

Mennonite leaders have discovered the mistake they made in expecting such exceptional privileges.—The exodus to Mississippi has not yet begun. Some of the younger Mennonites have frankly declared that they have no intention to leave Canada. It seems now that the Mississippi movement is abandoned. The Mennonite leaders are looking for educational freedom, not in the United States, but in our Canadian Province of Quebec. A deputation has waited on Hon. Mr. Taschereau, the Quebec Premier, expressing the desire of the Mennonites to come to this Province, if they can be assured of satisfactory school privileges and exemption from military service. On the latter question, the assurance given to the original settlers in Manitoba might hold good on the removal of their successors to another Province. But that is a matter on which only the Dominion Government can speak with authority. Mr. Taschereau, recognizing the many virtues of the Mennonites, spoke very kindly to the deputation, promising them every facility for inquiring into conditions in Quebec, but naturally he could give them no assurances of recognition of their schools except in conformity with the liberal laws of the Province.

One can feel a measure of sympathy for any group of industrious people of foreign origin who desire to maintain the language of their fathers. But experience has shown that the attempt to do this in our public schools, to the exclusion of instruction in the languages of our country, does not make for the building up of a Canadian citizenship. What Canada requires in this respect, of her citizens of foreign origin, is no more than is necessary for the welfare of our country, and no State in the American Union is likely to require less from those who enter it. The Mennonites are not likely to find in any part of the world a larger freedom than they have in Canada.

Jettisoning the Land Policy

From one view-point it was lucky for Mr. Lloyd George that one day last month he was engaged with urgent business in the international conference at Spa, in Belgium. If he had been in the House of Commons on that day he would have had an unpleasant hour in being an active participant in the condemnation and repeal of what not long ago was one of his most cherished political measures.

In the strenuous session of 1909-10 there was no measure more valiantly championed by Mr. Lloyd George, or more vehemently assailed by his Conservative opponents, than that which provided for land valuation and land taxation. The alleged evils of the existing land system were very eloquently and very forcibly pictured by Mr. Lloyd George, then Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Cabinet of which Mr. Asquith was Premier.

The relief that was to be obtained by the masses of the common people through the system of additional taxation of the rich landowners was one of Mr. Lloyd George's strongest cards in appealing to the public.

Many changes have occurred in the British political world since that time. Mr. Asquith sits in Opposition. Mr. Lloyd George is Premier. Mr. Austen Chamberlain, one of the strongest opponents of the land scheme in 1909-10, is Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Chamberlain's Finance Bill of the present session includes provision for the repeal of the law respecting land valuation and land tax that was so much vaunted by Mr. Lloyd George. Such a reversal of policy by a Government of which Mr. Lloyd George is Premier could not be expected to be adopted without some revival of the history of the enactment of the law. The debate was made merry by the banter of Mr. Asquith, and by other members who gave the House numerous quotations from the speeches with which Mr. Lloyd George had ushered in these land laws. If Mr. Lloyd George had been present he would have found the occasion an interesting if not entirely a pleasant one.

Mr. Chamberlain doubtless found some pleasure in making the frank admission of the complete failure of the measure which the present Premier had championed and he (Mr. Chamberlain) had strenuously opposed. The machinery for making the valuation and levying the taxation had cost the country, he said, about two million pounds. The total amount of taxes received from it had been £1,320,000, and this the Chancellor proposed to return to the taxpayers. Many people had resisted the law. Their action in doing so had been upheld in the courts, and in this way the operation of the scheme was paralysed. There was due for uncollected taxes £540,000, and the claim for this was to be abandoned. Mr. Chamberlain said it "would be contrary to public policy that a man who had paid promptly and had no dispute should suffer by reason of his prompt payment, whereas the man who had disputed the payment—it might be on frivolous grounds—should escape payment by reason of his delay." Hence it was proposed to abandon the collection of the taxes and pay back the money already received.

Mr. Chamberlain did not mince words in jettisoning the whole scheme. The land taxes, he said, "from top to bottom were bad. They could not be made workable without an immense amount of legislation." Strong language to be used in characterizing one of the most important reforms of the man who was now Mr. Chamberlain's leader! The Chancellor of the Exchequer tried to make some amends to his Premier in the following passage:

"The Prime Minister had great qualities, which all who had watched him in that House, and still more in Council, recognized, and had other qualities which those who

at one time or another had been in Opposition had not been slow to characterize with less commendation. He was human. But he had one great quality not given to every man. In middle age and after middle age he could still learn. He was no coward who feared to own a change of mind."

The Government's proposal was carried by a vote of 209 to 53. In the division lobbies the minority added to the humor of the situation by singing "The Land Song," which was a campaign song when Mr. Lloyd George was advocating his scheme of land reform—

"The land! the land!

'Twas God that made the land!"

Yes, Mr. Lloyd George was lucky to be in Spa that day.

Force Against Democracy

It is apparently becoming customary for certain classes of workers to abandon their tasks, under the guise of a "strike," whenever they fancy that by so doing they may possibly embarrass, not their employers (with whom in such cases they may have no quarrel whatever) but some remote political or religious or economic authority whose actions they happen to disapprove. This practice has been frequent in certain branches of transportation both in Great Britain and in the United States of late, and has now spread to Canada. Its usual object, here and in the adjacent Republic, is to annoy the British Government on account of its refusal to recognize the "Irish Republic." In Great Britain it has been employed, or threatened, to enforce compliance with Laborite views on the Bolshevik question. It may quite possibly be utilized in the near future to promote the doctrines of Single Tax or to prevent the importation of much-needed supplies of labor.

It does not seem to have occurred to any of the authors of these strikes that such a weapon is just as illegitimate for the pursuit of political ends in a democracy as assassination or the forcible restraint or terrorization of electors or their appointed representatives. It is a use of force, and if effective it is in no wise distinguishable from other forms of the use of force, such as kidnapping a Prime Minister or marching troops into the assembly-hall of Parliament. Like all other misuses of force, it may be successful for a time, but in the long run it is bound to recoil on the head of those who invoke it. Force can only be repelled by force, and those who use force to affect the political actions of a democracy will inevitably compel that democracy to arm against themselves. If a democracy is capable of defending its liberties against outside enemies, it should be able to defend them against its own stevedores or electricians.