

LAND NATIONALISATION.

Nationalisation of land is an expression of the times in which we live. The demand for land nationalisation shows a feeling of protest against the holding of privileged power in any form, and is an outcome of our present age of concrete definitions in place of moral generalities.

Under the freehold law the gap between the owner of much land and the landless laborer who works for him and bread, is too great a space for the proper development of the better faculties of man; on the one hand some are unduly expanded, on the other hand some are unduly shrunk; both extremes are unuseful and extravagant. Nationalisation will tend to lessen this distance without destroying individualism; it will tend to break down self isolation and to build up self dependence.

It seems to offer the essence of Decentralism and the essence of Centralism; under it each individual will be an assisting and assisted part of his nation, and as such will by the social compact, give and receive aid to and from his fellow-citizens; not existing by himself only, but each for each and all for all.

Nationalisation meets its first obstacle in the long continued habit or feeling named the freehold sentiment; this is the initial difficulty to be attacked and overcome. The difficulty is a real one: for habit has its strength in its deeply radicated hold of the mind, and new ideas have to be not perhaps generated there, but protected and cultivated: yet the mind is a rich soil, and will readily produce when properly encouraged those growths which, though temporarily stunted and lichen-like through long neglect or ill-usage, are yet native to it.

There are three aspects in which the question may be viewed, the social, the moral, and the political.

The social improvement under it will free and give leisure to the mind and body, and experience tells us that freedom of mind and body when backed up by the forces of civilisation, science, and mental and bodily activity results in greater and ever increasing progress.

Regarded politically it will cause an improvement: for politics may be described as the making and the administering of laws; the fracture of laws depends upon those by and for whom they are made, and consequently is formed upon the material acquirements and requirements of both the makers and obeyers; despotic laws for a despotism, republican laws for a republic; and thus the more improved the nation the more improved, though perhaps simple, the laws.

Considered morally: nothing is more beneficial to a people than a just regard for others; when this principle of action guides us, it follows that the rights and property of others are safe from us and secure to themselves; when this principle holds sway many of the stronger evil passions are held in check.

Again, as regards general civilisation: those gains which man has made since his protoplasmic and rudimentary state, have been the gains made by himself unhelped by any exterior aid; and notwithstanding the ceaseless encroachments and warring of nature against man and his handiwork, the mere fact of his retention of his existence, shows that man is comparatively powerful to subdue and make Nature useful to him, although he himself creates nothing; for man is no creator—he is merely an amalgamator, a joiner, or utiliser.

The forces that are within him and the forces that are without him are, have always been, and ever will be, such, and such only, as Nature (if I may use the term to denote in one word both cause and effect, a part and the whole) has placed in and around us.

There seems to be no backward tendency among our modern civilised nations: we may, in fact we always must, be going in a circle, but I believe it to be an enlarging, not a narrowing circle: if we have developed in our acquirements to an age of electricity and steam, may not we continue developing to an age as far in advance of this as we are in advance of the ante-speech and ante-fire age? for there is no reason to suppose that Nature will become offended at man's industrious curiosity, or say to him "so far shalt thou

go and no further." Nationalisation is in the course of events bound to come: as a principal effect of that resistless steam-hammer called "Material Civilisation" which, welding and moulding the thoughts and actions, the arts, the sciences, the discoveries of nations antipodean to each other in language, in manners, in distance and in time, and crystallising the accumulated knowledge of many generations into useful ends, increases by so much not only the actual stores for the use of man, but seems even to enlarge or at least to free his capacity for further gains, and so helps forward the intelligence of the people of a world to appreciate the Book of Nature, at length beginning to unfold its secret and close-held pages to the ever enquiring and ever insatiable demands of the human intellect.

AMICUS.

THE HEROES OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT.

Some sing of the times of theology's rule,
In mournful and dismal a strain;
They strive to restore Christianity's might,
To hold man in bondage again;
They sing with delight of the tyrants of old,
Who plundered, and murdered, and fought;
But we sing the praise of far worthier men:
The Heroes of Freedom of Thought!

Away with your Calvins, your popes, and your priests!
Away with your thumb-screws, away!
We want them no longer to spoil the fair earth;
We want something better to day;
We want not your priests, who, to stifle the truth,
Have ever unceasingly sought;
We honor the great ones who fought for our rights:
The Heroes of Freedom of Thought.

We sing to the praise of Galileo of old,
Who lived to bring knowledge to man;
We sing to Hypatia, who lived to do good,
In spite of the priests' cruel ban;
We sing to brave Bruno, the martyr for truth,
Who stoutly and honestly fought;—
We sing to the praise of those martyrs of old,
The Heroes of Freedom of Thought!

We sing for the heroes who fight for us now,
And those who have not lived in vain;
We sing of the champion of freedom and truth:
The great and the good Thomas Paine!
We sing of our Bradlaugh who's with us to-day,
Our Ingersoll shrinking at naught;
We sing of the great and the good of all time:
The Heroes of Freedom of Thought!

— DAVID A. ANDRABE.

AMERICAN SENTIMENT.

Judge Lowell, who retired recently from the United States Circuit Court, was complimented one evening last week by a banquet at the Hotel Vendome. Among the speakers was Oliver Wendell Holmes, who, after referring to Judge Lowell's learning, fairness, and devotion to duty, said: "I will not say more of the living: I wish to speak of the dead. In respectfully proposing the memory of his great-great-grandmother, I am speaking of one whom few, if any, of you can remember. Yet her face is as familiar to me as that of any member of my household. She looks upon me as I sit at my writing table; she never smiles; she never speaks; even the parrot on her hand has never opened his beak; but there she sits, calm, unchanging, as when the rude, untutored artist fixed her features on the canvas. To think that one little word from the lips of Dorothy Quincy, your great-great-grandmother, my great-grandmother, decided the question whether you and I should be here to-night, whether we should be anywhere or remain two bodiless dreams of Nature! But it was Dorothy Quincy's yes or no to Edward Jackson which was to settle that important matter, important to you and me, certainly; yes, your honor, and I can say truly, as I look at you and remember your career, important to this and the whole American community." Dr. Holmes concluded by offering the following: "The memory of Dorothy Jackson, born Dorothy Quincy, to whose choice of the right monosyllable we owe the presence of our honored guest and all that his life has achieved for the welfare of the community."

What hurts society is not that it should lose its property, but that it should become a den of thieves; for then it must cease to be society.