

to the profound significance of the political situation in Great Britain to which they have been oblivious (p. 937) for more than half a year. A New York World dispatch of the 30th from London describes the outlook in these words:

To-day the storm center in Great Britain presents a political cyclone. The frantic efforts made by protectionist Tories to defeat the Budget prove they are fully alive to the fact that when it becomes a law it will be much more difficult for any succeeding Government to carry through the protectionist scheme of passing on the burden of taxation from the banking accounts of the rich to the bread and meat multitude. This is the real issue on which this momentous general election will be fought in January, for, whether the Budget goes through or is rejected by the House of Lords, an appeal to the country is certain after the holidays. Party feeling has already attained a pitch of savage bitterness. The Tories calculate the general election will result in such reduction of the Liberal majority that the Liberals will be wholly dependent upon the Irish vote, and that in these circumstances King Edward will refuse to give Asquith *carte blanche* for creating the new peers necessary to force the Budget through the House of Lords, and that a further crisis will then follow, with another appeal to the country, on which the Tories hope to come in victorious. If this Tory calculation is falsified, they will have risked everything and lost, as with the Lords' veto power limited their greatest weapon will be broken.

+

In the House of Commons the Prime Minister announced on the 27th that on Nov. 5 he would move for the rejection entire of the House of Lords' amendments to the Irish land bill (p. 923). He also stated that the House of Commons would adjourn on Nov. 5 until Nov. 23. During the adjournment of the lower House the Budget will be in the hands of the Lords.

+ +

British Land Clubs.

Largely through rural England, but especially in Kent, what are called "Land Club Leagues" are being formed for the purpose of obtaining for the people country homes and land and to aid the revival of country life. The first general meeting of the League of these land clubs was held at the House of Commons on the 27th under a call of delegates for the adoption of a constitution and consideration of the following program:

To restore our people to the land, the first step to be taken is a complete valuation of the land of England. Rates and taxes must be placed on the land in accordance with the capital value given to it by the growth of population and the industry of the people. Power must be given to local authorities to take land needed for all public purposes at a price based on the valuation. On every parish and urban district must be placed the duty of providing homes and land needed for the people, and also

where required, village halls, reading rooms, and playgrounds. To secure that the cultivators of the soil, especially where grouped into co-operative societies, receive fair treatment in the sale of their produce, the restrictions on markets should be abolished, existing markets should be linked up with new markets wherever required, together with a complete system of collecting depots in the rural districts. Railways and canals must be nationalized, and road motor services arranged for transport. To improve the position of the laborer, a legal minimum wage must be enacted so as to enforce the fundamental principle that the worker has the first claim on the fruits of his labor.

+ +

Land Values Taxation in Germany.

The Imperial government of Germany asked the governments of the federated States on the 27th to hasten their reports concerning the introduction of unearned increment land tax (p. 682), coupling this request with the explanation that the government will allow the municipalities a rebate for five years of the average amount raised by the unearned increment tax during the period of its operation. The Conservatives in the Reichstag, although to a great extent representing land-owning interests, are reported by Associated Press dispatches, to be willing that an unearned increment tax be imposed, because such a tax must rest heavily upon land owners and speculators in the cities, but lightly on land owners in the country districts, where values increase slowly or, as in some instances, depreciate. The measure is expected to raise \$5,000,000 annually and is possible of great expansion.

+ +

More Land Values Taxation in Australia.

The efforts of the Australian State of Victoria (vol. x, p. 827), long frustrated (vol. xi, p. 718), to introduce in that State the land values tax now in successful operation in the sister State of New South Wales (vol. x, p. 386; vol. xi, p. 636; vol. xii, pp. 138, 199, 470, 990) were revived in August last, according to official documents just at hand, through the introduction by the Victorian Prime Minister, W. A. Watt, of a land-values taxation bill.

+

As stated by the bill itself, "the object of this bill is to impose a progressive tax upon the unimproved value of land," which is defined in the bill to be "the sum which the owner's estate or interest therein if unincumbered by any mortgage or other charge thereon, might be expected to realize at the time of valuation if offered for sale on such reasonable terms and conditions as a bona fide seller might be expected to require and assuming that the actual improvements thereon (if any) had not been made." Upon