

sion of the strike committee of the Transport Workers' Federation, announcing the strike at an end, and have declared for no surrender to the employers. At a big meeting of the strikers at Southwark Park today the men hauled their leaders over the coals in rough language, and it was not until something in the nature of an explanation was given that comparative calm was established.



The Land Question in British Politics.

News of the advance of British radicalism toward the heart of all industrial problems, the land question, is spreading through the American press. In his cable letter of the 27th to the Chicago Tribune, T. P. O'Connor, M. P., refers in this wise to what he calls the "complex situation of internal politics" in Great Britain:

At all recent by-elections the radical land reformers have thrust themselves and their policy in the forefront of the battleground and have made a new departure inevitable in the Radical party. But this preliminary stage of land reform, especially when advanced by avowed Singletaxers, separates instead of uniting the Liberal ranks. Capitalists and land-owning sections already utter cries of revolt, and the Tories take advantage of the contradictions in the Liberal position by asking awkward questions in Parliament. All this reacts against the position of the Ministers, and especially of Chancellor of the Exchequer Lloyd George, and has led to constant rumors of his early resignation. These rumors are without foundation, but it is certain that Lloyd George intends to put himself at the head of a big land reform movement next October which, while different from the Singletax extremists' plan, will still send Tory landlords into furies of terror and vituperation, and may antagonize some moderate sections. The Liberals' fate in this crusade will depend largely on the nature of the proposals and also on what backing Lloyd George gets among his colleagues. Asquith, it is believed, will agree in the main with Lloyd George, but Lloyd George's relations with Churchill are strained partly through Churchill's complete change of front on the question of the navy and partly through Churchill's hankering friendship for Tory landlords, to whose stock he belongs.

The New York Sun of the 14th has this quotation on the same subject from Lloyd George through the United Press from London:

"And now that the workmen's insurance act will be in full operation next Monday," he concluded, "we intend to put our hands to the great work of freeing the land, which was meant for the use of the many but which has drifted into the hands of a few, freeing it for the people and for their children forever."

An interesting illumination of the subject appeared in the Cincinnati Enquirer of the 21st in the special cable letter of Philip Everett. We extract the following:

The present Liberal Government probably means well enough and its legislation, nearly all inspired

by Mr. Lloyd George, seems to go in the right direction, but it is doubtful whether it will be able to save the country from a mighty social upheaval such as must come as surely as there are limits even to the patience of the English masses. In the first place the Liberal party supporting the Government contains a number of men on its right wing who in any other country but England would be called conservative, and, in the second place, the power of the Conservative party proper, the Tories, is enormous and their agitation against democratic reforms so violent that it is doubtful if the Government will be allowed to remain in power long enough to carry through such reforms as will convince even the dull masses of English voters that they must look to the Liberals and not to the Tories to save them from their present state of bondage. Lloyd George is going to tax the land. He is going to try in practice on a large scale for the first time the principles championed by the American, Henry George. There is no longer any doubt about it, and a cry of horror is heard in the whole English Conservative press, which on general principles tries to block every change. The Chancellor of the Exchequer will ruin the country, they cry; he is preaching class war and creating anarchists in England, where present conditions are nearer the ideal than anywhere else in the world. The plans of Lloyd George are striking at the very heart of English conservatism, that much is evident from the uproar they have caused. The land is sacred and so are its present possessors, according to the tenets of the Conservative faith. One single example, however, will show how radically wrong are the present conditions in England, where all land is owned by a mere handful of people. The Manor of Huddersfield was sold by the Crown to a certain William Ramsden, ancestor of the present owner, in 1599, for \$4,875. Three hundred years ago the yearly value of the Huddersfield was less than \$125. Now the yearly ground rents amount to no less than \$900,000. The whole of the land in the old township of Huddersfield, with the exception of a small plot in Firth street, long since built over, is the property of Mr. John F. Ramsden, who thus possesses a practical monopoly of the land, so that a man who wants to buy a plot in the township for a house cannot do so, but must lease it from the owner. In consequence no more glaring example of land hunger exists in the country. It is significant that up to the time when the finance act of 1909-10 was placed on the statute books the estate was held by Sir John Ramsden, who is still living. After the passing of the act the estate was transferred by Sir John to his son. Up to 1851 Huddersfield was almost wholly an agricultural town; its rise, as the world knows, being due to the woolen industry. In order to appreciate the present situation, it is necessary that the lease system in vogue should be understood. Until the middle of the last century the land upon which most of the buildings in the town were erected was held either under tenancies at will or renewable leases. In the case of the former the tenants had in most cases erected substantial buildings upon the faith that their rights to those buildings would be recognized by the landowner in the same way that in copyhold manors the rights of tenants are recognized and enforceable. These tenant rights owners were destined to receive a rude

awakening, for about 1850 the Court of Final Appeal decided that they were merely tenants at will, who could be ejected without notice or compensation! Ultimately, after long and bitter agitation, an arrangement was made that the landlord's title should be recognized, and that the tenants should surrender their tenant right interests but retain their buildings on lease from 1859. An act of Parliament was obtained for this purpose. The town of Huddersfield today has a population of 110,005, and every inch of soil upon which it stands is owned by J. F. Ramsden, who in the form of ground rent levies upon it a yearly tribute so regulated that every man, woman and child pays to him an average tax of \$8. The municipal budget last year was £174,425, so that the land owners' tax is actually \$27,875 in excess of the sum demanded for municipal services! Small wonder the Tory party representing the big land owners considers it a crime to suggest any change in conditions so ideal to the one man who counts in their eyes, and who is paying a mere nominal tax to the Government until the new valuation of land will come into force.

[See current volume, pages 673, 678, 697, 701.]



The Land Question in Argentina.

Since our report on the proceedings in Argentina for the valuation of land for taxation, the valuation for the capital and the national territories has been completed. Owners were required to declare the value of their property, improvement values separately from land values, under penalty of a fine of 2 per cent. They were consequently expeditious and the valuation was made in two months. Subsequently, at the opening of the Argentina Congress on the 7th of June, President Saenz Peña, in his official speech (corresponding in character to our President's message) informed the Congress with reference to financial affairs, as he is reported in English by the Buenos Aires Standard of June 8:

Without ignoring the resistance with which charges are always received, I consider it necessary to create an impost which some nations have adopted with success and whose absence does not indicate the equity that should be established among us. I refer to the impost upon the valuation of property when such does not proceed from private effort or work but from the collective effort. All necessities of life and all industries, as well as the work of man which assures him moderate profits, are taxed, but not the enrichment obtained without personal effort but by the action of the community, which rewards without merit of its own that which is constituted by the work of all. It is necessary then to amend so notorious a privilege; and while within our institutional regime, Federal legislation can reach the capital and the national territories only, it should be applied to the regions which favor it, in order to fill local necessities and in particular public works. I propose to present to you in the present sessions a bill which I hope will merit your support.

[See current volume, page 469.]

Proportional Representation for France.

A belated news dispatch tells of the adoption on the 10th of July by the French Chamber of Deputies, of a Ministerial electoral reform bill, by 339 to 217, which provides, according to the Toronto Globe of July 12th—

first, for abolition of the system of small constituencies, originally established in 1876 (whereby each elector votes for one Deputy only), and for a return to the system of list voting (whereby each elector votes for as many Deputies as the entire Department has to elect); second, for a system whereby, after the poll is taken, the total number of actual voters in the Department will be divided by the number of seats to be filled, in order to obtain the electoral quotient. Each list of candidates will obtain as many seats as the number of times the electoral quotient goes into the total number of votes cast for that list. For the disposal of the remaining seats the different electoral lists in the Department may be pooled. If after the pooled lists have obtained seats some still remain, they will be given to the list or group of lists having more than half the total number of votes cast, unless they already possess a majority of the total number of seats.

The passage of the bill is regarded as a triumph for the Premier, Raymond Poincaré. A large section of the Radical and Socialist Radical groups which form an important part of his majority, having opposed the measure, the Premier was obliged to exert his utmost diplomacy and the largest spirit of compromise to attain the result. Strong opposition is expected in the Senate. The first official intimation of this was through an open letter addressed by Senator Georges Clemenceau, formerly the Premier, to the present Premier, and published on the 29th, in which Senator Clemenceau assails the Poincaré measure as hostile to the principle of majority rule, which he describes as the foundation of the French republic. It is expected that the bill will come under discussion in the Senate during the autumn session of the French Parliament.



Proportional Representation in Tasmania.

Recent State elections in the Australian State of Tasmania, were conducted under what is known as the Hare-Clark system of proportional representation, the so-called "Droop quota" being used. The State was divided into 5 electorates, corresponding with the 5 Federal electorates which return one member each to the House of Representatives in the Commonwealth Parliament. For the purposes of the State Assembly each of these electorates returns 6 Assemblymen. The result of the election was the return of 14 Labor members, 15 Liberals (Government), and 1 independent Liberal. This is the second time the whole State of Tasmania has been similarly polled for the Assembly. [See vol. xii, p. 610.]