

Stinky and not to the Editor. We regard the letter itself as of no value. It is a crude reproduction of the belated and exploded theories of Henry George. We say belated, because it is well known that Henry George did not proclaim his gospel of the single tax until the latter part of the nineteenth century—some hundreds of years after the establishment of the social conditions of which he complained. We say exploded, because it is so regarded by all the fellows at the club. The name of George is, indeed, scarcely known in the circles in which we move; or it is mentioned only to be laughed at as that of an American crank who taught the doctrine that no man should be allowed to hold private property. It is true some 500 taxing authorities in Great Britain are at present asking parliament for power to rate unimproved land values, and several British newspapers of considerable influence are agitating for reform in the same direction; but this does not greatly signify. The people behind these movements are of the lower orders, who hold the vulgar notion that work is respectable. It is sad to find a man of Tolstoy's birth and breeding mixed up with such riff-raff. Not many of our subscribers, we trust, will read his long harangue; they can scarcely do so, we venture to say, and maintain the air of unconcern which is the outward sign of superior blood. We have, as a matter of editorial routine, gone through the lucubration, and can assure our friends of the landed gentry that they may well spare themselves the ordeal. The letter is full of wild and revolutionary ravings—but the whole argument may be gathered up in one statement—that the misery of Russia is chiefly due to the fact that the peasants are excluded from the land, or granted access thereto only on starvation terms. It would ill become The Times to condescend to bandy arguments with a man who wears a smock-frock (notwithstanding his family connections), and we will content ourselves by simply denying this proposition. The notion that man is a land-animal (a coarse expression which Tolstoy quotes approvingly from George), and cannot make a living if he is excluded from the raw material of nature, is too ridiculous. Everyone knows that here in London there are thousands of people who have access to no land apart from the public streets and parks, and yet manage to get along by selling shoe-laces, and other articles of commerce. Tolstoy is much given to such cheap clap-trap as that "God

made the earth for the children of men;" "land, like air, water and sunshine, is a gift of the Creator, and not an article of merchandise," etc., etc. He even goes so far as to say that the landlord as such is a parasite, and should be prevented, by means of a tax upon land values, from any longer battenning upon the toil of his fellow-men. This, of course, is arrant blasphemy; though it is a part of the misguided Count's so-called "religion." What, we ask, would Britain be without the British landlord? Where were the charm of our rural scenes if divested of the picturesque squire, the huntsman, the ladies and gentlemen of quality, in short, the leisured class, the glory and hope of our country? But enough. We will not demean ourselves to argue the question. We could even wish that our inborn snobbery had permitted us to refuse publication to the Count's article. We can only hope, once more, in the interests of peace and comfort, that nobody will read it.

J. W. B.

TOLSTOY AS PREACHER AND PROPHET.

Dr. H. W. Thomas on Tolstoy's letter—"A Great Iniquity," republished from the London Times in The Public of August 19.

The Public has done a noble service in giving to its readers the entire article of Leo Tolstoy on the social conditions and imperative needs of Russia. It was published in full in the London Times of August 1st, and short abstracts cabled to the papers of this country; but The Public is so far the first and only paper to give the article in full. Its length, and the fact that it quotes so largely from the well-known works of Henry George, may explain in part the fact of its limited notices; but its value in dealing with fundamental principles, applicable not alone to Russia, but to Europe and America, is too great to be lost. Let us hope that The Public may give it to the world in some more permanent form.

It is generally understood that Leo Tolstoy looks at all social questions from the moral and religious standpoint. He sees clearly the political and economic problems involved; but to such a deep far-seeing vision, these are more than questions of expediency, of personal pleasure, of loss or gain. At bottom, they are questions of essential right or wrong; and must be so seen and felt and dealt with before the evils that disturb and burden the social order can be corrected. There is no place in this great and good man's philosophy and religion for the convenient expediency and selfish utilitarianism that looks only

to the favored few, and not to the rights and welfare of the many. The principles of right, of justice, are eternal, are in the very constitution of things; and hence, are universal. The social order is conditioned in the laws of the moral order; and these, like the laws of the natural order, as gravity, motion, chemical affinities, must be the same for all. There cannot be one kind of justice for the black man, and another for the white; one kind for the Jew, and another for the Christian; one for the rich, and another for the poor.

Tolstoy, like the prophets of old, like John the Baptist, and the Christ, is a preacher of righteousness; and hence to his awakened conscience all forms of social wrong are sins against the moral order of the good; against man and God. And the point that he most distinctly accentuates in this great and timely article is: that it is only as mankind come to the clearer and deeper moral vision and conviction of the sinfulness of social wrongs, will they truly repent—change their minds, their thinking, see things in their true light; and in shame and sorrow turn from the wrong, and with gladness do the right. And in this, the great teacher-preacher touches the profoundest depths, and heights of the soul and God. Without a clear and abiding consciousness of the Divine, morality, religion if we call it such, man has only the lower or earth side of sense relations that may be swayed by passion, perverted by prejudice or corrupted by the love of gain and pleasure. With the vision of the Infinite Justice of love, the soul is lifted above the lower motives, and asks the one question: What is right? Not what will bring the greatest earthly gain or pleasure, but what is the will of God?

Speaking as a Russian, and knowing the thought and life of his own people, Tolstoy refers to the unrest of the educated classes, and their desire for social reforms in government, and for larger personal liberty; but says that these do not touch the one vital question; that the countries of Europe have largely secured these reforms, but are still suffering for the one thing of all most needed; and that is, the rights of all to the use of the soil. The truth of such a statement will hardly be questioned; but the rights of the people to some form of constitutional government may be a first step or condition of what he thinks is of all the most important.

Man does not ask to be born into the world; he finds himself here, and under forms of government and religion and the inequalities of social conditions that have come as inheritances from a long past. That past has been largely a selfish struggle of force for power, possession, owner-

ship of the soil, the minerals, of the one earth upon which all must live; and for places of authority in the state and nation. In this struggle we few have risen to trones and vast estates and fabulous wealth; there is a large middle class living in comparative plenty; and a still larger number with little or no land or property and living upon the toil of each day. And especially is this the case in the older countries where the struggle has been long and the population crowded.

Russia is a large country with almost unlimited room for farms and homes; but the land is largely owned by the aristocracy, and the poor peasants are doomed to toil and poverty for want of a possible place they can call their own. Undoubtedly the greatest need of the millions of that land is a right and the ability to own and till the soil; and in less degree the same is true of other countries, our own not excepted.

There is not time, nor is it the purpose of this article to discuss the theories of Henry George; but to call attention to the timely and able words of Tolstoy. But this is true: Henry George has, as was never done before, called the attention of our age to the rights of the millions to a place upon the earth, to the soil from which must come the food and raiment and shelter of all. And every year the question becomes more urgent; it is not that of land alone, but in the great shops the working man does not own the tools or machinery with which he works.

The whole great question of the land, of labor and capital, is at bottom a question of justice, of what is fair and right; and the appeal must be not alone to legal forms, but to the great law and life of love, of brotherhood. Tolstoy tells us that it was owing to the deep sense of the wrong and shame of holding their less favored brothers in servitude, that the serfs of Russia were set free; and in his great religious faith in man and God, he believes the owners of the vast land estates will come to see the wrong, the sin of denying the rights of the suffering poor to use the earth that is the gift of God to all his children.

This excommunicated, but Divinely ordained teacher of righteousness, may be mystical or extreme in some things; but in his self-forgetting and consecrated life he stands at the eternal centers of the true and the good, of the soul and God, from which alone can come the power to lift our world into the moral grandness of the life of Christ in the life of man.

Chicago. H. W. THOMAS.

Victim (after an hour of it)—You certainly seem to be very fond of Wagner! Miss Pounder—Well—er—not exactly; but I do love noise!—Life.

BOOKS

BROAD-CAST.

Aided by poet's vision and scholar's pen, Ernest Crosby sows seed for the future with the intensity of a man with a prophet's call. With the thought of his sowing he names his latest book of poems "Broad-Cast" (Funk and Wagnalls Company, New York, 1905), saying:

Others may frame and construct,
Fitting together the stones,
As they think, of the city of God.
Mine be the lowlier task,—
Mine be the dropping of seed
In the long silent furrows of earth,
Where she bringeth forth fruit of herself.

The poem on "Democracy" with which the book opens, seems to us to be the only poem written since Lowell's "Present Crisis" which is in the least comparable to it. In power and incisiveness, in nobility of diction, in courage, in the absoluteness of its humanity, who shall say that it takes second place in such a comparison? The wrong that stirred Lowell to pen his burning words, ripened, and was pulled violently up by the roots. Writing more than half a century later, Crosby urges the natural methods of eradication.

And yet I am no abolitionist.
I would abolish nothing except by disuse.
Slavery is good for those who believe in slavery, for in a world of slaves there must be masters, and men with the hearts of slaves had better be slaves.
Government is good for those who believe in government, and punishment for those who believe in punishment, and war for those who believe in war.
Anything is good enough for the man who believes in it, and the first step upward is not abolition but disbelief.

No truer word for democracy has ever been said than this:

Would you make brothers of the poor by giving to them?
Try it, and learn that in a world of injustice it is the most unbrotherly of acts.
There is no gulf between men so wide as the alms-gift.
There is no wall so impassable as money given and taken.
There is nothing so unfraternal as the dollar,—it is the very symbol of division and discord.
Make brothers of the poor if you will, but do it by ceasing to steal from them;
For charity separates and only justice unites.

And no better lesson in democracy has ever been offered than this:

Despise high breeding? Nay, but we should be fools indeed to throw overboard such a treasure.
Good manners, the nice sense of what is fitting, the refinement which is so difficult to learn in a single lifetime,—far be it from us to risk these hard-earned possessions of the race in any social cataclysm.
But is it not you, rather, who put them in peril—
You who would monopolize these gifts and restrict them to your narrow circle;

you, who hoard them like your gold and silver;—who find the chief value of them in the fact that others have them not?

"Noblesse oblige," fine thought.—fair flower of feudalism, foretelling a summer of even fairer bloom. But "Manhood obliges," is not that finer still?

Long poems and short, most of them in the unrimed, Whitman measure, follow each other through these attractive pages. "The Cotton Mill" is more grim, and more accusative in its implications than even Mrs. Browning's terrible "Cry of the Children." "The School of Riches" (reproduced in another column of this issue of *The Public*) should be committed to memory by every man to whom riches are a lure. "My Soul," while not so complete and well rounded as "Democracy," furnishes questions as searching for the individual life as the former furnishes for the communal life. Has anything been written about the human function better than this:

I found my soul lying neglected, and I picked it up and wondered what the strange mechanism was for.

I went to school to learn what use to make of my soul.

They taught me to think with it, but it strained and creaked and nearly gave way under the ordeal.

They showed me how to amuse myself with it, but it speedily got out of order and refused to work.

Then they trained me to hate with my soul, but it broke down utterly and nearly fell to pieces.

I came back from school disgusted with my soul and my teachers.

It was long after (alone, lying on my bed in the night-watches) that it flashed upon me what my soul was for.

Why did none of them tell me that my soul was a loving machine?

With one more quotation which well expresses the intense vitality, not only of this book, but of all Ernest Crosby's relations to life, we close:

Stop rummaging in the past for musty causes, O scientist!

Seek not the living among the dead.
Life is, not was,—and must ever continue to be.

How can the vanished columns of ages ago sustain our present temples?

Then search, not for dead causes, but for the Living God.

ALICE THACHER POST.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

—Glasgow Corporation Railways. Abstract Statement of Income and Expenditure for Year from 1st June, 1904, to 31st May, 1905, with capital account and balance sheet as at 31st May, 1905. General Manager, James Dalrymple, 46 Bath St., Glasgow. This detailed account of the operations of the municipally owned and operated street car system of Glasgow is an instructive publication. It accounts for every penny of receipts and expenditures for the year, and shows the net revenue to have been \$1,800,000, of which \$125,000 was turned over to the general reserve fund after appropriations for interest, sinking fund, taxes, rentals, depreciation, reconstruction, alterations, improvements, etc.