

or direct assertion, that the goodness of society can be guaranteed only by the goodness of the individuals constituting that society. He makes the monstrous assumption that individual action can make justice with unjust laws, that the man who goes to the market can correct the sweat shop, or that he can counteract the villainy of land speculation. This man would make every one more than a Canute to sweep away the tide. Perhaps there is no more gross superstition today than this, that individual effort can change a social system. The individual is utterly impotent to change the market; we must collectively change the law that presses one man with a competition that forces him to accept a pittance of his just earnings, and allows another man to carry off yearly a fortune which he has never earned.

It is terribly discouraging thus to have to see the kind of education that is offered to those who are to take the lead in calling the attention of the public to the sublimest truths and to inspire them with the noblest aims. It is not much to be wondered at that the church is wielding such a meagre influence, where it should be well nigh omnipotent. There was no mistaking the character of Christ's teaching when he told the leaders in the church of his day, that they made long prayers; but, at the same time, they devoured widows' houses. And we still have the long prayers, and we still devour the widows' houses.

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## LIFE ON THE FARM AND THE BRITISH FARM LABORER.

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*(For the Review.)*

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By JOHN R. RAYNES.

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Half a century ago the activity of Joseph Arch sent a thrill of hope through the lower strata of the agricultural world. At that time the farm laborers were overworked, underfed, and underpaid. Those conditions have not altered much since that time, and have not in fact altered much in the last five hundred years. Other conditions have altered for them considerably. They no longer go into the ripened crops with a sickle or scythe, nor do they any longer beat out the precious grain with the flail. Instead of the sound of the singing of birds in the field there is the rattle of machinery, and instead of the sweet smell of bruised straw at the threshing, there is the smell of smoke from great engines. These changes have been made for the employer's sake, and any such change is welcomed when it means more profit. The work of the laborer has changed somewhat in character, but not in its cash product. The single men are in many cases still housed in bedrooms and common mess rooms attached to granaries or stables. The married men still in almost every case carry home to the toiling wife a wage that is supposed to represent his value in the world. It may be fifteen shillings, aided by a cottage valued



at 1s. 6d. a week, and a garden alongside. Seed potatoes are possibly provided for him and a certain amount of bacon. All in all, it is not a pound a week, and there is a family to feed out of it. Thousands of such men with strong frames and kindly natures are perpetually on the lists of our County Courts. The most economical of wives cannot provide all the necessary boots, suits of clothes, and food without running into debt. I am sorry to say it, but nothing suits many country tradesmen better. I have known many cases in which at a time of peculiar hardship the general store keeper has persuaded the prudent housewife, always an honorable customer, to get what she needs, and to leave her amount for another day. She gratefully and sincerely accepts, her simple nature placing reliance on good faith. A few weeks later a heavy bill comes in, on which prices are higher than she usually paid. She hurries round to the grocer, who receives her most cordially, and expresses pleasure at her prompt payment. When the object of her visit is explained his brow darkens, and he hints at a summons, and his rights, and the privilege she has had. The poor woman is the more easily induced to pay something on account as often as possible, and to place all her orders with him, on the condition that he does not sue for immediate payment. He has got her fast so long as she lives in the district, and she is always in his debt.

Thus it comes about that many women who are married to good men and have bonny children, and live in a veritable garden of England, have drawn and anxious faces, and are never able to realize the natural glories of a country life. She is thankful if her daily round passes without a call from someone wishing to pick up a little account, or to obtain an order for something. Thus it comes about too, that their countenances are dull as their future prospects, which only give visions of a miserably inadequate pension, or the work-house when the old man can work no more. They would love the life they lead were it not a life on the poverty line. Their narrow financial limits hold them down, but today they are learning for the first time that those limits can be broken down, and there is a new and tangible thrill of hope among them.

Is it to be a delusion? I cannot think it. I hope that the inspired gospel of Henry George is the light of the world to these people. Without injustice to others, it would give justice to them. It would open out the broad acres by tens of thousands, and thus open new channels and new demands for their labor. The corollary to that is better pay, and a breaking of the fetters of debt and anxiety. Just a little—a very little—was done by the Budget of 1909. I heard many farmers and landowners most wickedly misrepresent that Budget. Indeed I contradicted a powerful but wealthy bully who farms nearly 1,000 acres in Lincolnshire, and is known as a bad employer. His only reply was a threat of violence. We won that election with tremendous enthusiasm and it was fought almost solely on that question of the taxation of land values.

Many men were dismissed after that election in our division and in others, and there were presentations and libel actions. We seemed to be on the



eve of a new and more equitable era in agriculture, but having done a little, and with such a great deal yet to do, it makes me blush to hear that some Liberals are urging their leaders to

“Halt with the end half won  
For an instant dole of praise.”

In this matter disaster lies in hesitation. Liberals must not forget that what the Tories will not give in policy they will cheerfully give in charity, and many of our rural divisions suffer by a system of generous Tory gifts. The overcrowded industrial centres of the North, teeming with hard headed and shrewd artisans, will not brook hesitation, and will not tolerate Toryism. They will accept the militant policy of the Labor party. The destiny of Liberalism rests not upon palliatives like pensions, or even national insurance. It rests upon a reform that will remedy the evils of rural life, and re-act beneficially on industrial life. The policy of the taxation of land values will open the eyes of the dwellers in the country to the fact that the earth is beautiful, that the wind on the heath is bracing, that there are sun, moon and stars above, and that the poverty of past centuries was not the just reward of the toiler.

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## FAIRHOPE, ITS PROBLEMS AND ITS FUTURE.

(For the Review.)

By J. BELLANGEE.

NOTE.—This article is printed without editorial comment, and without obtruding our own views of Fairhope and Single Tax colonies generally. Mr. Bellangee is a friend of Fairhope—the famous Single Tax colony on the shores of Mobile Bay. He is at the same time one of the gentlest critics of the Fairhope Corporation which administers the affairs of that colony.—EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW.

It has been about a score of years since the enterprise of Fairhope was first projected. Up to that time the theory of Progress and Poverty had not been established in any human institution. The irresistible charm of Mr. George's style appealed to literary critics, the irrefutable force of his logic convinced the mind of thinkers, and the catholicity of his spirit, the purity of his purposes, and his devotion to justice, aroused the interest and sympathy of reformers. But the great body of those who control the forces of civilization in business and politics were heartlessly indifferent; it had made but a slight impression on men and affairs. Such men are usually imitators rather than projectors; they are willing to back up experiments that have proven successful, but as a rule they risk but little on untried innovations.

Yet George's philosophy had made a profound impression upon the