

cratic Party—the party of Jefferson, who declared that “that government is best which governs least.” In that party, occupying positions of prominence, are former radical leaders, progressives of many shades, and many former disciples of Henry George and Tom L. Johnson. Their early convictions are carefully laid away in camphor to be taken out when they emerge once more from their innocuous official positions to wave once again the radical standard with the old brave huzzas. In the days before they were christened with the baptism of official silence they were “terrible as an army with banners.” Their cup of sympathy, too, with the poor and the oppressed was full to overflowing. It was apparently drained to the dregs in the years preceding official emolument.

The young men, ah, the young men! Is it any wonder they are leaving the Liberal Party in England and the Democratic Party in this country? They are flocking now, in small numbers as yet, it is true, to the National Single Tax party movement. The purely educational movement of the past, because it leaves actual legislation to the accidents of the remoter future, did not enlist their enthusiasm. And the Single Tax movement is now bright with promise.

From Australia comes a notable voice of dissent from the policy hitherto pursued in that country. We ask our readers to note its significance. We feel almost like claiming credit for it did we not know that it is only indicative of the revolt now wide-spread against the methods of teaching that have hitherto prevailed. It is from an editorial from Ald. J. R. Firth in the Sydney, Australia, *Standard*. We append the significant portion of this editorial, merely pausing to call the attention of those of our readers who have doubted the wisdom of our attitude and that of the Single Tax Party on the tariff to the fact that it has found strong endorsement at the hands of one of the foremost leaders of the Australian movement. No longer as a mere fiscal issue looms on the political horizon the coming of the Great Restoration:

“Let us drop all the talk about Free Trade or Protection or Socialism or even proportional representation.

“Just talk one thing.

“Land values made by the people must be appropriated by the people, and the land thus opened up for our returned soldiers and for the immigrants we stand in dire need of.

“At present, over £1000 a year is raised to keep the Henry George flag flying. Surely we can raise £2000 to £3000 a year to not only keep it flying, but plant it further forward until all of God’s children can participate in His heritage.

“I anticipate strong opposition from Single Taxers to my proposal to cut out the fiscal issue. My argument is that Henry George’s gospel proclaims that the value of the land belongs to the people who created it. Let us take the whole of this value as an act of justice—justice to the present land holders and to the landless masses.

“Having done this, we can then discuss which taxes we will abolish, same as the Prohibitionists, while advocating the abolition of liquor bars, etc., make no mention of what taxes they would impose to make up for the loss of revenue from liquor duties.

“If we take the whole annual land value we’ll settle the fiscal issue in two ways. Sincere protectionists advocate protection to provide jobs. If land values are confiscated jobs will be automatically provided in such variety and number that support on this ground will soon be ridiculous.

“Again, if we take the whole annual land value, any protected manufacturers who make money out of a tariff for any length of time, will cease to advocate a tariff because by taking the whole annual land value we will absorb any advantage a tariff gives them.”

## The Universal and Silent Partner

PLANS for providing 250,000 houses with governmental financial assistance has been begun in Great Britain to meet the housing needs of the people. How strange it all seems! Here are forty million of people; here is land capable of supporting many times the population; here is labor and here, too, is the capital that may be required. What is it that stands in the way of the people making all the houses they need? Why is it that the people stand helpless before the scarcity of homes? Has the government anything that the people haven’t, necessary to building construction? Has it got more nails, lumber, bricks, stone, than the people have? Why, government has none of these things. Then why should it be necessary for government to build homes?

It is the people who have the timber, bricks, stone and nails. But there is one thing that the people haven’t got—and that is the land. Only a small portion of the people have the land. When the people start in to make houses they call in the lumber men and the nail makers and the men who make the bricks. And then they call men to lay the bricks and piece the timbers and drive the nails.

Is that not all? No, not all. For in all these activities there appears a partner, a silent partner, a very still, idle and non-working partner who is necessary to the making of a house. That is, he is necessary in the sense that his consent has first to be obtained before a piece of timber can be cut, a nail driven, or one brick laid upon another. That partner is the landlord; he provides the land, not as others provide the timber and the bricks and the nails by making them, since he never made the land. All other things are provided by the men who produce them by their labor. The landlord provides what he did not produce, but which was part of Great Britain when the Romans landed, and before that in the days of the Druids, and earlier yet when all of Europe was the home of the cave dweller.

It is therefore only a legal fiction. A superstition. An incredibly stupid custom. It is clear that the amount necessary to the building of houses would be greater if divided only among those who really produce the things necessary for the building of houses, who contribute of their labor or capital. The amount is less if some one shares who contributes no labor, yet has the thing essential to the building of homes. And this is the explanation of

why there is a scarcity of homes and why government must step in to aid in the building of homes.

Yet government could solve this problem by dissolving this ill-assorted partnership. The government alone is responsible. The landlord is the creature of government. It issued parchment or paper titles to him, and thus created a partnership that has served to obscure the obvious relation of men who supply service for service, payment for labor received, and all of whom must work for what they get. This system of paper titles has established a relationship which is abnormal, and which is responsible not merely for the scarcity of houses, but for the manifold results which destroy prosperity and sap the strength of nations.

## The New York Labor Party

THE American Labor Party of Greater New York, which has made nominations for offices in this election, has put forth a platform favoring Public Ownership of Public Utilities, a Minimum Wage Law, a Standard Working Week of 44 Hours, a System of Social Insurance and Democratic Control of Industry, Commerce and Education. The party favors "a 100 per cent. tax on all incomes over \$100,000, a progressive increase in taxes on profits, unearned increments and incomes, the use of public profits from nationally owned utilities and resources, and the use of revenue derived from a system of taxation that will stimulate rather than retard production."

This is the veriest hodge-podge. No legislator could draw a bill embodying such recommendations. What are the "unearned increments and incomes" that are not included in land values? Though it is conceivable that a legislator might identify some kind of profits, "all" profits are quite beyond the ken of any power but omniscience. What are profits, anyway? The storekeeper who examines his books at the end of the month finds that after paying rent to the landlord, wages to his clerks and interest on capital (his own or borrowed), a certain sum remains for himself. This is his "profit." But it is really his wages. As he has already paid his taxes how much more does the New York Labor Party want from him? Wages being, and very properly so, a term sacred to labor, the makers of this platform would probably be highly shocked to learn that what they are proposing to tax is wages.

It is unfortunate that a party speaking in the name of labor should exhibit such an ignorance of elementary economics. They have made the mistake of following in the footsteps of the Socialists. We find here nearly all the recommendations appearing in former Socialist platforms. Very little is missing save the jargon about "capitalism" and "the Co-operative Commonwealth."

Our readers are asked to note the timid reference to the "use of revenue derived from a system of taxation on land values." The only thing that seems to appeal to these gentlemen is the "use" to which this revenue may be put. Not the faintest indication appears that they have sensed

the economic effects of such taxation in throwing open the opportunities to labor, a provision which would render the rest of their platform amiable but senile delusions.

## "The American Contractor" On Our Future Building Policies

ONE of the significant signs of the times is an article on the first page of *The American Contractor*, a paper for contractors and builders, of immense circulation, entitled "What About Our Future Building Policies." It says in the opening paragraph:

"There must be a more progressive building policy in the United States if the nation is to make up the construction deficiency incident to the war within a reasonable length of time."

It continues: "There must be concessions in favor of home building and home owning in the United States. The pressure of circumstances will force these concessions in time if they do not materialize from a sane consideration of their desirability."

"Along what lines should local authorities move in their efforts to stimulate home building? Pittsburgh has answered the question in its system of taxation."

*The American Contractor* then reproduces an editorial in the *Christian Science Monitor* which cites the testimony of W. N. McNair, of Pittsburgh, in favor of the moderate measures that have been inaugurated in that city by which improvements are somewhat relieved of taxation and land somewhat more heavily taxed.

It then says: "If cities are to have the benefits of such policies in 1920, keen and immediate interest must be taken in them to the end that municipal legislation, where it is necessary, may be had at once, and planning for 1920 can be taken up by private interests with full knowledge of the municipal policy."

*The American Contractor* is on the right track, and we trust that it will see its way to pursue its advocacy of a more liberal policy for the industries to whose welfare this solid periodical is devoted.

## Max Nordau for the Single Tax

THE Zionist Convention is now (Sept. 16th) in conference in Chicago. Mrs. Fels is in attendance. Mr. M. W. Norwalk is also at the conference, and will report for the REVIEW that part of the proceedings of interest to Single Taxers. He writes us that Max Nordau, the distinguished author of "Degeneration," has sent greetings to this, the 22nd U. S. Zionist Convention, in which he

(1) Bemoans the fact that 8,000,000 Jews in Russia, Poland, etc., are so disorganized and deprived of everything through "pogroms," murder and persecution that we cannot expect any concrete work from them in the rehabilitation of Palestine, but thanks God that we have 3,000,000 of Jews in America who will not only take the initiative but help their stricken brethren.