

REVIEW

Mr. Lloyd George's Land Policy

The Liberal Land Report, on conditions in England and in other countries, contains, according to information to hand, an encyclopaedic array of facts and figures which is a great addition to the popular literature on the subject. If the report is anything like as full as "Coal and Power" it will, whatever be the remedial views advanced, be of great service, and will influence greatly all three parties in England. The methods of remedy suggested are somewhat radical, too radical for the liking of some of the most influential Liberals in Britain, and hence we have noticed some notable secessions from that historic party.

Mr. Lloyd George has stressed the most important thing among the many economic problems facing England today. He is telling the unsparing truth about the magnitude, the urgency and the danger of the problem. Fifty years ago when Lord Derby, a most cautious Conservative, made the statement that England could gain at least \$200,000,000 more per annum by doubling the yield of her soil, he caused a sensation. Modern appliances and methods could give as many more hundred millions now, and England has her greatest market at her own agricultural door. In the fifty years since Lord Derby's time, nothing has been done—in fact there has been a decline.

Feudal conditions in land have obtained in England even after Feudalism proper was swept away. There was nothing like the French Revolution in the continent to break up estates and raise a class of peasant proprietors—nothing, even, like the agrarian agitations in Ireland which in a measure remedied this defect. English lands became and remained concentrated in the hands of the few. We know that one of the saddest chapters of English

economic history is the decay of the yeomanry. Down to the Industrial Revolution, the British Yeoman was unsurpassed in physique and character. He was dispossessed and destroyed by the Whigs. The Liberals followed for a change of reasons, and the Tories conformed, though professing different principles.

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay:
Princes and Lords may flourish, or may fade;
A breath can make them; as a breath has made;
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied."

Every other country has a strong agricultural basis. Free importing economics is on the verge of collapse in England, and to quote an influential London paper: "They were a sanguine gamble upon the belief in a permanent and progressive command of foreign markets in countries which are protectionist because bent on the utmost self development. Sacrificing our home resources in many ways, and the very life of an agricultural race, we pursued pell-mell a national policy 'high interest and bad security' and we are coming to the usual results.

Mr. Lloyd George points to the monstrous fact that Britain brings in from abroad annually some £350,000,000 worth of food and £50,000,000 worth of lumber. British soil could produce the bulk of it, yet lies half waste. The gift of God is neglected, for was not Britain at one time called the Granary of Europe? In the world's economic history we have no such example of national folly and fatuous economics.

Mr. Lloyd George's remedy is that he would put out all the land holders without discrimination—good and bad, big and little. He would leave no room for the small land holders who are the backbone of the prosperity of Denmark, France, Germany and Canada. That is one great objection. He would institute all cultivators as supervised State Tenants, assured of fixed and even hereditary tenure given good behaviour. It looks simple, but, to my mind, smacks too much of socialism and nationalisation. Liberals say it is the great bar to nationalisation, I have not read the report in full, and so I can offer no final opinion; but, like all human documents I suppose it to contain truth and fallacies, but, I feel, that

one can truthfully say that its opportune appearance and importance cannot be over estimated.

Maritime Rights

There can be, to the mind of the writer, no two opinions regarding our claims on the Dominion. Prince Edward Islanders all think alike on this subject, and their opinions were well voiced by our Prime Minister, the leader of the Opposition, Mr. Saunders, and those who supported the Resolution introduced into the Legislature during the present session. In view of the campaign now carried on by our public men and our daily press, we have nothing to offer upon the subject itself excepting to stress its paramount importance, especially to Islanders. Justice requires that our claims be satisfied.

Is Britain Decadent?

"Thy wish was father, Harry, to that thought."
(II Henry IV, Act IV, Scene 5.)

So spoke the old King as he lay adying in Westminster Palace when he thought he saw young Harry's impatience to reign supreme. At present the United States is under the most sorrowful delusions about old England's political and social state, that her press hardly likes to mention all it feels. English commercial men who have visited the United States, and have arrived unsuspecting and with peace of mind, have, very shortly their hair on end. The United States is convinced that Britain is down and out, and will never be heard of again.

In the face of this orgy of pessimism, some who know may state, in the words of the humorist, that Britain's demise is "grossly exaggerated." Britain has not the least intention of going under. England is grappling with her difficulties and her shown power of surmounting them is sufficient index of the steady fact of her recovery. The English press does not resort to any false system of advertising verbiage.

If one says England is not as great as she used to be, then the answer is, she never was. In Elizabethan days, the old chronicler, William Harrison, preached that England's day was visibly over. Horace Walpole felt the same in his time. England was never so weak as before the Seven Years War except, perhaps, just before

the French Revolution. In our time almost, in 1880-85, the universal continental opinion was that Britain was a decaying nation, and her Empire was disintegrating. Before 1914, Germany believed it implicitly. After Armageddon Britain relapsed into her old ways, and observers into their old delusions.

They tell us that there was a certain room in the German pre-war Embassy—we might call it the room of Jeremias—and therein was a bookcase stocked exclusively with such works as the following: "Darkest England," "The Bitter Cry of Outcast London Social Wreckage," "Rocks Ahead;" under such cheery titles the Germans thought they had the truth. The late Marquis de Soveral, one of the late Queen Alexandra's closest friends, used to say that, when he first came to England, he thought he understood her in three months. After three years he was less certain. After twenty years he knew her, indeed, as few have done, but he often said that London was, of all capitals, the most difficult to know, and Britain, of all countries. The writer does not believe, and he has had some opportunity to know, that there was ever a stronger ferment of ideas amongst the English than there is today. The vitality of Britain is unchanged, and there are more able brains and stirring characters there than at any time.

England manages her Empire on principles which France is now recognising as wiser than hers. She is bearing her taxation, rejecting inflation, maintaining her credit, paying her way, developing new industries to compensate for injury to the old. Incidentally, she has forgiven three quarters of the French debt, as well as six sevenths of that of Italy, who are her sternest competitors in the European markets. At Locarno she scarcely appeared as an exhausted nation. England is rebuilding, pressing patiently on to higher purposes and larger achievements.

While on such a topic one feels impelled to say a word or two about Rubber. The United States is visibly upset on account of Britain's control of the rubber market. When American speculators failed, because of the intervention of the British Government, to smash the British market, and the consequent reaction sent rubber up, there was quite an outcry against monopoly and all its attendant evils. We might draw attention to the old parable about the mote in your neighbour's eye for the

benefit of the U. S. press. Also Mr. Herbert Hoover has seen fit to declare in no uncertain terms, that foreign control of raw materials will not be tolerated, and has inferred that such procedure might ultimately provoke war. This is a threat that seriously affects Canada, in view of the depletion of American forests, and of the fact that we control the nickel and asbestos supplies of North America, and, largely, the pulp wood supply. Such a gesture as that of a man of Mr. Hoover's influence in the United States would have been interpreted in other less accomodating times as a serious threat, and an unfriendly act that might reasonably require explanation.



Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
Heaven did a recompense so largely send
He gave to misery (all he had) a tear;
He gain'd from Heaven ('twas all he wish'd) a friend.
—Gray.

The tear down childhood's cheek that flows
Is like the dewdrop on the road;
When next the summer breeze comes by,
And waves the bush, the flower is dry.
—Scott.

The love of study, a passion which derives fresh vigour from enjoyment. supplies each day, each hour, with a perpetual source of independance and rational pleasures.

—Gibbon.

Tomorrow! the mysterious unknown guest,
Who cries to me: "Remember Barmecide,
And tremble to be happy with the rest."
And I make answer: "I am satisfied:
I dare not ask; I know not what is best;
God hath already said what shall betide."
—Longfellow.