

Lloyd George and the Land Question

LOYD GEORGE and the land question are to the front again. Home Rule takes a rest. The Welsh Chancellor has given expression to his views at Bedford and again at Swindon. He is still determined to solve the question of landless men and manless land in Great Britain. The young Duke of Sutherland is able to go a day's journey in a straight line from his castle and never be off his own land. There are others. And there are millions of Englishmen who have never owned and never will own a plot of land as big as their own boots. The question may not be as old as the hills, but is certainly as old as the House of Lords. Lloyd George sees always something new in this fascinating problem of how not to live up to the Messianic adage, "To him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away, even that which he hath."

The Small Holdings Act has not succeeded. The indifference of the local authorities responsible for the working of the measure killed that reform. Single tax would be very unpopular. Straight confiscation is out of the question. There is no doubt that Englishmen have a remarkable veneration for great landed estates. In spite of economics, or socialistic sentiment, or party politics, the Englishman likes to contemplate the great unoccupied hills of game with the castle on the highest hill and the deers roaming in the valleys. It has been so ever since William the Conqueror compiled the Domesday Book after the Battle of Hastings, and put the accent on the feudal system. In the Guildhall at Exeter there are piously preserved ancient copies of some of the surveys made by the chain gangs of the Conqueror, when the Domesday Book was being compiled. These are shown to tourists as examples of the historic greatness of England. No doubt the British Museum contains other specimens of this kind. And there is a slum three blocks distant from the Guildhall.

But the little Welsh Chancellor is still sticking to his guns. He will now make the President of the Board of Agriculture a Minister of Lands with full cabinet rank and with jurisdiction over both rural and urban lands. He still believes that "God made the country and man made the town," and that it is the statesman's business to get the millions away from the man-made cities on to the God-made land. He has no sympathy with those who think that England may yet become a kind of huge, deserted village when the overseas empires of land are occupied largely by Britishers. He believes that free trade is consistent with putting people on the land. Recent activities of the government look as though he may even anticipate the nationalization of railways which would be almost necessary if a sweeping land reform were to be effected.

Having bitten off a large chunk of the land question, he is resolved to chew it. Home Rule and woman suffrage and syndicalism are to him but minor phases of the one great question, how to cure the people's ills by getting them back on the land.

Waiting at the Pit

CIVILIZATION is yet largely built upon an underground basis. The men who work in subterranean towns and villages, away from sunlight and from native air, to get out to the world above ground coal and precious minerals, number hundreds of thousands and belong to most of the civilized countries of the world. Great Britain has more coal workers according to area than any other country. Wales has by far the greatest coal population according to area in the world. Coal is to Wales what forests once were to Eastern Canada and what wheat and cattle are now to the Argentine. When the coal mines of Wales are closed, Wales as an industrial country will have lost its peculiar place in Great Britain. The British navy is largely dependent upon Welsh coal mines. Welsh coal comes to Canadian ports in the stoke-holes of the mercantile marine by thousands of tons a year.

The population of Wales depends mainly upon the coal mines for the wages of living. The recent disaster in the Universal Mine, near Cardiff, was the worst that has ever befallen South Wales. It came like a blow from the hand of nature, which acts with as strange suddenness below the earth as it does on the waters and the air above. The coal miner has not the protection of his craft that the sailor has. When a gas storm breaks loose in the caves of the earth, whether it takes the form of fire or some mere sudden explosion that shuts off all means of escape, none of the engineering of civilization are available to save man from either burying or burning alive. Wireless is of no avail in the mine. Rescuing steamers cannot go full steam ahead to take off the passengers and the crew. Men must perish in the deep below, by a death whose horrors are only feebly appreciated by those that stand at the mouth of the pit and wait, hoping against hope. The mine disaster in South Wales and the swiftly succeeding mine disaster in Mexico, with the burning of the steamship Volturno, in mid-ocean, together make the latter part of 1913 as tragically momentous as the Titanic catastrophe made the early part of 1912. One picture on this page conveys a quietly but dreadfully vivid impression of what death below means to the lines of women and children above.

Old Country Activities



THE LITTLE WELSH CHANCELLOR AND THE LAND QUESTION.

In His Recent Meeting at Bedford, Mr. Lloyd George Dealt Rather Philosophically with the Land Question, Which Will be at the Root of the Next British General Election. At Swindon Later in the Week He Laid Practical Emphasis on Making the President of the Board of Agriculture a Direct Minister of Lands.



THE ALL-BRITISH ALLIANCE ROYAL WEDDING.

On October 13 Prince Arthur of Connaught Was Married to the Duchess of Fife in the Chapel Royal of St. James' Palace. The Ceremony Was Performed by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Procession is Here Seen Passing Hyde Park Corner.



"HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL IN THE HUMAN BREAST."

On Tuesday, October 14, the Worst Mining Disaster That Ever Happened in South Wales Entombed Several Hundred Miners in the Universal Colliery, Near Cardiff. There is Something Which Words Cannot Convey in This Picture of Waiting Wives and Kiddies.