

recommends itself as being a source from which revenue should be derived."—Sir Edward Grey, Foreign Minister, at Oxford, February 25th, 1899.

"I regard the land values bill as a more important measure than the small holdings bill."—The Earl of Crewe, Secretary for the Colonies, at Rothesay, October 11th, 1907.

"There is one method by which we can get even with the peers next session, namely, by reverting to the rule in pre-Cromwellian days, and placing taxes not on the value of land in 1692, but on the present-day value. Why not bring these taxes up to date? I make that suggestion to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for his consideration during the next few months."—Mr. Keir Hardie, at Barry, December 12th, 1908.

"There seems no longer to be any room for doubt that it is the intention of the Government to include some provision for the special taxation of land values in their next budget."—The Estates Gazette, December 19th, 1908.

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The manifesto which makes the foregoing quotations gives this consideration to the subject in its relation especially to restricted employment:

In view of the problem of unemployment, what relief can we look for from the budget tax on land values? We can look for an extension of freedom, freedom to produce as well as to exchange, an elimination of those conditions which at present restrict the opportunities to work and close the avenues to wealth, enrich the few at the expense of the many, and cause injustice and obstruction in the industrial system. Chief among those restrictive conditions are, first, the power of those who control the sources of livelihood to say on what terms those sources may be utilized, and that they shall not be utilized at all except upon impossible terms; and, secondly, the burden of rates and taxes upon the processes and products of industry, which hamper and kill those processes, and make those products scantier and dearer.

It is true that the taxation of land values would divert such values from those who have not earned them to the community whose collective energy and enterprise have earned them, and thereby destroy the power of the few to impoverish the many by exacting a tribute without rendering value or service in return. But the chief argument in its favor is that, by opening up fresh opportunities for the profitable expenditure of labor and capital, it would tend to bring fresh chances to all of earning their livelihood.

The right to work, and to enjoy the fair and full fruits of work, is the demand which is becoming more and more insistent. The central problem of politics is how to absorb into the body of workers that residuum of unemployed who, earning nothing themselves and always ready to step into the shoes of those who are earning anything, tend continually to bring the rate of wages down to the subsistence level. The widening of the whole field of employment—a larger scope for the application of labor to land in a natural and remunerative way—is the only solution of the problem. The taxation of land values is the first step on the sure and scientific road leading to that solution.

Land valuation will indicate the national sources of

wealth and avenues of employment which are at present neglected, or deliberately closed; and the taxation of land values will be the effective means of securing that those sources shall be utilized, and those avenues opened. By the taxation of land values, the land will be made "less of a pleasure-ground for the rich, and more of a treasure-house for the nation."

If Mr. Balfour and the lords capitulate and allow the Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposals to become law, the first battle of the coming struggle will have been won triumphantly. If they carry insolence so far as to mutilate or kill the budget, the fight will be concentrated on this fundamental issue between democracy, progress and economic justice on the one hand, and privilege, reaction, and monopoly on the other, and the fight will have to be fought to a finish.

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Radical Taxation Reform in Rhode Island.

Astonishing advances in general sentiment regarding taxation methods are reported from Rhode Island, where the Rhode Island Tax Reform Association (vol. xi, p. 685), has been at work for several years and with especial activity for some months. The movement appears to have derived a vigorous impulse from the notable effects of experiments in temporarily exempting industrial enterprises. These exemptions, which have proved highly beneficial, are about expiring; and consequently both from the enterprises that have been encouraged by them and from those that have been incidentally discriminated against, there is reported a general demand for liberty to the thirty-eight municipalities of the State to adopt the Tax Reform Association's proposal for home rule in taxation. A bill for that purpose, now before the legislature, and under consideration by the judiciary committee, is advocated by many of the most respected business men of Rhode Island. The bill would amend the fiscal section of the general laws for municipalities as follows:

Section 1. Section 3 of Chapter 36 of the General Laws is hereby amended so as to read as follows:

"Sec. 3. They may raise by a tax on real or personal estate or on both, or on improvements or on land, or on both personal estate and land, such sums of money as shall be necessary to pay town debts, or to defray the charges and expenses of the town hereinafter set forth; and may include the town's proportion of any State tax which may be assessed, in the assessment of the town tax and pay the same out of the town treasury; provided, the same be voted at a legal meeting of the electors of the town."

Sec. 2. When any town or city shall exempt any class of property from taxation, as provided in the preceding section, said town or city may assess its ratable property in excess of one and one-half per centum of its ratable value.

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State Railroads for Oregon.

In support of the movement in Oregon for construction of State railroads (p. 176), the Portland Chamber of Commerce has come forward with