

Not at all does it follow, however, that the Insurgents either will or should go into the Democratic party. That would only expose them to the pluto-Democratic taunt that they are newcomers and should take a back seat, just as they are now exposed to the pluto-Republican taunt that they are rebels and ought to get out. Nor would it probably do any good if they were really welcomed into the Democratic party. Time was when there was nowhere else for a disgusted Republican to go, but the signs are that this may be so no longer. At any rate, Mr. Dolliver was quite right in coupling the Democratic party's organization with that of his own party when denouncing plutocratic control. It is painfully true, as he said, that—no man looking towards a larger progress in our institutions can count with much confidence on the ironclad organization which has had its hand on one or the other political party in the United States. The rank and file of the Democratic party, and a very few conspicuous leaders, have indeed tried hard to shake loose the grip of that "ironclad" hand; and not without temporary successes within their party, but at the cost of defeat in battles with "ironclads" sailing under Republican colors. And now that Republican treachery, defiant and unashamed, makes Democratic prospects fair, those same "ironclads" are putting on Democratic paint. Signs are plentiful of such an outcome of Democratic victory as the outcome of 1894, when the Interests, now represented in the Senate by a Republican Aldrich, were represented there by a Democratic Gorman. The Interests are so catholic politically, that Senator Dolliver's arrow went true to the mark when in his Senate speech he said: "I know, and every Democratic Senator knows, that it has been as difficult to use the Democratic party to promote progressive government in the United States as it has been to use the Republican party."

+

What, then, is that parting of the ways which appears from Senator Dolliver's speech to be so surely almost at hand? To answer this question would be to indulge in futile prophecy. As one may see a storm coming without so much as an inkling of the course it will take, or may watch the sprouting of a crop without knowing exactly what the harvest will be, so one may predict a political revolution without perceiving its processes or foreseeing its results. Senator Bailey of Texas ventures the statement that unless the Insurgents either stay Republicans or join the Democrats, they must become Socialists. Well? Couldn't worse than that happen, if there were enough socialistic sentiment in the Republic to raise it in

national affairs above the level of merely playing at politics? Senator Dolliver declared his intention of remaining as a democratic Republican inside the Republican party, in the hope—which he must feel to be vain when he reflects upon the failure of democratic Democrats to drive plutocracy out of their party—of rescuing his own party from the bedevilment of the Interests. But out of the contest now raging he thought he saw possibilities of new parties, one the champion of special privileges and the other based upon Abraham Lincoln's maxim of "an unfettered start and a fair chance for every man in the race of life." Not a happy simile, that of a race, as if one man's success were necessarily another's failure. But the thought rings true. What Lincoln meant, as doubtless Dolliver does, is that every man shall have the fruit of his own labor, with an unfettered opportunity to produce it; and this implies, of course, that none shall have what is another's without the other's free consent.

+

We should be glad to believe that a great party might soon base itself securely upon that principle. Possibly such a party is coming. But whether so or not, Senator Dolliver's speech is further assurance that there is near at hand a parting of the political ways, after which, be the political parties in name what they now are or something else, the political cleavage will be along the line that separates privilege from democracy. And the warfare will be fierce. The best guess at the moment, for it can only be a guess, is that the Insurgency now stirring in the Republican party, coupled with that which has so long saddened the spoilsmen of the Democratic party, may bring about one of those political upheavals over a burning issue, like the historic one over the Kansas-Nebraska bill, out of which a new party of democracy will spring spontaneously, and ready equipped not only with a good platform but with an army of enthusiastic voters to give it political vitality, as did the Republican democracy of the '50's.

+ +

### The British Revolution Under Asquith.

If the world realized the big meaning of the British Budget, the news of its enactment last week would not have been overshadowed in our newspapers by sensational reports of scandals. But something like this has always been true. Even the greatest event in the history of civilization—the career of the Founder of Christianity—was so lightly considered at the time, that no con-

temporaneous record of it is found in the ordinary sources of history. That Budget is the thin end of a great wedge. Its aim and effect is by means of taxation to take the value of land for public revenues. Not because land value is private property and therefore ought to contribute to public uses along with other private property, which is the American idea, but because land value is public property and therefore ought to go to public uses, which was Henry George's idea.

+

So far, this Budget is radical and revolutionary with reference to public revenues, but that is not all. It is radical and revolutionary with reference also to private rights. At the core it is a vigorous practical expression of the popular shibboleth regarding it, that "God made the land for the people." By taxing land values because they are public property, this Budget opens the way for taxing them more and more heavily, and labor less and less so, until approximately all ground rent will go to society as a social income. At the same time, desirable land out of use and producing no ground rent, and land only partly in use and producing less than full ground rent, will, by the development of that Budget, be forced into its best use, thereby at once adding to the social income from ground rent, and, through the consequent multiplication of opportunities for labor, increasing individual incomes for useful work.

+

For this accomplishment Mr. Asquith seems to us to be entitled to more credit and gratitude than he has been getting. As responsible head of the Ministry, with a cabinet partly radical and partly whig to hold together in order that anything at all could be done, his political task might have been easier in the direction of reaction than of progress. At any rate, it was not easy to marshal the conflicting groups in a solid mass behind the progressive program, nor a happy experience to bear meanwhile in silence with the misunderstandings of those whose purposes he was trying to bring to realization. It was necessary, however, that he should patiently endure this experience. Thus and thus alone, perhaps, could the whigs in his political following be whipped into line. The whig Liberals of his cabinet had to be made to understand that Mr. Asquith's keynote speech of last December must be redeemed or their own political careers would end. And Mr. Asquith was both patient and true. He appears now to wear worthily the mantle of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman whose policies

he and the other, progressive members of the Ministry are carrying out. Every pledge of his keynote speech is in process of redemption in good faith and efficiently. His tactics thus far are justified by the outcome, and the outcome inspires confidence in his good faith and good sense for the future.

+

### The Land Question in Australia.

An idea of the progressive character of the Labor victory at the Commonwealth elections in Australia (p. 368) may be got from the campaign literature of the Labor party, some of which is now at hand. In the March 16 issue of "The Worker," of Sydney, official organ of the trade unions and labor organizations, and a vigorous adversary of the Fusion which the Labor party defeated, we find this pronounced declaration against tariff taxes on necessaries:

Who should pay? Competent authorities admit that the Commonwealth Government will have a deficiency during the first year of the new Parliament. The Fusion refuses to tax the great land monopolists of Australia. Sir Phillip Fysh, M.H.R. (Tas.)—one of the most respectable of the Fusionists—made the following statement in the Federal Parliament when the need of additional revenue was pointed out: "There are £3,000,000 worth of piece goods imported annually as yet untouched" (by duties). One of the first acts of the Fusion Government would be to impose heavy revenue duties upon tea, kerosene and cotton piece goods which are now admitted free. Such taxes will increase the load on the worker's back. The Labor party proposes on the other hand to raise any necessary revenue from direct taxation upon those best able to bear it, as for instance, the land monopolists, and the absentee wealth owners. In the same publication and same issue, a still more direct attack upon land monopoly is made. Here it is:

Land for the people! Stalwart Australians, Sons of the Soil, are you prepared to tramp for ever seeking land? If not, support the Labor candidates. Dear land means cheap people. Do you want to become cheaper? If not, support the Labor candidates. Land is the chief tool of industry. Land monopoly makes slaves of the landless. Do you wish that monopoly to increase? If not, vote for the Labor candidates. Land monopoly has driven thousands from the Old World. Do you wish to see similar conditions perpetuated here? If not, vote for the Labor candidates. All the land monopolists support the Fusion. Can you vote with them? The Labor party is pledged to burst up the big estates. It keeps its promises.

Land monopoly, the keystone problem in the arch of the whole social problem, is getting to be better understood by men who abhor the present plundering social order, which associates leisure with wealth and work with poverty. They begin