wells and canals, sanitary provisions, public police, fire and military protection, have all intervened; but the rent remains the same—i. e., to the zemindars, but not to the occupant.

The rental received by these Bengal landlords, over and above the state rental, is said to amount annually to the sum of \$40,000,000, which, capitalized at four per cent., would represent a wealth of the valuation of \$1,000,000,000. This right, then, of collecting rent in Bengal is equivalent in its productive capacity to \$1,000,000,000 worth of property; and the statistics of Bengal show it to possess, either in its total sum or its average, a much greater wealth than many other provinces with temporary settlement tenures.

Yet Bengal is no more prosperous or better to do. The land is no more productive, though its value represents great wealth, while the land value in the other provinces represents none. Or, to state it otherwise, in the former case the landlords possess great wealth, while in the latter the government retains this wealth. In a republic this would mean the people retain this landlord wealth. And, now, instead of these landlords being a source of strength to the government, they are a thorn in its side. They claim exemption from all kinds of taxation, irrespective of the nature of local or general improvements. Even an income tax, paid willingly by others, is resisted by them as a violation of their permanent settlement rights, so called, whereby their annual rental to the state was fixed in perpetuity.

Not only did the English make a serious mistake in granting valuable permanent rights in land at insignificant temporary prices, for the benefit of a few, and at the expense of the many, in Bengal and certain other provinces, but they have failed to appreciate the glorious inherited opportunity to adopt the Henry George idea of the single tax. The English tendency seems to be to extend the tenures, which are partly from year to year, partly for ten years and partly for 30 years, renewable forever, so long as the rent as fixed by the government at the expiration of each agreed period is paid.

England's policy also tends towards a diminishing of returns from the land, and an increased indirect taxation in the form of import and internal revenue duties. During the time of Akbar, the great Mogul, in the year 1582, the following maxim is believed to have ex-

pressed the ruling idea of the revenue system maintained under him:

There shall be left for every man who cultivates his land as much as he requires for his own support till the next crop be reaped, and that of his family and for seed. This much shall be left to him. What remains is land tax, and shall go to the treasury.

Accordingly, a land tax was collected which far exceeded the land tax now generally collected, sometimes even double the present tax. How easy it would have been upon the advent of the English to declare a tax of so much as is necessary for economical administration of the government, the balance to belong to the cultivator.

Instead of this direct and equitable method, the British government, like all governments, seeks popularity from its ignorant subjects by reducing the known direct tax and imposing continually increasing, uncertain, unfeeling, less known, and, therefore, less irritative indirect taxes. Instead of her policy tending towards equal opportunity, and, therefore, progress and "love," it tends toward unequal opportunity, special privilege, aristocracy, and unbridled authority and power.

Credible authority places the land revenue at one time far in excess of all present sources of income, including gross income of railroads, irrigation, telegraphs, post, opium, salt, etc. That is, if the same tax were paid to-day, all might ride on trains, send telegrams and letters, and transport freight, free of charge. In the boast of a diminishing land tax or rental is concealed the confession of ignorance that property and speculation in land arise in an increasingly menacing proportion as the state rental is diminished and the land relieved and exempted. Compared with other industries or avenues of trade or profit, the greatest speculation and property is created in land where it is least taxed.

But I started to show the importance of the land tenure systems as an explanation of continued British supremacy. Briefly stated, I believe that the communal system of holding property is one of the main secrets of English retention of power. Not only did the Brits find that the intermediate landlord was the exception to the rule, but also that by far the greater part of the land of India was held and occupied by communities organized as villages. These villages have their own government, make their own regulations, work the land conjointly, and constitute, in short, communal entities with which the rulers have at all times dealt as units. The larger part of the land of India is still held by villages which pay their rent to the government in a lump sum. The details are left to the village, which is the unit of assessment, rather than each particular lot or field.

The English found these local governing bodies large helps in administering

general affairs, and have, consequently, not disturbed them in their local affairs. And, as these represent the larger part of the affairs with which an ignorant population are conversant, we may say that in great part England preserves the local self-governments as she found them.

Many Englishmen maintain that they have been successful with their dependencies in proportion as they have permitted them to continue without interference; in other words, as England keeps her hands off, her colony prospers, and English rule is successful. It certainly seems to be the fact in the case of Australia and Canada. It was certainly so in the case of the lost flower of her colonies, the United States. It is so in a lesser degree on the continent of India. I am firm in the belief that her taking of these local villages as units in occupation, taxation, tenure and government, and her maintenance of Mohammedan and Hindoo laws and customs as she found them, is the very condition of England's continuing in India. But thereby she minimizes her influence as a civilizing, Christianizing power, and again proves that the "white man's burden" is to "stay on the black man's back."

JOHN A. ZANGERLE.

NEWS

Week ending Thursday, May 19.

Reports of the week from the seat of the Russo-Japanese war (p. 87) indicate no change in the course of the conflict. The Russians are still retreating before the Japanese advance.

On the 12th it was reported that the Russians had blown up the docks and piers of their city of Dalny, a few miles northeast of Port Arthur, and these reports have since been confirmed, with the additional information that the whole city has been destroyed. Dalny is the old Manchurian city of Talienwan. It was rebuilt as well as renamed, 1899-1901, by express orders of the Czar, at a cost of \$20,000,000, with a view to making it the commercial center of the Russians on the Asiatic coast. Its bay, one of the finest deep water harbors on the Pacific, is free from ice in winter, and ships drawing thirty feet of water can enter at low tide without difficulty, and without the aid of pilots could sail or steam alongside the docks, where their cargoes could be loaded into railroad cars and run direct