

or the Maid of Orleans. What the orthodox of two or three generations in the days when self-examination was more common than it is today called "conversion" was very real to them, and for the most part had an enduring effect upon their lives. So with Sinton's "illumination," which was a spiritual experience which determined the whole of his after life. Give what name you may to these spiritual crises through which some gifted souls are destined to pass they are to them as actual as the more mundane experiences which are the sum of most human lives. It does seem as if Sinton were one of the prophets, as Henry George himself was, as Emerson was, as Carlyle was, despite his physical crabbedness. Such men are rare.

Walter Sinton had little use for polite conversation, but his Irish wit was often manifest at social gatherings.

Bolton Hall's "Things as They Are" is based on Sinton's life and letters. Reading it we learn more of Sinton, the Man.

## Byron W. Holt

**I**N the death of Byron W. Holt, Dec. 11, 1933, justice and truth have lost another champion. Mr. Holt was always on the alert for opportunity to exert his influence in favor of a just cause.

For years, this indefatigable, patient and scrupulous statistician produced volumes of tariff literature, the most part of which was credited to his pen. He was not only a student of facts and figures but had a perception of principles, giving exceptional value to his deductions. The special faculty which he possessed would have commanded a high price in the open market provided it had been made available for selfish ends.

His talent was often utilized by organizations and political aspirants; his careful words often gave unearned reputations to their users; but never was evasive or untrue matter furnished. The recompense, far exceeding any stipulated payment for service, was the opportunity for diffusing and advancing the cause of real democracy.

The American Free Trade League and the New York Reform Club were indebted to Mr. Holt for some of their most authoritative literature. In Congress and in the press his figures inspired speeches and editorials and furnished campaign orators with trustworthy ammunition. His unbiased judgment and sterling integrity compelled the respect of his associates.

As editor of "Plate," and "Ready-Print," for the Sound Currency Committee of the Reform Club in the 1896 campaign, Mr. Holt's work was especially effective. The matter edited by him was used in 3,000 newspapers, largely in the doubtful states of Iowa, Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Minnesota and West Virginia. It would have required less than 20,000 additional votes properly distributed among these doubtful states to elect Mr. Bryan president.

Mr. Holt edited the Democratic campaign book of 1902,

some of the matter being used in the books of 1904 and 1912. Early in 1912, the Tariff Reform Committee, of which Mr. Holt was then chairman, decided that Governor Wilson, of New Jersey, a free trader, was the best man to boost for the Presidential nomination. They gave him a dinner at the Hotel Astor and started rolling the ball that ended in his nomination and election. Mr. Holt planned the campaign and wrote practically all of the speeches that were used to elect W. L. Douglass Governor of Massachusetts in 1904. He was Mr. Douglass' writing secretary after election, and was called the "Sherlock Holmes" of that administration.

Mr. Holt was an ardent believer in taxing land values and untaxing everything else so far as possible, believing that this would result in the destruction of monopoly, a complete recognition and protection of private property rights and a commonwealth based on the antithesis of socialism or communism.

At the time of his death Mr. Holt was treasurer of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation. He leaves not only a vast amount of useful work accomplished in the interest of economic truth, but many co-workers and friends who lament their loss, and who will miss him sadly.

G. R.

**T**HE evil is expressed in a few words, and sooner or later the nation will appreciate it and rectify it. It is the alienation of the soil from the State, and the consequent taxation of the industry of the country.

PATRICK EDWARD DOVE, "Theory of Human Progression," 1850.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### AN INTERESTING WORK\*

The future historian, surveying the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt must devote considerable space to the "Brain Trust" surrounding him.

We venture to predict that the historian will rub his eyes in amazement to read that in this age, so-called "Wise Men" could be found who would seriously advocate the destruction of wealth amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars, in the form of cotton, wheat, hogs as the road to national recovery.

In this book Mr. Neilson, with gentle ridicule, exposes these blind professors who are leading a blind President up a blind alley.

As our author well says, (page 90),

"They are landlord's men to a man, and pretty nearly every scheme that has been passed by Congress since Mr. Roosevelt took office will make the landlord richer some time or another."

B. W. B.

### A ROBBERY OF THE LIVING AND THE UNBORN\*

Here is a book which will provide an armory of facts for those of our British friends who are advancing against the fortress of land

\*Control From The Top. By Francis Neilson; clo. 190 pp. Price \$1.50. G. P. Putnam's Sons, N. Y. City.



owning privilege. First we are arrested by the startling "jacket" of attractive design with the barred gate and "Strictly Private" lettered across the iron grating. To whomever was responsible for this, our congratulations!

And then the book itself with its fascinating history of landownership and the long tragic story of the alienation of the workers from the land.

Just a glance at the chapter headings reveals something of its contents: The Land of the Realm, How They Hold Our Land, Our Stolen Lands, Lords of the Land, Landholders in the Commons, Landlords in Local Elections, etc., etc. To quote significant extracts would be to quote the book itself entire, for it is the most thorough indictment of landlordism that has appeared to date. And no words are wasted. There are no superfluous sentences. The guns are turned upon the formidable fortress of landed privileges, and every shot tells.

The work will aid land restoration as no other work has done. There is no talk of the Single Tax, nor the taxation of land values—that is not Graham Peace's way. Nothing but a law of the Commons providing for the immediate collection of the full economic rent and the abolition of all taxation! And in doing this they will have the support of the best authorities on English law. Legally as well as morally the land of Great Britain is vested in the people of England and under the crown.

The Constitutional History by Stubbs says: "The king of Domesday is the supreme landlord of all the land of the nation; the old folk and has become the king's and all private land is held mediately or immediately of him." And Mr. Peace adds: "This, the central theory of English law, has not been changed through the centuries."

When the people of the United Kingdom realize that the whole question of unemployment can be solved by the restoration of an ancient right, how long will they hesitate? Conservatives may delay the day of resumption and salvation, but how long will they hesitate? Conservatism may itself be enlisted for the restoration of the land rights of the English people in accordance with the older laws that have never been repealed and today form the basis of English law.

Again, congratulations! This is one of the most telling books in all our literature. We owe Mr. Peace a profound debt of gratitude for a splendid piece of work superlatively well done, that will serve the purpose of educational and political propaganda up to the very time that shall crown the triumph of our principles. Not until that day will this book fail to serve us.

J. D. M.

\*The Great Robbery, by J. W. Graham Peace, clo., 128 pp. Commonweal Press, price 3s 6d. 43 Chancery Lane, London, 2 W. C. England.

## Correspondence

### TUGWELL HODGE-PODGE

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Prof. Tugwell believes that we can do better in the long run than continue a pattern of land settlement which is essentially "hodge-podge" provided we proceed "not by mandate but by providing new and better opportunities—renewed frontiers—within our borders."—*New York Times*, Jan. 14, 1934.

With all due respect to the Professor his problem can not be solved by buying out those able to subsist on marginal lands. It has no more chance of curing the disease that he knows exists than an opiate has of curing a broken leg. The hodge-podge Mr. Tugwell objects to is certainly an anomaly in a land so gifted by the Creator with every possible feature of topography and climate and which once could be used for nothing. This hodge-podge is not the cause of our distress. It is the inevitable effect. It could never have occurred if the land had not been given away or sold, first by the Crown, and then by the Colonial Governments, and lastly by the Federal Governments through its Homestead Laws. If such land had been retained by the

people through their governments, colonial, state, or otherwise, we would now be spared any problem of marginal cultivation. Under secure leases from the government no men would be forced to use lands which can provide but a bare subsistence no matter what the expenditure of labor or capital.

The cause is land monopoly. The best lands can not be had except at a price. Therefore they are in great part held out of use. They can not be forced into use by spending \$25,000,000 to buy out all the holders of marginal and submarginal lands. Production will be limited to the better lands but the hodge-podge will continue, the least productive of the better land now in use will become marginal land and real wages will be forced still lower. The reason is this; as the withholding of the better lands forced men to poorer lands and lowered the margin of cultivation so will the withdrawal of marginal lands force their users from employment at living wages to idleness at no wages at all. They must be supported by those employed and the necessary taxation will cause the margin of cultivation to rise so that lands once able to produce a surplus will now produce but a bare living. Methods of agriculture under this weight of taxation will be forced to deteriorate instead of improving. Look at India or Egypt. The owners of land out of use and the landlords of tenant farmers will not be affected except as the standards of living is lowered for they will continue to receive without returning goods or services. Real wages will be depressed because of the drain upon production to support non-producers.

Men do not choose the hardest way of doing things as Prof. Tugwell well knows. It is an axiom that man seeks to gratify his desires with the least effort. Thus inventions are made, new processes discovered, new lands opened. Therefore, since he sees the futility of overcoming this hodge-podge settlement of America by mandate and the necessity of providing new and "better opportunities—renewed frontiers—within our borders," why not force the frontier into use by collecting its economic rent for the people of the United States? It is useless to complain about the use of marginal lands when nothing is done to remove the cause, so give man a chance to work without paying tribute to some other man for the privilege and the necessity of planning will disappear with the opening of the new old frontier.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

JOHN LUXTON.

### ASSEMBLE THE FACTS AND PUT THEM TO WORK

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

President Hennessy's idea regarding the assembling of data bearing on land speculation as the cause of depressions and panics is excellent.

Recently I have been noting the marked differences between the prices received at auction sales in foreclosures and the assessed value of the parcels sold. If these values are any criterion of real values then they are surely bargain sales. The liquidation of speculative values is inevitable and must take place before recovery comes. But evidence based on such transactions can hardly be regarded as convincing because it lacks the factor of mutual agreement between a willing seller and a willing buyer.

Perhaps my reasoning is faulty or my presentation weak, but I seem to have difficulty in establishing such convincing evidence. Quite lately instances came to my notice which for me at least provided convincing evidence, but I was not able to use it so that others would be convinced.

One dealt with a parcel of land recently offered for development purposes. It consists of approximately six acres located in a district the site value of which is the highest in the town. Assessments on adjacent land mostly improved bears at least some relation to its value for use but the particular parcel was assessed as pasture land. The owner kept a few highly bred dairy cattle and at such times as the weather would be injurious to such delicately nurtured creatures they were allowed to graze on this tract. The peculiarities of certain state laws were thus satisfied. The assessors were forced to value this tract,