

ipal ownership problem when he added:

The whole direction of municipal ownership is toward equalization of opportunities, whereas private monopoly of any public service tends to the increase of inequality. If the cause of corruption so much complained of in America be removed, is it not probable that official corruption itself will disappear and the public will rejoice in the possession of cheap general utilities as in other lands?

Land values taxation in Great Britain.

From a "catechism of land values," which a landlords' union, The Property Protection Society, is circulating in England in opposition to the land values taxation idea to which the Liberal party is committed, we observe that the British landlords are defending their privileges with quotations from a speech made in 1887 by Dr. A. R. Wallace relative to land value taxation in the United States. Dr. Wallace must have been badly informed as to fiscal customs in this country. He is quoted as saying that although every particle of land under private ownership, whether built on or not, is taxed on its full selling value in America, land speculation is nevertheless everywhere excessive. The latter part of this statement is true; the first part never was true, and we question its authenticity as being a statement from Dr. Wallace.

If there is any place in the United States where land is appraised for taxation at its full selling value, the rate or percentage of tax there will be found to be extraordinarily low. In most places it is appraised for taxation at much less than its full selling value; and in all places the tax is so low, relatively to selling value, that a large margin for speculation is left. In Chicago, for instance, land is required by law to be appraised for taxation at one-fifth of the selling value, and the taxes are limited to 5 per cent., so that the tax is only 1 per cent. of selling value. The highest tax appraisals of land anywhere in the

United States seldom exceed 60 per cent. of selling value, and large holdings not built upon are often appraised at only 20 or 25 per cent. of selling value.

It is strange that so thoughtful a people as the English should be misled by such "statements of fact" regarding economic conditions in distant countries. The statements, in so far as they imply that a full tax on the full selling value would not abolish speculation in land, are transparently false. Any British child ought to be able to calculate that if the tax gatherer were to take all, nothing would be left for the speculator. If, however, taxes were levied on full selling value, but the taxes were so low as to leave a margin for speculators, then of course there would still be speculation. Its intensity would depend upon the margin, and the margin would depend upon the rate of tax. We do not understand that the Liberal party of Great Britain advocates taxes high enough to wipe out the speculative margin wholly. It proposes one that would narrow the margin. Consequently, what it now proposes would not abolish land speculation; but it would obstruct land speculation, and the rest would be only a matter of keeping on.

Woman suffrage in New York.

Under the auspices of the Harlem Equal Rights League of New York, a "straw" election is to be held on election day, at which the women of New York are invited to vote for their choice for city and county offices. All women living within the limits of greater New York are invited to attend the woman's polling place in the Harlem Casino, 124th street and Seventh avenue, from 1 to 6 p. m., on the 7th. At that time and place provision for balloting in the ordinary way will be made, including a supply of voting booths and forms of official ballots, and the vote is to be regularly announced and published. It is quite improbable that knowledge of this exper-

iment will become general in time to produce results of much magnitude at the present election; but it is easy to see that if the experiment were to grow into a general custom, it would figure as a formidable practical argument for welcoming women citizens to the official voting places. The experiment is in charge of Mrs. Martha Williams, Mrs. Belle de Rivera, Mrs. Florence Kelley and Miss Maud Malone as the board of election.

Bernard Shaw's play.

Whoever has read Bernard Shaw's "Plays, Pleasant and Unpleasant," on sale this long time at general book stores of good repute, will be rather more surprised than the average newspaper reader at the decorous din over the alleged indecency of one of the unpleasant ones—"Mrs. Warren's Profession." The decorous din is easily explained. It is not because one of the characters is a courtesan, as the newspapers have it; courtesan characters are common in fashionable dramatic productions and there is no din. It is not because her vile business is exploited in the play; that also is common and permissible in fashionable plays, and exploitation is absent from this play. It is not because of any pruriency in Shaw's play, for, common as pruriency is on the stage, it is not present here. The outcry against the Shaw play springs from no sensitiveness at making prostitution a subject for the dramatic stage. It is in truth a pharisaical protest against the awful indictment Shaw launches at the industrial causes and wealthy promoters of prostitution. Prostitution is a fact, a terrible fact, and Shaw recognizes it as such in his play. Had he done this artfully and stopped there, we should have heard no outcry. But he does not stop there. He points at the respectable groups who profit by prostitution, and at those who maintain industrial conditions under which great masses of girls in every generation must choose between Mrs. Warren's profession, and some such industrial servitude as had