

# The Saturday "News" Special Foreign Service.

## Government Goes in for Scientific Town Planning

**Special Correspondence.**  
LONDON, May 12.—This month the Right Hon. John Burns, former member of a public house (the "Red Lion" in a public house) and now one of the principal members of the British cabinet, is going to introduce a bill that will be of almost as much interest across the Atlantic and on the continent as it will be in England. It passes and works as well as the keenest and most practical Right Hon. John Burns thinks it will. It is going to make a big difference to the next generation, and quite a lot of difference right away.

The idea is to make a science of town planning, and to put the government in charge of the job. It occurred to broad-minded Americans long ago that you can make a better, healthier, and more attractive town if you lay out the scheme for it beforehand than you can if you leave it to grow up anyhow, guided only by land speculation. Various American efforts were made in this line, and some of them highly successful, but it was over in Germany that town planning first became a kind of science. Lately England caught the craze, and now the writer is informed that Mr. Burns—unofficially, of course, and not as a British ambassador—has been studying the latest system introduced in the United States. He has even sent a representative to England—albeit unofficially—to study the English projects with a view to interesting prominent Americans in the great idea.

**GOVERNMENT TAKES A HAND.**  
But the most significant fact is that the British government proposes to take a hand in the game. It is Burns' pet hobby. He looks to it as a practical solution of the most urgent economic problems of the day. His new bill on the subject, which will soon be the topic of discussion throughout England, is calculated to put a stop to all ill-considered, haphazard building and land operations. The heavy hand of government authority is to be laid upon all property management, which heretofore must be conducted with a view to the public weal and not to individual interests. Local authorities are to be authorized to conduct town planning operations, and the local government of each town is to be the final appeal, is to decide as to how all these measures are to be carried out. Local councils in every city are to be empowered to acquire land for town planning purposes, and even to take over compulsorily any land or buildings which they may require. If private interest is injured, it is to be compensated, and the government, with government ideas. For instance, should one property owner be benefited at the expense of another the injured party is to be indemnified, not by the government, but by the benefit which accrues to the lucky owner. Thus will the government borrow from Peter to pay Paul, and in some cases, perhaps, even forget to pay Paul.

The writer recently has had a long talk with the Right Hon. John Burns over his new scheme for which he anticipates so much in England's cabinet, but it is very evident from Burns' entire attitude that he looks to town planning to do wonders. If it accomplishes only half of what the president of the local government board expects the millennium is not so distant as the professional pessimist would have us believe.

**LOCAL CONTROL OF HOUSING.**  
One of the principal features of the bill relates to local control of housing. Under existing conditions local authorities can exert no authority either as to the number of houses per acre or to the style of architecture. Up to now the housing problem has been attacked on

Measures of Universal Importance, and of Especial Interest to America, About to be Put Forth by the British Cabinet at the Instance of John Burns—George Bernard Shaw Has Just Subscribed \$27,000 for a Private Scheme of the Same Sort.



matters of detail, but not as a comprehensive whole. Though John Burns has the credit of introducing this epoch-making measure, its further progress does not altogether depend on him. This scheme is popular with all political parties; and even if the liberal government went out of office, as there are rumors of resignation, the Conservatives probably would adopt this bill.

**SOME CASH BACKERS.**  
In addition to the powerful interests of the British government, which is fostering town planning, private individuals are vying with each other to make it a success. No less a person than George Bernard Shaw has backed his faith to the extent of \$27,000 in hard cash which he has just contributed to a town planning society, while Leopold Rothschild has put up \$10,000. J. S. Nettlefold of the famous Birmingham firm associated with "Joe" Chamberlain has contributed \$25,000 and written a book which makes town planning so attractive that, on reading it, you feel like rushing off into the wilds and beginning something of the sort forthwith. Another enthusiastic town planner is Miss Sybella Gurney. She has invested \$30,000, an enormous sum for an individual to put into a venture of this kind.

**ALL TO BE CHANGED.**  
Hitherto it has been the idea of the metropolis to erect square or oblong structures on square or oblong patches of ground at the rate of 50 per acre. These semi-circular dwellings in canyons have been let by mere landlords at rack rents. But now it is to be changed. All future plots of ground are to be laid out with a view to artistic effect and health-giving results. Every chain of houses per acre are deemed sufficient, and every other acre is to be devoted to an open space for children. Iconoclastic hands shall no longer be laid upon trees, nor is

beautiful scenery to be recklessly demolished.

In Germany there are now no less than 715 town-planning societies, with 115,000 members. In Berlin alone there is one society which has put up 1,654 dwellings at a cost of \$6,250,000. Most German towns are acquiring all the suburban property surrounding each town site, and plotting it off into beautiful, artistic landscapes.

**MAIN PROPOSITION.**  
The main idea is to acquire land in the suburbs or within easy reach of great cities and to plot out this land in accordance with certain fixed principles of scientific procedure. For instance, in comprehensive schemes, the main thoroughfares are expected to comprise any land near a city that might be built upon within the next 30 or 50 years. Municipal authorities and private individuals are encouraged to plot out this land in such a way that wide avenues are provided for the main traffic between centers and outskirts, narrower streets are allotted for ordinary traffic, while less expensive roads and narrow drives are provided for purely residential districts. While the main thoroughfares are as direct as possible, the private drives are made to conform to artistic standards. Parks and ample open spaces are provided for the benefit of the people, and the usual procedure—departing from the usual procedure—most of these parks are in what is known as

"back land," that is, in residential and not in business districts.

All factories are assigned to districts on the opposite side of the town to that from which the prevailing winds blow; while railway lines and water communications are designed to tap these factories at their most convenient point of access. This takes the traffic away from the residential districts.

**GRADED SECTIONS.**  
The future town is divided into sections, which are graded. High buildings close to each other are allowed in the center and on main arteries, while in the residential portions buildings are lower the further they are removed from centers. All warehouses and business offices must be placed in the center of the town, as should also all municipal buildings which latter are expected to be handsome and imposing in order that citizens may take pride in their corporate existence.

One of the first essentials to an efficient town plan is to have dotted about at frequent intervals on cheap land many small plots of open ground, where children can amuse themselves without being a nuisance to others or in danger themselves, as they are in congested areas. The children will be seen playing in the streets.

**OBTLITERATING THE SLUMS.**  
Of course in settled cities such as London it is impossible to adopt this scheme entirely owing to the enormous cost of land, but wherever possible, even in congested areas, many things are being done to alleviate present conditions. For instance, local authorities are converting bare, unsightly courts into pretty parks; streets wherever possible are being widened, and houses altered. Many slum houses are radically changed in such a manner that more windows and larger doors are

being added; and, as a consequence, more light and air get into the structures.

Wherever possible, working people are encouraged to leave the congested districts and go to "town-planned" lands in the suburbs. With cheap street car and railway fares, the suburbs of the great cities in England are rapidly opening up. Instead of private land speculators being allowed to capture and hold for speculative purposes all the cheap lands in these suburbs, workingmen's societies are purchasing land wherever possible.

**"CO-OPERATIVE TENANTS."**  
Most of these societies are run on what is known as the "co-operative tenants" principle. In this way the land is purchased by a private association of more or less philanthropic individuals, who agree not to take more than 1 or 2 per cent on their investment. The land is plotted with the most up-to-date ideas, and houses are built and let only to such tenants as obtain stock in the co-operative society. The tenant pays his rent in the ordinary way, but instead of it going into the pocket of an individual landlord, it is paid to the society in which he himself holds stock. In the course of time, when he has acquired sufficient stock to cover the value of his house and land, he becomes practically his own landlord. The attainment of this ideal state is the ultimate object, the "ultimate design," as it were—of every one who goes into the project.

**EASIER FOR HOUSEWIVES.**  
In addition to becoming eventually their own landlords, co-operative tenants have many other advantages. If they choose to partake of them, for instance, two families can take what are called "paired houses"—that is, a single large house divided up for two families, and with a common dining

room. Thus two families, by combining, may eliminate the drudgery of keeping up separate cooking establishments. One may cook for the other, or they can take "turn and turn about." Several of these paired houses are already in successful operation at Garden City. By combining their interests, tenants on these estates may attain an ideal state of existence which renders them superior to even cooks and janitors.

**PASSING OF THE BACK FENCE.**  
At most of the settlements springing up all over England the idea seems to be for the various families in any one settlement to have as many interests as possible "in common." Thus the houses usually include large spaces of open ground in the rear, and this ground is used by all tenants whose houses abut upon it. The "back fence" is becoming a thing of the past. In its stead one sees small wire boundaries a couple of feet above the ground. How this is going to work out where families of growing children are springing up remains to be seen. But still, people with co-partnership ideals need not necessarily be retarded by such trifles as children.

Probably the man who knows more about town planning than any one else in England is Ebenezer Howard, founder of Garden City. There is a proposal on foot to send him to America to lecture before economic societies in St. Louis, Chicago and elsewhere.

**MR. HOWARD'S SCHEME.**  
When asked by the writer for his views he made the following statement: "The powers given to the Local Government board of which Mr. Burns is the head are very far reaching, even to the extent of enabling it to frame provisions which may suspend parliamentary enactments. That is, what may make provision for town planning in all places where improvements are likely to be carried out, and local au-

thorities are even empowered to purchase lands compulsorily for these purposes. Money may be borrowed by local authorities throughout the country for the purpose of building towns in accordance with the highest ideas. Wisely administered, this government scheme will usher in a new and splendid era.

"London, as it exists today, is an enormous magnet, and it might be said that the people who are attracted to this vast city, and indeed, to all other great cities, are human needles which are drawn almost irresistibly by this great magnetic force. What we propose is to build towns that will combine the advantage of the city with the country is practically to demagnetize cities like London.

**DEMAGNETIZING LONDON.**  
"If, with our town-planning, we can make our new cities so attractive that they form opposition magnets to London, we have solved the problem. We are not building cities but are making what we call 'Town Countries.'"

The demagnetizing of London and other big cities by founding English counter attraction all over the country where men can pursue their lives under healthier conditions will be followed by some very remarkable results. London, so enormous today, will disappear. The spell of London will be broken, and the great bubble burst. Today the life and energies of the nation are in pawn to the owners of its soil, who kindly permit them to sit upon it at enormous cost.

**HIS ARGUMENT.**  
"While the removal of a vast body of people from London to our town-planned cities will reduce the value of land in London, the rates will fall on a smaller number of people, and even these people will ultimately be forced away from the metropolis. We are not building cities but are making what we call 'Town Countries.'"

The consequence will be that all people now dwelling in slums will have a large number of good houses at their disposal at cheap rents and lowered rates. And thus the problem of London overcrowding will be solved.

"Already proposals for the reconstruction of new London have been projected. The late William West-garth offered the Society of Arts \$5,000, for the best plan of a remodeled London on Garden City lines.

**EFFECTUAL CHECKS.**  
"Today there are several bills on foot which have been projected but are not carried out because the London county council is making through parliament such demands that capitalists will not go on with ventures of this kind. These checks upon private enterprise have begun to affect the growth of London even now, and it is less rapid than it otherwise would be.

"But when the untold treasures of our land are unlocked and the people now living in London discover how easily vested interests make them, they will be circumspect, then the land owners of London and those who represent other vested interests will be less quick to oppose the social and besides being what Mr. Grant Allen terms a 'squalid village,' may become a deserted one."

And in human progress, so the venerable Francis Galton says, is to apply pretty much the same principles to children as it is now applied to towns—plan them beforehand. That is, what much discussed system which he has christened "Engines" amounts to.

W. B. NORTHROP.

## HOW CZAR'S UNCLE WAS SNUBBED AT DAUGHTER'S WEDDING

**Special Correspondence.**  
ST. PETERSBURG, May 10.—At the last moment, the czar's uncle, the Grand Duke Paul, hurried across the border by special permission of his august nephew, and was an inconspicuous guest today at the gorgeous wedding of his daughter, the Grand Duchess Marie Pavlovna to Prince William, son of King Gustav of Sweden. The bride's father was kept in the background and had no part in the brilliant and picturesque ceremonies at which 2,000 guests were present. After the wedding, at which he was the least welcome guest, his royal highness was hustled out of the city and back to Paris. Few of the wedding guests even knew he had been present.

Perhaps the grand duke's elopement with Mme. Pistolkors, which was the cause of his disgrace and exile, would have been smoothed over a little by this time if it had not been for a recent incident in St. Petersburg that had a direct effect on the grand duke's position. It was undoubtedly influenced the czar in humbling his royal uncle at today's wedding. That incident was the recent murder of the beautiful Mme. Andreeva by her husband, a rich St. Petersburg court merchant. The affair made a great stir, of course, but few realized that the indirect cause of this tragedy in a middle-class Russian family was no less a personage than the Grand Duke Paul.

I happen to have a good many unpublished details of the whole story of the grand duke's conduct on the subject, and it is worth telling from the beginning, for it throws a lurid light on social conditions here.

**FASCINATING WOMAN.**  
A few years ago Madame Pistolkors, wife of an officer in the guards, appeared at court and fascinated everyone, not merely by her beauty, but by her witty and brilliant conversation. Her chair was always surrounded by a little crowd of grand dukes, ministers, officers and courtiers, and she never failed to keep them amused and charmed. Of course she made enemies. Great ladies with historic names, who found themselves deserted, began to say very disagreeable things about her. They professed entirely to fall to see what the men saw in her, and lamented over the decadence of manners which permitted the wife of a colonel in the guards, who ought to be thankful if she were allowed to come to court at all, to monopolize more attention than themselves. Matters were not improved when the czar himself indulged in a mild flirtation with the lady; and spiteful women expressed their sympathy and pity for "poor Col. Pistolkors," when it was noticed that the Grand Duke Paul was paying her marked attentions.

A personage connected with the

court gave me an amusing account of a luncheon party at a country house where the grand duke was staying. Every chair at the table was occupied except the one next the imperial guest. Everyone knew for whom it was reserved. The men were amused, the women furious. But princesses and countesses with no regard for rank, and great positions, might fume as much as they liked. The grand duke had expressed the wish that Mme. Pistolkors should sit next him and the hostess, although well aware of the indignation of the other guests, was quite helpless and bound to submit. Soon after the meal had begun the radiant Pistolkors, seated in the room in an expensively striped spring frock, took her place next the grand duke, and chatted away to the exasperation of the other ladies, who could no more utter a bon mot than fly.

**SOCIETY AMUSED.**  
After a while society, which is really far less hypocritical in St. Petersburg than in most other capitals, pretended to be scandalized and was in reality vastly amused, when it discovered that Mme. Pistolkors was constantly going

abroad, and always to stay at places where the grand duke happened to be. Her husband used to see her off at the great ball in the Winter palace, and they invariably shed tears when the moment came for a last embrace, for they were really very fond of each other in their restless Russian way. Presently, in the Winter palace, his too charming wife that he used to say to her in the most obliging manner, "Please do exactly as you like, I don't want you to be happy in her hands." The grand duke was so devoted to his too charming wife that he used to say to her in the most obliging manner, "Please do exactly as you like, I don't want you to be happy in her hands." The grand duke was so devoted to his too charming wife that he used to say to her in the most obliging manner, "Please do exactly as you like, I don't want you to be happy in her hands."

Now, czars may tolerate a good deal, but there is a limit to their endurance, and this was reached when jewels worn by Madame Pistolkors, under the guardianship of their aunt, the Grand Duchess Elizabeth, widow of the Grand Duke Sergei, and a princess who is even more lovely than her beautiful sister, the czar's wife, were found to be missing. This action was supported by the empress, who will no more tolerate a divorcee who has contracted a second marriage than she would her grandmother, Queen Victoria.

The marriage was, of course, illegal, as the czar's consent was withheld, and quite legal when a Parisian announced that the grand duke and Grand Duchess Paul had been at some society function a "communique" from the Russian embassy corrected the statement to the following terms: "There is no Grand Duchess Paul, the grand duke being a widower."

Meanwhile, Col. Pistolkors left with his wife and looked down on by society for the same manner in which he had allowed his imperial rival to rob him of her, was amusing himself in St. Petersburg. He had opened one day to meet Mme. Andreeva at a party. He was greatly attracted

by her, and small wonder, for she was one of the most beautiful women of the capital.

Her husband was a remarkable one. The child of poor Jewish parents, her future husband saw her working in a small shop as a seamstress. The rich court factor had divorced his first wife and married her. She was a fair and spotless flower to be tended and cared for. He determined to marry her, and in order to fit her for the position she was to occupy, sent her abroad to be educated. She returned to Russia a cultured young woman. M. Andreeva persuaded her to forsake the Jewish faith and to become a daughter of the orthodox church. Their marriage was celebrated with the picturesque rites and sumptuous ceremonies peculiar to the Russian church. The marriage's attachment to her was so passionate that he settled a large fortune on her absolutely and gratified her every whim.

So woman in St. Petersburg had more splendid jewels or more luxurious gowns than Mme. Andreeva, but unhappily she set her heart on something money could never buy for her. In Russia there are hard and fast distinctions between people of various

classes. The wife of a business man, however wealthy, knows perfectly well that no power on earth can open her into the aristocratic circle of her Mme. Andreeva made up her mind, at many women in Europe and America do, that happiness consists in getting to know people who do not want to know her. She was a social aspirant, an instrument to obtain that very desirable end, and deliberately encouraged his attentions.

The scene now changes to a fashionable Parisian hotel. Mme. Andreeva is there with her daughter, Natalie, a girl of 17, and they live in the lap of luxury while M. Andreeva works for them in the snowy northern capital. Of course, Col. Pistolkors, a great deal together, Natalie is miserable and implores her mother to see less of the dashing guardsman, but her words have no effect. Her ambition is now supplemented by a tender feeling, and Mme. Andreeva will listen to no warning. She glanced at the clock and saw that it was late when she and Col. Pistolkors found themselves one night in a box at the opera opposite the one occupied by the Grand Duke Paul and the beautiful Andreeva. Col. Pistolkors had eloped from her husband.

**LAST ACT IN TRAGEDY.**  
The last act of the sordid tragedy took place in St. Petersburg. There were frequent meetings between the pair. At last they made a desperate resolution. Life was intolerable, the ties which kept them apart must be broken. So one evening Col. Pistolkors and Mme. Andreeva, without minding matters said briefly:

"I am in love with your wife, she returns my love, and I ask you to divorce her in order that we may be married."

M. Andreeva promptly signed the general out of the house. But next evening his wife came to his study. "I am perfectly well aware," she said, that Gen. Pistolkors was here last night and I know what he said to you. He expressed my feelings as well as his own."

Her husband pleaded with her, but she created every argument with scorn. At last he could control himself no longer and catching up a Finnish knife he plunged it in her heart. The police, when they heard the story, refused to arrest the murderer.

At the funeral of Mme. Andreeva there was a touch which was altogether Russian. Behind her husband in the train of mourners who followed the coffin through the streets from the church to the distant Sergievsky cemetery—walking, as Russians even of imperial rank invariably do at a funeral—was Gen. Pistolkors, carrying an enormous wreath of immortelles.

SHTIGLITS VOLKHOVSKY.

**VILLAGE ESCAPE.**  
At one time she had a great penchant for red and wore it constantly. Her last escapade, a few months after her marriage to Mr. Asquith took place at a country house which they were visiting. Arriving at the house, a red of red satin she and Muriel Wilson made their way to a merry-go-round in the village and mounting two horses rode with the villagers to the infinite amusement of all and sundry. After this Mr. Asquith put his foot down and his wife has never since worn red.

The present Mrs. Asquith is the prime minister's second wife. Of their union there has been three children, a daughter and two sons, one of the latter dying soon after birth. By his first wife Mr. Asquith had five children. Raymond, who last summer married Miss Katherine Horner, a descendant of the Little Jack Horner of nursery rhyme fame, has proved himself a real chip of the old block. There has been something singularly remarkable in the way he has followed in his distinguished father's footsteps at college, winning the same prizes and holding the same office. He is now a practicing lawyer having been called to the bar in 1904.

The other children have yet to leave their "footprints on the sands of time."

MAYNARD EVANS.

**GLADSTONE'S PREDICTION WINS ASQUITH A WIFE**  
It is hard to say whose has been the greater triumph, that of Mrs. Asquith or that of the prime minister. The latter has succeeded to the greatest political post in the country, but there is considerable doubt as to his ultimate success. The former has succeeded to the position of leading hostess of the English political world and there is no doubt in anybody's mind but that she will be the most brilliant success of the decade. As a matter of fact, Lord Salisbury, who found forward with a whole-hearted joy to the day when Mrs. Asquith assumed her position of political queen of England.

Not since the days of the premiership of Lord Salisbury, more than 15 years ago, has a lady presided over 10 Downing street, the official residence of the prime minister, as the wife of the first statesman of Great Britain. Lady Campbell-Bannerman was in too poor health to assume the burden and died last year. Lord Rosebery was a widower, and Mr. Balfour a bachelor. Even Lady Salisbury was not very fond of the social duties imposed upon her by her husband's position nor was Mrs. Gladstone in her old age. The critics agree with striking unanimity that no better woman than Mrs. Asquith could possibly be found to revive the glories of the great position to which she has succeeded and to write political and social history as they traditionally supposed to be written in England.

**LEADER OF INTELLECTUALS.**  
As Margot Tennant, Mrs. Asquith