

she transgressed those rules? If so, the Board should have full power to dismiss her; and for the courts to order her reinstatement would be an unwarranted intrusion by the judiciary into the realm of educational business—such an intrusion as leads straight to inefficiency through that old bete noire of government, divided responsibility.



Mothers and fathers, husbands and wives, spinsters and bachelors—among us all there can be found so few good teachers that the needless loss of one competent instructor from our schools should almost be cause for dismissal of the educational authority responsible. To maintain an authority, however, in a position of responsibility and at the same time to subvert its executive power is, in public administration, a folly so habitual that it puts on all the airs of reason. In its refusal to countenance such confusion, the New York Court is entirely right.

A. L. G.



Robert G. Bremner.

Another Singletax enthusiast of distinction passed "beyond our ken" when Congressman Bremner died. To meet him was to be in communion with one of the most joyously spiritual of men. His physical suffering had been for years intense and incessant, but he seemed unconscious of it in the happiness of living and serving. His courage in bearing his pain and ignoring the steady encroachments of death was not of the negative kind which merely endures. To the last hour he was enthusiastically and unselfishly busy building for the future. With the aid of his wife, he kept up his work on the Daily Herald of Passaic, of which he was principal owner and manager, as well as editor; with that of his sister he kept up his work as a Congressman from New Jersey. Always genial and cheerful and fun-loving, he got the friendly nickname of "Smiling Bob Bremner." So confident of his good health was he that his friends in spite of all the evidence against it, got almost to believing with him that his "little trouble" was passing away. This "little trouble," of which he gave no sign in speech or facial expression, but only in a painfully distorted body, was an enormous cancer, the attempted cure of which in its latest stages by radium has attracted nation-wide attention to his case.



Congressman Bremner was born in Scotland in 1874. He was educated in Canada, and, after

working as a carpenter and electrician in New York, became a reporter in Paterson, N. J., and then proprietor of the Passaic Herald. Two years ago he was elected to Congress as a democratic Democrat by a large majority in an overwhelmingly Republican district. In his place in Congress he served especially on the District of Columbia Committee, where questions of taxation are uppermost and on which Congressman Henry George, Jr., Bremner's friend and confidant, has made a record. A measure to which Congressman Bremner devoted himself is a bill for securing safety appliances for wage-earners. He left behind him unfinished the speech he intended to deliver on the floor in support of that bill; and while consciousness and strength remained, he worked upon its preparation with all the enthusiasm and expectancy of a man with full capacity for the enjoyment of constructive service. Robert G. Bremner, who numbered President Wilson among his affectionate friends, revered the memory of Henry George as the prophet of a new crusade in which he himself was a banner-bearer. His death occurred at Baltimore on the 5th. Of no one could expressions of sympathy be more sincere than those which come from all sides now over the death of this long-suffering but ever-cheerful and serviceable soldier of the common good.

LOUIS F. POST.



THE AGRICULTURAL RECKONING

There is something refreshing, a flavor altogether unique, about the latest Annual Crop Report of the Department of Agriculture. Not the least of its claims to distinction lies in the fact that it is simply honest, merely candid. If this makes a significant difference between this first annual crop report of the Department under David J. Houston and the annual crop reports that have gone before,—then so much the worse for the crop reports that have gone before.

It is a striking and, mayhap, illuminative fact, however, that these essential differences seem altogether to have escaped the press generally, for there has been nothing but the usual loud huzzahs, over the mere aggregate of farm yields, which custom hath staled and in which there has heretofore been no variety. And, except in rare instances, there is no apparent realization of the fact that something new has been done, something worth while has been told. Analysis is not so common a habit as might be wished.



The aggregate value of farm products is esti-

mated to be the largest on record; a great and glorious fact, truly. It reaches the stupendous total of \$9,750,000,000, and this fact has been delivered with a fine fanfare of large headlines by the press which seeks, without overmuch care perhaps, to please those votaries and protagonists of large things which do not yield graciously to dissection, the live and thrifty gentlemen who sing sweet songs on the popularized theme of "back to the farm," "buy a little farm of me and be independent." But the democratization of the Department of Agriculture—which, incidentally has no reference to any partisan success—has brought the Department closer to the people, as democratizing anything must inevitably do; sufficiently so that in the first annual report under the new regime and changed conditions, facts are revealed which should never have been concealed except to foster false beliefs and boost fictitious valuations. Truths are told about the farmer and his products and his wealth which heretofore seem to have escaped the Departmental eye altogether, or have been deemed unworthy of note.

The Department announces a grand aggregate of products of a value of \$9,750,000,000, but it has the competence and the integrity to set before those who wish to know the truth the fact—along with much else equally edifying—that these reports of aggregate production value are distinctly gross—not net; that the sum includes not only what the farmer sold but what was consumed on his own farm and entered into other of his own products duly reckoned in the aggregate; that there are so-and-so many farmers in the United States among which this aggregate is to be divided, leaving an exceedingly modest average; that from this must be deducted sundry and various inevitable expenses, like hired help and taxes and interest, and so on. Even the advocates of the "two blades of grass where one grew before" doctrine as the means of salvation for the farmer receive a jolt to give them pause, for it is found that a considerably *decreased* yield of products for the year just passed has given the farmer a considerably *increased* aggregate and average of returns. These incidental facts have not heretofore been featured, I should say.

Indeed efforts have more than once been made in the past to induce the Department to present with the statement of the annual aggregates of production the facts relative to its proper division, but the efforts did not meet with overmuch success. Even individual effort to present the facts through other channels than the Department were not encoed or even encouraged.

Nor is it so very long since the solicitation of

the Department of Agriculture for information as to the average of farm incomes elicited the somewhat amazing statement that the Department could not say because it did not know; that even the farmer himself did not know. There are only two classes of persons who do not know what their incomes are, those whose wealth is so great and so constantly and rapidly increasing that they cannot keep track of their incomes, and those whose net possessions are so relatively small, whose incomes are so pitifully trifling that it is not worth while keeping track of them. There is not the slightest evidence that the farmer belongs to the former class, and the failure hitherto to give all the facts germane to the matter has aided in making many thoughtful persons wonder if he did not belong to the latter.



To deal more specifically with the annual statement of the Department of Agriculture referred to, this latest report tells the farmers of the country—and any others who are deeply concerned with the welfare of the agriculturists—that of the grand total of production for 1913, amounting to nearly ten billions—being \$6,100,000,000 for crops and \$3,650,000,000 of animal products—the net cash sales of both crops and animals amount to only \$5,847,000,000. Five billion plus does not ring nearly so loud and hence is not nearly so popular a figure for "what the farmer got for his crops last year" as ten billions, but it possesses the essential quality of accuracy and aids considerably in assisting the average citizen in understanding what the farmer does with his money. The method of computing the farmer's productions heretofore prevailing—a method which seemed to have the endorsement of previous administrations of the Department of Agriculture—has been to assume, for instance, that when a farmer had raised three hundred dollars' worth of corn and fed that into four hundred dollars' worth of hogs and converted the hogs into five hundred dollars' worth of ham and bacon he would be receiving for his product three hundred plus four hundred plus five hundred, or a total of twelve hundred dollars, which only demonstrates again that a neat fabrication rigged up to resemble the truth is a snare and a delusion.

Of the crops, valued at \$6,100,000,000, approximately fifty-two per cent were not and will not be sold at all. They have been or will be consumed, used up, in other products on the farms. Even of the animal products, full twenty per cent will never leave the farms that produced them.

The number of farms of the United States at the present time is approximately 6,600,000. Simple analytical mathematics, a none too popular pastime, by-the-by, reveals the fact that the average annual income per farm then is less than nine hundred dollars. Obviously no farm is owned by less than one person. Many farms are owned and worked by more than one person. There are practically no farms upon which all of the work is actually done by one person. So we must pare down considerably this average as an income *per farmer*. But more than that, at the very outset, as the Department's report lucidly shows, this nine hundred dollars is but the gross income from which must be deducted all the cost of hired help, the cost of machinery and its up-keep, the cost of feed bought for stock, the taxes of every sort, the cost of fertilizers, and all the other inevitable expenditures, to say nothing of interest on his investment.



Truly, to those who will look, and who have not looked before, this latest annual statement of the Department of Agriculture must be something of a revelation.

ROBERT S. DOUBLEDAY.



MINES AND MINING OPPORTUNITIES.

Objection is made by a valued correspondent to the statement of the Public that the Calumet Mining Company does not have to come to terms with the striking miners, because "they control the opportunities bestowed by nature," and the inferred assumption that "under the Singletax the opportunity would be as open to the man having only a pick and shovel as to the capitalist." The correspondent continues:

I confess I cannot understand this reasoning. A mine is no more an opportunity bestowed by nature than is a factory or an office building. The difference is that the mine is constructed under ground, instead of upon the surface, but it is just as much a construction as the factory or the office building is. An ore body in itself is not a mine; it does not become a mine until it has been "developed," or in other words, not until shafts have been sunk, headings run, and the machinery installed for the economical handling of the ore and the waste material, for ventilating the workings, and carrying on the various processes that are required. The construction of a mine is an expensive undertaking. In most cases the expenditure of a considerable amount of capital is necessary before any return can be expected. The existence, or supposed existence of a body of "pay ore" in a piece of ground does not constitute that ground an opportunity, so far as mining

is concerned, for any one save a capitalist, and even for him the risk is so great that his profit needs to be most extraordinary to be justly regarded as disproportionate.

In discussing the particular questions raised by a miners' strike it is well to bear in mind that were there no mining companies to furnish the capital and to take the risk of developing the ore bodies, and making mines of them there would be little or no work for miners anywhere or upon any terms. The cases where a man with pick and shovel can attack an ore "prospect" on virgin ground and earn even a day laborer's wage are too few to signify.

The distinction between an undeveloped ore body and a mine is one which, so far as my observation goes, is not commonly made by the advocates of the Singletax. Yet it is not merely a question of choice of words; it is a vital difference, the difference between land and "improvements" so called. And if the sound rule of taxation is that the tax should be assessed against land values, and that improvements should be exempt, would not the impartial application of the Singletax result in taxing mines at only the value of the land before the mines were developed?

This raises the issue, not only between university economics and the Singletax, but also between Socialism and the Singletax. The opportunity to produce wealth, our critics say, is not an opportunity to Labor, but to Capital; and it matters not how free land may be, Labor still remains helpless without tools—which, in the case of mines, means expensive machinery—and therefore, subject to the terms offered by Capital. University economics holds that Capital must enjoy abnormal profits in order to induce it to engage in production; and that the only redress that Labor can have, or is entitled to, must come from organization on its own part, and through industrial commissions and sumptuary laws. Socialists hold that the antagonism between Labor and Capital is of the same nature as that between Labor and Land, and therefore, permanent relief can be had only through public ownership of the tools. The one would have the industrial system remain substantially as it is, modified by such palliatives as profit-sharing, increased efficiency, and government supervision. The other, ignoring entirely the basic motives of human nature, would reverse the present industrial order, eliminate Capital and make the State the employer. This is not to say that the correspondent belongs to one or the other of these schools; but his criticism might have come from either.



The question raised seems to be due to the confusion that comes of indefinite terms. Political economy based upon indefinite terms is indeed a dismal science; but when its terms are defined