

different things. The just aim of doing away with the private absorption of land values would be common to both systems, but the first would call for a complicated arrangement for administering a great national estate, while the second would require much less machinery than we have now for collecting taxes. The land value tax would simply be increased in amount under the Single Tax, and this would call for no increase in the number of collectors, while the whole cumbersome mechanism of custom houses and personal and indirect taxation would be swept away.

And this difference in form involves a difference in principle. Socialists and Single Taxers unite in criticising unfavorably present economic conditions. Both desire to secure a just distribution of the product of labor. But the socialist believes that the present unsatisfactory state of industry proves that the natural laws of labor and exchange are defective, while the Single Taxer asserts that natural laws have never had a fair chance to operate. After his house has burned down, it is natural for a man to find fault with the laws of combustion, and, in a moment of resentment, he might wish to do away with them. Just after a bad fall we are inclined to curse the law of gravitation. But to do away with these laws would leave us in a worse plight than ever, and the wise thing is to study them and adjust ourselves to them, and to make them our useful servants and not our tyrannical masters. The socialists would throw the natural laws of trade overboard and provide a special Providence at the center which should take the place of these laws. The Single Taxer pronounces such an attempt unnatural and impossible of execution. He has faith in the laws of nature, and would only ask to let them have free play, as they never have had up to the present time. He claims that it is unnatural that the mere possession of valuable land should give the power to individuals to exact tribute from the community. Abolish this injustice and all other monopolies, and the much-decried law of supply and demand, and the other beautiful laws of natural human intercourse, would begin to operate as benignly as do the laws of gravity and combustion when man makes proper use of them.

It is a beautiful sight in a laboratory to watch gases and liquids and solids obey the laws of their being—to see water rise to its own level, however indirect the connection between its various surfaces—and to note how vacuums are always filled if the pressure of the air is given a fair opportunity. And just so it would be a delightful thing to open our eyes to the world around us, if the beneficent laws of social life were not interfered with at every turn. By laws of the same character the product would seek the consumer, the laborer would seek his work, the reward would adapt itself to the service. Where there was a tendency to pro-

duce too much of a given article, the demand would diminish, the price would drop and the manufacture of it be discouraged, and at the same time the producing class, receiving the full value of its product (for there would exist no monopolistic method of depriving them of it), would be able to consume all that they produced, after making such provision for the repairing and extension of plants as their savings might justify. Socialism means a lack of faith in natural laws. It believes in an artificial, machine-made justice. The Single Tax, on the other hand, is based on faith in natural law and would secure justice by removing the artificial obstacles to it which man has created.

The *Denver Republican* is right in dwelling upon the growing unrest of the public. Some great crisis will arise before long when the people will have to decide what form of change they prefer to enter upon. Will they select a vast and impracticable system of universal interference with individual activity, or will they take the wiser course of putting an end to the unjust privileges which are operating before their eyes to their injury? The former course would lead to disastrous experiments, bring in again the Man-on-Horseback and postpone for a century or two the final triumph of justice and freedom. But even then the Single Taxer can afford to abide his time in patience, for eventually his simple plan of preventing all sorts of graft will have to be adopted. By our present campaign of education, however, we hope to persuade our fellow-countrymen, when the time comes, to take the short-cut to the Promised Land and not waste golden years in wandering through the Wilderness.

ERNEST CROSBY.

SINGLE TAX PROGRESS IN GREAT BRITAIN.

Great and far-reaching as the political changes that are pending in the United States, and of which 1906 is likely, at least, to see the preliminaries, it is probable that those destined to happen in Great Britain will be not less portentous.

There is much of truth in the claim that the ferment now so apparent in American political life, is due to the work of Ida Tarbell, Lincoln Steffens, Ray Stannard Baker, Chas. E. Russell, and especially of Thomas W. Lawson, during the past two years, but it is almost as certain that it had its initial impulse in the Bryan campaigns of 1896 and 1900, and in the even earlier and since continued propaganda of Henry George and his disciples.

So in Great Britain the conditions which have produced the Campbell-Bannerman ministry had their origin in the "red-van" and other propaganda work carried on there by equally loyal followers. There, as here, the missionaries of the gospel of "the

land for the people" have been fighting the good fight to relieve industry from taxation and transfer its burdens to land values.

From time to time reports of progress there have been made which to many have doubtless conveyed the idea that progress in this country was relatively slower than that being made in the United Kingdom. For instance, the vote in the House of Commons on the Rating Bill—158 to 229, in 1902; of 183 to 170, in 1903; of 225 to 158, in 1904, and of 202 to 112 (a majority of 90), in 1905, has been cited as evidence of a much more rapid progress towards the Single Tax than we are able to show. Especially is this so regarded by those who remember that the high water mark of Single Tax membership in Congress—the 53rd—was but four, Johnson, Maguire, Simpson and Warner, that there was but one in the 58th, and that there are none in the present Congress. But note the difference. Johnson, Maguire, Simpson and Warner, in the 53rd, as well as the lone Single Taxer in the 58th, stood for the abolition of all other forms of taxation and the taking of the entire rental value of land for public purposes. The vote in the British House of Commons, however, has never been anything more than a declaration that there should be a new assessment of land—the present being some 250 years old—and that a figure representing three (3%) per cent. of its selling value should be placed in a new column, and that said 3 per cent. should contribute to the rates (taxes) in the same manner and at the same rate that buildings and personalty are now taxed. The McNamara Bill of 1903 only asked for the right to levy a rate of a penny in the pound, equal to five-twelfths of one per cent. How much would be obtained under the Trevelyan bill of 1905, would depend, I assume, upon the local rates, but as the average rate in England and Wales is now a trifle over five shillings in the pound (rental, not selling value) it would mean an average contribution of not to exceed one quarter of three per cent. of selling value—or three-fourths of one per cent. of its rental value, that is assuming that the assessment was the full selling value and not as with us (even here in New York City) much below it.

Great progress is undoubtedly being made in Great Britain, but we must not forget that they have much further to go than we have. Here in New York City we are now probably taking on an average one per cent. of the rental value of land—the local tax rate being over 1.50 on about two-thirds land valuation.

It is gratifying to know that the Campbell-Bannerman ministry is committed to the principle of the Trevelyan bill, and that we may reasonably expect that with a good plurality in Parliament which the elections about to be held will surely give them they will send to that bulwark of landed aristocracy—the House of Lords—a bill providing for this entering wedge of the Single Tax.

ROBERT BAKER.

News—Domestic.

KANSAS.

SACRIFICING THE SCHOOL LANDS—OKLAHOMA WISER THAN KANSAS—WORK FOR SINGLE TAX LETTER WRITERS.

There is apparently little direct work in Single Tax agitation in the Jayhawker State just now, but there is considerable along collateral lines of educational influence. The looting of our school lands is attracting attention, and Single Tax writers can do valuable work by showing the almost incredible loss to the people through sale of school lands in the past as well as in the present.

The original grant of lands for educational purposes comprises sections (640 acres) eighteen and thirty-six of each township, or one-eighteenth of the State's area, for common schools, and about a half million acres each for State University, State Normal Schools, and Agricultural Colleges. The total was over four million acres, which now brings an average yearly rental of two dollars per acre, or about eight million dollars. The State constitution prohibited the sale of school lands without a direct vote of the people, but the real estate speculators and politicians soon secured the submission of the question to the people and as school lands always had been sold in other States and as the choice school lands were then in demand, the people voted to sell their patrimony for what has proven to be, a mess of political pottage. The million and a half acres granted for higher education were selected by commissioners when there was little settlement and were the choicest of the State, a third valuable coal lands and much in the present oil and gas belts, the whole now averaging perhaps \$100 per acre in value.

Much of these lands brought but a dollar and a quarter per acre, and the average of all the State school lands sold was but two dollars per acre, or much less than the present annual rental value. The proceeds were invested in municipal bonds, giving a fertile field for official rascality, so that nearly one-third of the permanent fund has been lost. An average country school district would now have a larger income from the rental of the land, if it had been retained, by seven times, than its present share of the interest on bonds in the State school fund, while the loss to the three higher educational institutions was much greater in proportion.

Oklahoma has not yet sold her very valuable school lands, and is deriving a large revenue from their rental, but the leasees and politicians are clamoring and organizing to secure their sale at nominal prices. No better work can be done than by writing letters to the Oklahoma newspapers, most of which are edited by men insufficiently