

who bought that lot has done little, if anything, to earn that \$1,000; the people of Emporia have done most of it by living thriftily, peacefully and honestly, making the town a desirable residence place. They should, in all fairness, have their share of the increase in the value of city property.

This is no mere dream. It is a law now in actual practice in certain German cities. In England it is to be applied, not to agricultural lands, which grow in value through the owner's improvements, nor to small holdings, but to big city lots and estates—mostly of the lords and dukes.

Naturally, the proposal of the Government to tax the landlords' unearned increment in England produced a great outcry. And there was a great hullabaloo. But as election after election returned members pledged to the proposition without the loss of a single member, it dawned upon the Tories that Liberalism would prevail.

In July there was a great mass meeting called in Hyde Park, to support the Government in its demand for the proposed tax upon the unearned increment. And we got into a taxicab and went to see the fun. There was a great procession leading to the park. It was composed of laboring men, merchants, professional men—all sorts. The banners they carried are of interest. One read, "Idle Lands Make Idle Hands," another read "Tax Land, Not Food." A third read "Down With the Dukes." A big banner carried Cromwell's picture, and one man carried "a banner with a strange device" that looked mighty familiar to the Kansas eyes. The banner declared for "equal rights to all, special privileges to none." And the great Government of England, the cabinet and a majority of parliament were behind it.

It is a long jump from Jerry Simpson to Lloyd-George, lord chancellor of the exchequer, but progress seems to have made it in "two jumps."

Knowing something of the political temper of Europe, we were not surprised to see the greatest political meeting ever held in Hyde Park, supporting the increment tax. But even if we were not surprised, we were immensely interested at seeing the same deadly seriousness in the English crowd that used to pervade the old Farmers' Alliance processions in the nineties in Kansas.

An American crowd takes its politics ordinarily in a merry mood. There is always a good-natured chaffing and guying and badinage in an American procession of any sort, and a political procession in this land of the free is usually festive. But this great English crowd, to begin with, was flanked with policemen. The police never know where trouble will start in a British crowd, and so, with these banners demanding "land for the landless," and taxes "upon the idle rich and not upon the idle poor," literally thousands of policemen were detailed to march with the procession. Then, in addition to the solemnity produced by the police, there was a ponderous gravity about the crowd

that not even the Scotch bagpipers, playing "The Wearing of the Green"—which, of itself, is enough to make a dog laugh—could shatter the vast gloom of the British temperament.

In the park, 250,000 men gathered. There were fourteen platforms ranged in a crescent about as long as from the railroad over to the city-library and back to the Normal School. On each of these platforms speakers were holding forth. There were members of Parliament, politicians, statesmen and one woman speaker at each stand.

The presence of the woman speakers, though women have no vote, is a British political tradition, and titled women, "ladyships" and "honorable Mrs." were common, as they are at all meetings.

On one platform a red-haired, curly-haired Irish priest, who looked and gesticulated and talked like Victor Murdock, was telling the people to rise against the idle landlords, who toiled not, neither did they spin, but who spent their lives "yatching in the Mediterranean, and marking time in Picadilly."

At all of the fourteen platforms the orators were going at the same time, and the great crowd moved from platform to platform, listening to its heroes.

BOOKS

A CATHOLIC PROFESSOR ON WAGES.

A Living Wage: Its Ethical and Economic Aspects.
By John A. Ryan, S. T. L., Professor of Ethics and Economics in the St. Paul Seminary. With an introduction by Richard T. Ely, Ph. D., LL. D. Published by The Macmillan Company, New York and London. Price \$1 net.

A priest in the Roman Catholic Church and a teacher in one of its theological schools, Dr. Ryan presents in this book—to adopt the words of Dr. Ely in the Introduction—"a clear-cut, well-defined theory of wages based upon his understanding of the approved doctrines of his religious body." It is the first attempt in the English language, Dr. Ely states, "to elaborate what may be called a Roman Catholic system of political economy," meaning, as he explains, "an attempt to show exactly what the received doctrines of the Church signify in the mind of a representative Catholic when they are applied to the economic life."

Dr. Ryan is not offering a complete theory of justice concerning wages; he lays down no rules for determining the full measure of compensation for work; he deals only with the question of a living wage, feeling that in the present stage of intellectual development relative to the distribution of the products of labor, any more profound exposition could not be generally convincing. His

book must be read in the light of this self-imposed limitation. Yet even this limitation hardly explains the author's use of a dictum on page 326, which attributes essentially to the employer's "ability to wait, while the laborer must go to work today or starve," the laborer's unwilling sale of his labor for less than a living wage. Since the employer's ability to wait would count for nothing if the demand for workers were pressing or even the most primitive working opportunities were free, that statement of the author seems to have been improvidently borrowed from the economic pleaders for things as they are. But on the whole and within its limitations, here is a refreshing discussion of the wages question—refreshing both in its intellectual and its moral aspects.

At the outset Dr. Ryan makes good the basic contention that every laborer has a moral right to a living wage; and in this he makes quick work of the fallacious use of the argument that "free contracts are fair contracts." Labor contracts for less than a living wage are essentially not free contracts. "The laborer agrees to the harsh conditions because they mean for him the preservation of life."

After a careful effort to estimate a living wage in terms of money the author fixes the minimum at \$600 a year. To meet the increase necessary to lift the underpaid to this level, he points to the increased product, under the principle of the "economy of high wages"; to the possibilities of lessening the supply of luxuries for the rich by producing necessities of life instead; and especially to the possibilities of "the vast amount of productive power that is at present utilized or only partially utilized"; for, as he adds, "no one who is at all acquainted with the unused industrial resources of America—the lands, mines and fisheries, the machinery that exists and that could readily be called into existence, the numbers of men that are nearly always unemployed in nearly every industry—can doubt for a moment that if all these were fully utilized in addition to the productive forces actually employed, the natural product would be abundantly adequate to provide a decent livelihood for every man, woman and child in the country."

By no means the least interesting or useful feature of this book is its able discussion of the doctrine of natural rights.

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"THE QUESTION OF QUESTIONS."

Some Assurances of Immortality. By John R. N. Berry. R. F. Fenno & Co., New York, 13 East 17th St. Price 50c.

The author of this small volume contributes his view of a much discussed subject with as fairly convincing "assurances" as are offered by the legion of writers on this topic. When he says

of the question, "To no man has the answer been given," he virtually closes the door of expectation to those who seek "proofs" and "evidences" of a future life. Yet he adds: "While we may not know, we can gain a belief that will be a vestibule of knowledge."

Reasoning from the ground of the indestructibility of matter, the inference is fair enough that the mind controlling matter with godlike force must be on its higher plane an eternal power.

Further than this Mr. Berry advances proofs, convincing to his own mind, not only of immortality, but of the return of departed souls in testimony of their continued existence. Communication on the plane of spirit seems to him no more incredible than communication by wireless telegraphy. But possibly he might admit that until the eyes of Science are anointed with spiritual vision it deals more understandingly with the physical properties of the atmosphere than with the subtleties of the invisible realm which manifests imperfectly through material mediums.

The author of "Assurances of Immortality" appends short essays on "Love," "Faith," "Prayer," "Intuition and Conscience," in which an independence of thought and openness of vision are expressed with a restraint that would not offend the most conservative mind.

A. L. M.

PAMPHLETS

Cobden and the Land Tax.

It is not generally known that Richard Cobden was a land value taxationist as well as a free trader; but the fact is made plain by a little pamphlet ("Land Values" publication department, 376 Strand, London, W. C., price 1 penny), which quotes many striking passages from the great British liberator.

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Disemployment.

The pamphlet on "Unemployment" by Winfield R. Gaylord, Socialist State Senator in Wisconsin (Milwaukee Social-Democratic Publishing Co., price ten cents), states the disemployment problem with emphatic precision: "Given the wealthiest country on earth, with an abundance of natural resources unexploited; given the most perfect mechanical equipment known to the world's history; and given the most efficient industrial army that the civilized world has ever known: What is to be done with the fact that millions of able-bodied men and women who are willing to work, and who need to work in order to get their living, are refused the opportunity to use their abilities in order to get the necessities of life?" Senator Gaylord's explanation of panics is good as far as it goes: "The workers do not get wages enough to buy back their product." But this is a little like explaining floods by reference to excessive rainfalls. And when he says that "there would be no profits to the capitalist" if workers got