

## IN THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT

Mr E. J. Craigie, M.P., who is President of the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade, moved in the South Australia House of Assembly, on 6th November :

"That, whereas it is desirable that the tax burden shall be removed from industry so as to encourage the maximum production of wealth ; and whereas the present method of raising revenue imposes taxes upon wealth producers in proportion to the success of their effort in production ; and whereas the tariff policy of Australia increases the cost of production, imposes a burden upon primary industries, adds to the cost of constructing and maintaining social services and generally lowers the standard of living for all wealth producers :

"Therefore, this Parliament being anxious that early action shall be taken to give effect to those principles of Justice and Liberty for which the war is being fought, recommends (a) that the State Government give early attention to the question of removing the tax burden from industry ; (b) that the Federal Government be asked to abolish the Tariff, Sales and Primage taxes with a view to preventing exploitation by monopolistic interests, thus lowering the cost of production and bringing about a higher standard of living for all wealth producers ; (c) that the rent of land which arises by reason of the presence of the people be taken into the Public Treasury for the purpose of defraying the cost of government ; thus laying the economic foundation for that new social order promised after the war, and ensuring that those now engaged in producing munitions shall not at the conclusion of hostilities be forced into the ranks of the unemployed, but shall find avenues of employment awaiting them in the peace industries.

"That a copy of this resolution be sent to the Federal Government."

Mr Craigie's speech on the motion made on 6th November, adjourned by the Orders of the Day, and resumed on 21st November, occupies twenty-five columns of the Parliamentary report. It is a brilliant marshalling of the facts and arguments bearing on the whole tax question, criticising existing methods, reviewing the incidence and effect of one tax after another, income taxation, the stamp tax, the succession duties, motor taxation, the sales tax, the interplay of Federal and State taxation, customs and excise, with a particularly damaging exposure of tariff protection for the robbery it commits on the people and the powerful monopolies it has established. The information so fully and carefully compiled is shattering. No less able and revealing is the constructive argument explaining why "the rent of land, which arises by reason of the presence of the people, shall be taken into the public treasury for the purpose of defraying the cost of Government," built upon new foundations so effectively prepared by the speakers' sweeping demolition of the bad old order of things.

"The protectionist system," said Mr Craigie, "has had a thorough trial, and it has worked. It has done all the things it was designed to do. The Australian people have certainly been loyal to the tariff policy, notwithstanding they have seen want and fear steadily increase under it. Surely they have now been loyal long enough to the most infamous system for the plunder of labour that greed ever devised. The case against Protection can be rested on 10 points. First, because it represents special privilege ; second, because it represents class legislation ; third, because it builds trusts and monopolies ; fourth, because it enables these monopolies to sell cheaper abroad than at home ; fifth, because it robs the people without their knowing they are being robbed ; sixth, because it employs public taxation for personal enrichment ; seventh, because it obtains the votes of labour by falsehood and fraud ; eighth, because it diminishes the wages of labour ; ninth, because it diminishes our total wealth production ; and tenth, because it builds up great fortunes by impoverishing the people.

Going on to explain the alternative to all this, the need for land value taxation and its justice, Mr Craigie gave many remarkable facts. In 1837 the whole of the 1,042 acres which constitute the City of Adelaide was sold for £3,594 4s. ; the unimproved land value of the same area to-day as assessed for the State land tax is more than £11,000,000. The initial expenditure (in 1837) of £324, by John B. Thorngate on purchase of four acres in what is now the City of Adelaide and 540 acres of country lands had, by the subsequent increase in land values, enabled the Thorngate Estate to

take out of South Australia no less than £622,988 in rent on land by July, 1928. Robert Gouger bought a town acre No. 106 for £8 2s., later purchased by W. P. Featherstone for approximately £500. In 1882 the Y.M.C.A. leased the land, and during the 40 years to 1923 it had paid the Featherstone Estate £64,000 besides having to spend £27,000 in erecting buildings. Considering that and other properties, the Featherstone family descendants and beneficiaries had taken £1,000,000 out of the State although not one member of it had ever set foot in South Australian soil. Mr Craigie piled Pelion upon Ossa with his revelations, and in the exposition of the principles at stake he got admirable assistance from the interjectors who, putting their objections, drew forth his explanatory answers. Apt quotations from Henry George and an eloquent peroration brought to conclusion a speech which would stand high in the annals of any Parliament and one that ought immediately to be widely disseminated in pamphlet form. No vote was taken, the motion lapsing because the House adjourned for the session on 22nd November.

Mr E. J. Craigie's devotion to the public interest, the care with which he prepares his brief, and his close attention to all subjects are exemplified in other debates—on 7th September, upon the Northern Areas Water Supply Bill ; on 2nd October, upon Housing Subsidies, and upon the Budget ; and on Interest Free Loans for Public Works and Government Financial Support to Secondary Industries, on 20th November.

### OLIVER CROMWELL

AN UNUSUAL view of Oliver Cromwell is presented in the following passage from OLIVER CROMWELL, by Mirko Jelusich, translated by Eileen R. Taylor (Massie Publishing Co. Ltd., 1939).

Cromwell rebukes him so fiercely that the young man involuntarily falls back a couple of paces. "You may have bought the Soke of Somersham a thousand times over in due legal form with your damned gold : you have not bought with it the right to let a whole countryside starve. Yes, starve. The farmers of the neighbouring lands, from whom you and your like squeeze out a usurious rent, that you may lead a life of profligacy in London and in your Manor-houses, these farmers live by breeding live-stock. By breeding sheep, to be exact. That is something you can understand, I suppose ? But these sheep grazed on your 'couple of meadows' and thus provided a living for hundreds of men and women. When you enclosed the land that had stood open from time immemorial you committed crime against the community. Young man, do you comprehend ?

"Here is no question of protecting you, but of protecting those whom you would pillage. That would you, Lord Mandevil. But I am still here, Lord Mandevil, to preserve for these people their ancestral right, the right to gain a living from the land, and neither man nor devil shall hinder me." He flings himself passionately across the table, breathing hotly into the young man's face. "You complain of the opposition of the farmers, you, who are the opponent of an entire people. You stand on your rights, you who deny men the right to live. And you would have your injuries made good, you who through your damnable, self-willed actions have done more injury than you can ever answer for. Know you, what I would do, if it were I who sat in the seat of justice, instead of one who wears himself out to serve you, and to twist common justice to cover the wrongs you do ?" And raising his voice above the general uproar that has broken out at his words, "I would cast you into the Tower, and keep you there until you rot, that you might learn the meaning of this freedom which you would take from men."

The Northern Friends Peace Board, a Quaker committee which, among other work, sends out posters very widely circulated in the north of England and Scotland, is using for its February posters the words from the Church manifesto : "The resources of the Earth shall be used as God's gifts to the whole human race."