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Distressed Agriculture

Things have come to a climax when it is a Conservative Member of Parliament who has to rebuke farmers for doing too well. Speaking at East Dereham, Norfolk (*Manchester Guardian*, 7th March) Lt Somerset de Chair said: "I know of farmers in the Fens whose income has increased from under £300 to around £1,500 per annum as a result of the war, and they are boasting they do not pay income tax. Farmers are getting fantastic prices for malting barley, and I say there is something definitely unbalanced about a war economy which permits such prices to be paid. I hear also of farm workers who prefer working for farmers with an assessment of under £300 per annum, as income-tax returns are not requested from such farms, and the workers escape tax."

But let not the Member blame the farmers. Parliament is responsible. The farmers are quite naturally, even obediently, applying the laws that have been passed deliberately in their favour. If you agree to subsidies then you must pay for the subsidies either in increased prices or in increased taxes for the Treasury to hand them on. Mr de Chair says there is something unbalanced about a war economy which permits such fantastic results. Permits is hardly the word when there is so much design in it backed by the powerful landed interest. Better understood it is a policy of law-made theft, the State giving the beneficiaries letters of marque to plunder the community. How much of the spoil goes to farmers as farmers, or will continue to go to them while such policies are maintained, will depend entirely on the tenure of their farms. If they are owners they will retain or capitalize them, but if they are tenants they will find the landlord demanding, and themselves unable to avoid paying, so much more rent that the spoil is handed over to the superior party and they are no better situated than they were when the racket started.

Not at Any Price

Think of the future, what chance is there for those who, seeing the benefits the State is showering on agriculture, would like to be farmers and have all the training and all the capacity? None, except to pay such a price or such a rent for the opportunity to cultivate "with the aid of the State," that only hard and poorly rewarded toil will be their portion. Or worse, the land speculation that this policy provokes, together with the hopes that governments will prolong and extend and increase the subsidies, will send land prices and rents far beyond what any farmer in his senses would think of paying. Agriculture will then head for collapse. More subsidies may be voted in the attempt to stay it—which is the usual

course—but that will only postpone and aggravate the final disaster. "Recent sales in Yorkshire of agricultural properties," says the *Yorks Evening Post* of 24th March, "show a definite appreciation in the value of land as an investment." But more to the point and almost like a paragraph from *Progress and Poverty* in explaining how land speculation brings production to a stop is the report of Messrs. Surridge and Son of Coggeshall, Essex, that "The extra fertile land around Southend is worth £65 an acre, but that is only nominal for there seems to be none for sale at any price." Statements like that are given with gusto by the real estate agents who have reached the zenith of their ambition: the dearthness of land at its maximum; but, oh folly, not to see that what agriculture needs and wants, if it shall be prosperous, is land readily and cheaply available and the destruction of the monopoly which passes the rent of land into private pockets. And so of all industry. Men and women returning from the state of war to resume their peaceful occupations may be expected not to tolerate lightly a "war economy" which has caused the natural resources of the country to be held to ransom.

What is an "Improving Land Market"?

The effect of the subsidies is shown for example in a report by Messrs Harrington and Hetherington, estate agents of Carlisle, appearing in the *Scottish Farmer* of 3rd January, which a correspondent has sent us. "Large sheep farms carrying a bound stock have previously been a slow market, but a decided improvement can now be reported, particularly in the South of Scotland. As anticipated in our last report, this encouraging feature may be partly due to the increase from 2s. 6d. to 7s. 6d. in the hill sheep subsidy."

The admission is clear, and it is "as anticipated." Interesting and significant is the welcome given to the increased price of land in the jargon that an encouraging feature is a decided improvement in the market. So might the auctioneer have spoken in the slave mart in Liverpool. If land costs more to buy, someone other than the producer of wealth is getting a larger share of the result. There is no escape from that circumstance, for in the last analysis all wealth is distributed into wages of labour and rent for land. Nor is the rent or price or value of land an addition to the total wealth of the community; it is a part of and a subtraction from the total wealth. The higher that part is as a proportion, the less is the part left to the producers of wealth as their proportion. How then can the enhanced price or rent of land be given as a criterion of the greater prosperity of agriculture, or of any industry

or of the country as a whole? But reports of real estate agents indulge in much nonsense of the kind about their so-called market, where the sale is in fact that which no landowner produced or ever could produce plus what is not in his gift although he pockets the value of them—the advantages, facilities and benefits bestowed upon the land by nature and the community. To pick out some special use of land, giving it public support or special privilege is the legislative way of increasing rents and therefore of enabling some people to get more at the expense of the rest of the people. Prosperity for the land monopoly if you like, but prosperity is hardly a word to use where one man's good fortune is the other man's ruin.

An Essay Submitted

The "New Order" was the subject of an essay set for a Workers' Educational Association Class attended by one of our readers, who has sent us the text together with the comments the W.E.A. tutor made upon it. The latter we are able to print with the permission of the tutor although at his request both parties and the class itself must remain anonymous. The student is now a "Tommy," having since left to join the forces. In his essay he wrote, in part:—

"The Atlantic Charter is ostensibly an effort to set out in broad principle the desired state of the world after the war which will provide social security, economic freedom and freedom from fear. We must remove the incongruity of poverty amid plenty which is the basic cause of war. This will not come by merely removing the tariff barriers. The open competition resulting from this will only serve to increase the value of land from which the raw materials are obtained. Tariff barriers must be removed, but at the same time a tax on the value of land must be imposed so that the community, and not the landowner, will benefit by the removal of those barriers." After explaining the principles and the economic effects of land value taxation, with examples given, the essayist maintained that "if this tax is not instituted then reconstruction will be hampered at every turn and those who labour will continue to pay to those who do not labour . . . The toleration and acquiescence in a system of land monopoly has been the curse of all ages, for it renders private enterprise difficult, hazardous and often impossible, while it hampers and holds to ransom public works and government undertakings."

The Student Admonished

The essay did not please the W.E.A. tutor who added reproof to his criticism as follows:—

"Why, do you think, would open competition increase the value of land?"

This I cannot see at all. Surely the value of raw materials is not only dependent on the value of land? For instance, metals are often mined where the value of land is low, even practically nil; and the value of the subsoil rights very often accounts for very little. Are you aware that in most legal systems, the owners of the soil have no property rights to what is underneath the surface? It is a peculiarity of English Common Law that the landowner also owns what is found below it.

"You certainly can tax the value of land. I doubt, however, that it would do more than any other tax; in particular, it would tend to strengthen the 'monopoly' obtaining as to land, and make matters worse from your own point of view.

"I think you are under the influence of H. George. I warn you not to be carried away by single track theories. There is hardly a 'monopoly' in land if we take the world as a whole, nor is there strictly speaking one in this country, though, here, there is a comparatively large acreage being owned by comparatively few owners. If it is a 'monopoly' or something like it, there are certainly many other monopolies, even in the strictest sense of the term: mineral oil is under monopolistic control at least to the same extent as land. So are chocolates, matches, in short an endless variety of goods.

"It is certainly not correct to think that 'land' is the only productive factor responsible for what we may call value. Certainly labour is as important as land.

"As to the land: productivity is greater in industry than on land. It confirms that labour and organization are the more important factors to be considered. All over the world there are too many men working on the land, i.e., land is too accessible. I do not want to say that land should not become the property of the community. It is likely, in my view, that it is advisable to make such change. However, this done would not go very far in creating such conditions as we desire.

"This idea of the land tax is fascinating you much too much: it cuts you off from increasing your knowledge and developing your faculties. Put this matter a little in the background of your mind. At present it suppresses you, and it is as if you had an axe to grind. This is never a very satisfactory position to be in."

Questions for the W.E.A.

If it were not that this is the considered statement of a teacher duly appointed by the Workers' Educational Association it would not be worth printing. We give it with the question mark whether many W.E.A. classes are entrusted to an outlook so narrow. The ignorance of the land question is self-revealed. Obviously the teacher has not read or tried to understand Henry George, the which can be overlooked but not, for the sake of the reputation of the W.E.A., the ignorance that is here combined with prejudice as ignorance so often is. For the rest the statement is so incoherent that comment is difficult, or it is like the task at school with the question set "point out all the mistakes in the foregoing." Poisoning the minds of his students against *Progress*

and *Poverty* with which he is wholly unacquainted, this teacher says in effect that if trade was thrown open to ports that are now closed the value of the land within them would not increase; his lack of scientific training makes him see land only as the surface which is fitted for growing potatoes or other foodstuffs; that minerals and other natural resources are outside any contemplation of the law of rent, if indeed any such law exists in his economics; that over the wide spaces of the earth there is no land-withholding, but on the contrary the land is so cheap that these territories are congested with population; that if vacant valuable land is taxed on its value, the land would become dearer still, flouting every economic authority that a tax on land values cannot be passed on in higher rents and prices; that industry and commerce is carried on up in the air and not on the ground where the land question counts so heavily that sites are sold or rented at pounds per square yard or per square foot; that there can be no monopoly in the production of chocolates, matches and "an endless variety of goods" so long as all are free to produce them (whereas land cannot be produced) and unless there are tariffs or other law-made privileges permitting production or sale only to a favoured few. What qualifications do the W.E.A. ask from the teachers they employ? Is it with their sanction that classes are warned against Henry George to be influenced by whom is to have an axe to grind?

Costly Road-making

A Retired Borough Surveyor, using that pseudonym and enclosing his card, sends us the following letter:—

"I wish to give you some facts and figures about my experience in dealing with road widenings, diversions, by-passes, etc., when I was engineer-in-charge of the reconstruction of an important length of Trunk Road. Two of many similar cases are:—

"*Instance No. 1.* A by-pass five-eighths of a mile long. In my 'innocence' I saw the owner of the land needed, also the tenant, and convinced the former that he would have twice five-eighths of a mile of building frontage worth possibly 30s. a yard frontage, and the latter that he would have easy access to his farm and compensation for the loss of area. The owner agreed with me to accept at the rate of £50 an acre for his land. But what a hornet's nest I stirred up. Superintending valuer, district valuer, 'Monstrous interference!' 'ultra vires!' 'settlement!' 'what does the engineer know about land?' etc., etc. Then a 'conference.' Result: my bargain washed out and a valuation made of £184 per acre for the owner and compensation for the tenant.

"I appealed to the M.P. for the division and I gathered from him that it was the policy of the Treasury to *over-value* all such land so that death duties could be piled up on the compensation basis!

"*Instance No. 2.* A short diversion of 520 lineal yards within the Newport town-planning area. The tenant-owner had eight or ten horses unemployed. I said I would give him eight months' work for his horses and £30 an acre for the land,

pointing out that he would have 1,040 lineal yards of building site on a 60 ft. road which would eventually fetch 30s. to 50s. a yard for 120 ft. deep. He jumped at my offer. But again I was over-ruled by the Land Valuation Department which agreed to pay at the rate of £153 an acre for the land, which he had bought for £25 an acre including buildings, ten years before. To-day, every yard of the *frontage* is bought and built upon; about one-third of it fetched 28s. *per foot*.

"Multiply these instances by 10,000 and you will realize why road improvements are and have been for 30 years so expensive."

In the City of London

Note taken at an Exhibition of London photographs and plans at Charing Cross Station, 15th December, 1939: "Wren's plan for London in the seventeenth century would have solved the city traffic problem, not only in his own time, but even to-day. To-day, to widen the carriage-way of Old Broad Street from 19 ft. to 26 ft. for 30 yards and provide a 9 ft. pavement (side-walk) cost £30,000 or £47 15s. 4d. per square yard. £46 of this was approximately the cost of compensation and only £1 15s. the actual cost of construction."

Collecting the Fares

The *Belfast News Letter*, 3rd March, reported the purchase by the Lisburn Council of approximately seven acres of land at the rear of the cemetery for £10,080, being at the rate of £1,440 per acre. Mr Barbour, chairman, said part of the land would be used for graves, numbering 2,000, the sale of which would more than recoup the Council for the outlay.

Well may the Church pray for the dead when it costs all that to reach Heaven's gates. Peter must look down with grave doubts about the sanity of mankind which thus allows the land monopolist to charge a price for admission to Paradise.

I now expect, as I have anticipated for many years, a war in Europe which may even outlast the century—with occasional lulls—and I suppose the result must be, after a dreary chaotic interval, a discarding of the existing worn-out methods of government, and probably the establishment of society under a wholly new idea. Of course, none but a prophet could be expected to declare what that new idea will be. . . . But all that I feel called on to say now, when I am not writing a political essay, is that the leading feature of any such radical change must be a deep modification of the institution of Property—certainly in regard to land, and probably in regard to much else.

Before any effectual social renovation can take place, men must efface the abuse which has grown up out of the transition from the feudal to the more modern state; the abuse of land being held as absolute property, whereas in feudal times land was in a manner held in trust, inasmuch as every land-holder was charged with the subsistence of all who lived within his bounds.—From HARRIET MARTINEAU'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY. Written in 1855.

The Publishers of *Land & Liberty* acknowledge, with many thanks the copies of back numbers, so useful for the files, which have been returned by sundry readers in response to recent requests.

THE LABOUR PARTY'S PRONOUNCEMENT

THE LATEST restatement by the Labour Party of its policy is contained in a draft report entitled "The Old World and the New Society." It states a number of principles which are likely to command general assent. Particularly it bases itself on President Roosevelt's Four Freedoms (Message to Congress 6th January, 1941), and the Atlantic Charter. Whether the President would endorse the interpretation or the method of attaining his four freedoms is another matter.

The greatest weakness of the report is the excessive dose of rhetoric and metaphor in which it is embodied. It is sometimes extremely difficult to attach any meaning or any precise meaning to the phrases used. Here are some examples: The report says that in our society "there was no organic relation between effort and reward." This presumably means that "effort" was inadequately rewarded as a general rule. Then it continues: "Poverty and riches were the outcome not of ability and character but of the blind forces of the market." What are the blind forces of the market? They sound as if they were some kind of devil which bewitched people. The correct statement should read more like this: "The inequalities in the distribution of wealth resulted from the operation of economic law under the social conditions then existing." This is, of course, much less exciting and it leaves for determination the question what exactly were the social conditions which led to inequality in the distribution of wealth.

The nearest which the report gets to answering this question is to assert that all our troubles are due to living in an "unplanned society." This may be a statement of profound importance, but it certainly requires elucidation. Does it mean at the minimum that we failed to establish certain economic conditions which would have been sufficient to prevent inequality (or at least great inequality) in the distribution of wealth? Or does it mean that we are in a mess because the government did not direct and control every individual economic transaction? Or is there, perhaps, some intermediate stage which is considered desirable?

These questions are more than academic. The report says that "the nation must own and operate the essential instruments of production." What these are is not stated. It adds that "this common ownership does not commit us to a regimented bureaucracy." What is a regimented bureaucracy, and is it any better than a bureaucracy pure and simple? The straightforward question is: who is going to manage "the essential instruments of production" that the nation is to own? Is there any means of doing it except through a civil service, that is to say a bureaucracy?

The report says that "the basis of democracy . . . is planned production for community consumption." Democracy, we imagined, was a method of government under which the mass of the people had certain rights of determining the form and composition of the government of the country. And what is "community consumption"? Consumption is surely an individual act. The whole purpose of

economic life is the consumption or enjoyment by individuals of certain things which they desire. It is in its effect upon the individual that the acid test of any social system is to be found.

Talking of the years of the Great Depression the report says: "All over the world millions of men and women were unemployed, vast areas of production were left to waste, poverty was widespread, while every device that could restrict the potential wealth at our disposal was called into play." As a general statement this is not open to objection. It is a pity, however, that no attempt is made to explain the "organic relation" between idle natural resources and idle men. Not content with this plain statement the authors have to add: "An unplanned economic order went into a frenzy of unreasoning nationalism; everywhere the state-power was mobilized to maintain the interest of those who owned the instruments of production." The first part of this is incapable of logical analysis. What is an "unplanned order"? how does it get into a frenzy? and what is unreasoning nationalism? The latter part is intelligible, but it would have been more accurate to say that "legislation was passed with the intention of preserving the interests of some of those persons who owned the instruments of production." A further analysis would have shown that it was only the more powerful interests which got any benefit out of the various forms of protective and restrictive legislation. Many owners of factories and workshops and other means of production suffered severe loss or bankruptcy. Those who succeeded in gaining special privileges for themselves were generally the owners or part-owners of natural resources. Tin, rubber, coal, copper, steel, are some examples of primary materials the monopoly of which was fostered by governments. The legislation intended to benefit farmers, including growers not only of food but of various raw materials, in the long run went to the advantage of the landlords.

Except for this passage and another where it says that it would not be equitable to ask our people "to go back to a world in which there are mass unemployment and distressed areas, in which the ground-landlord and speculative builder can profiteer from the rebuilding of Britain," there is not a single mention of the land question beyond a reference to safeguarding the rights of natives in the colonies. Although it is admitted that the basis of local taxation is in urgent need of revision, there is not a word about the rating of site values; nor is there any mention of national taxation of land values, or even of a valuation of land which most town planners now admit to be an essential instrument of planning.

These are surely matters of basic importance, but the report in large part at least appears to have been drafted with a Marxian bias, and Marxians (unlike Marx) seldom seem to know that there is such a thing as a land question. In any case Marxian economics (so called) will not bear scientific examination and certainly provide no foundation for any rational action. The strength of the Labour

Movement in this country has been that it has remained free from the dialectical materialism and other vagaries of Marxism which have had so deplorable an effect upon the labour movements of Europe, and we hope it will remain so.

S. I.

SCOTTISH LAND ENQUIRY

RT HON THOMAS JOHNSTONE, Secretary of State for Scotland, has announced the appointment of a Committee "To review the operation of land settlement schemes in Scotland and, in the light of the results achieved, to advise what changes in the system of tenure or of existing methods of land settlement are desirable, with particular reference to the social and economic welfare of smallholders and crofters."

The Secretary of State and his Council of ex-Secretaries on Post-War Problems feel that the time is ripe for a further review. The success or otherwise of land settlement schemes and of various types of holdings, both in the pre-war years and under war conditions, will be of value, not only in guiding settlement policy after the war, but in helping to solve problems as to the economic size of units for various forms of agricultural production, and how such units should be dovetailed into agricultural production generally. There are also problems peculiarly related to the economic and social welfare of the Highlands and Islands; and there is the question of settlement of ex-Servicemen after the war, which must be examined in the light of past experience.

Members of the Committee are: Lord Robertson, a senator of the College of Justice; Dr E. M. Barron, editor and proprietor of the *Inverness Courier*; Major Robert Bruce who was a prominent member of the Hilleary Committee of the Scottish Development Council; Mr J. Boyd Douglas, a well-known dairy farmer and chairman of the Kirkcudbright Agricultural Executive Committee; Mr J. Dunlop, formerly Commissioner for Small Holdings in the Board of Agriculture and is a Governor of the West of Scotland Agricultural College; Dr Gavin B. Henderson, a lecturer in history at the Glasgow University; and Mr Alex M. MacKay of Dornoch, a farmer and vice-Convenor of the Sutherland Agricultural Executive Committee.

Inquiries and offers of evidence should be addressed to Mr J. Nish, Department of Agriculture, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh, who has been appointed secretary to the Committee.

It is territorial monopoly that obliges men unwillingly to see vast tracts of land lying waste or negligently or imperfectly cultivated, while they are subjected to the miseries of want.—WILLIAM GODWIN, *Political Justice*, Book VIII., Chap. III.

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RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT — By Dr D. G. Taylor, M.A.

SPEAKING AT the Annual Meeting of the Welsh League for the Taxation of Land Values, Cardiff, 13th March, Dr Taylor took as his text "World Conflict and Home Policy." He said it would be difficult to find in the whole range of history years so violently contrasted as 1880, just after *Progress and Poverty* was published, and 1942. In mid-Victorian times confidence and buoyancy were at their highest pitch. We had no political problems except Ireland and the extension of the franchise; it was thought we were on the road to the millenium, that it was due in a few years' time. What influence had the Henry George teaching shed? It had been throughout those years after 1880 a great instrument of social and economic education, principally in this country, in the Dominions and the U.S.A., and in a lesser degree through the European world. To thousands *Progress and Poverty* had been a liberal education, and it was in fact that book which had been the textbook of reformers in this country, not *Das Kapital*. It had a message for the Russian and the Indian peasant as well as for the British artisan; it was high-principled, Christian, taught no doctrine of class-hatred, and relied on intelligence and rational propaganda and peaceful political progress.

But the world had not moved as Henry George or anyone of his time had anticipated. The teaching that "association in equality is the law of progress" had to meet not only the challenge of the old-established systems of inequality, but the new challenge of militant totalitarianism; and the question occurred to him whether, if Henry George were alive to-day, we would have a re-statement, especially in his great chapter on the Law of Human Progress.

Our overseas empire was the creation of our ruling aristocracy. We might question the desirability of creating an empire; but, speaking after the deluge, he would say that if you will have an empire you are bound to provide an adequate defence for it. If we failed in that, our failure would be due to our insularity. Plato was a philosopher and a man of peace, but he had an ever-present sense of the danger of aggression across the frontiers. The U.S.A. and Great Britain are among the few great countries in world history that have been able to ignore this point of view.

It may be that we are at the beginning of an age of turbulence unfavourable to anything but a succession of hand-to-mouth expedients. In such a case, where are we as a movement? It is only in a broad and stable peace that the work that is near to our hearts can prosper. We go on in the faith that truth is great and will prevail, and it is not limited to one country or continent. The greatest single step towards land monopoly had been the spoliation of the monasteries by Henry VIII, but, as Hilaire Belloc ruefully admits, this was the basis of English progress in the sense that the aristocracy produced the longest-lasting national institutions; it was to this that we owed stable government, and that after two centuries of this aristocracy the principles of land value taxation could come to the

light of day. Nor would he grudge the aristocrats the credit for permitting such a moderate degree of freedom of thought and speech to grow up as made it possible for the doctrine of equal rights to land to come to birth. Most urgent and necessary was *Education*; for in time of war minds were shaken up and were more open to fresh points of view than in normal times. During a war the claims of the common man are generously admitted, though he usually gets a "raw deal" in the settlement which follows.

CHAPMAN WRIGHT

WITH DEEP regret we have to report the death of W. Chapman Wright. It was a sudden passing for he had been active to the last moment and he was in his office on 13th March when it happened. Chapman Wright, in his 79th year, was one of the veterans of the movement who gave his whole life to it with the utmost devotion and much self-sacrifice. As a young man he had already caught the fervour and wishing to be helpful acted as a canvasser for the English League. His travels brought him to Birmingham where he became the local representative of the Financial Reform Association. It was at the time of the great campaign for the 1909 "People's Budget" that the Midland Land Values League was formed and the choice of the man to conduct it naturally fell upon him. His perseverance, his knowledge, his intellectual attainments and, above all, his patient and modest character, endeared him to all who had the privilege of his intimate acquaintance. To the general literature of the campaigns he helped to organise, he made many contributions in the way of leaflets, folders, and pamphlets. Most notable was his *Hundred Reasons for Taxing Land Values*, and another, his leaflet, *A Tale of Two Cities*, comparing Birmingham (or any British city) with Sydney, which was a great favourite at many municipal elections. Himself he was candidate for the Birmingham Council on four occasions, but although he had good votes he did not succeed save in blazing the path for others to enter the Council who have raised the question over and over again. Out of these municipal campaigns grew the Sydney Rating Association which did a special and very valuable work at the time, so forcing attention upon the Council that the City Treasurer was commissioned to produce a report upon the Rating of Land Values which required to be and was answered by a widely circulated pamphlet published by the United Committee. By open air and indoor meetings, by his membership of the local Parliamentary Debating societies, by organising economic study classes and petitions signed by rate-payers, by the house-to-house distribution of literature, and similar activities, Chapman Wright was never idle but always inspiring and exhorting others to make opinion for the cause he had so deeply at heart. He left on his table a whole list of meetings he was about to address. His death is a serious loss also to the United Committee of which he was a member; he will be missed not only for his kindly companionship but also for the sound

judgment he always brought to the consideration of practical affairs, the more so as he had such a thorough grasp of all that pertained to the philosophy of equal freedom. On behalf of his colleagues not only in the Midlands area but throughout the country, we extend to Mrs Wright and her daughters our sincere sympathy in their bereavement.—A.W.M.

LET'S GET WHAT BELONGS TO US

IF SOMEONE had something of value belonging to you, and the fact that it was really yours could be easily proven, what would you do about it?

From a personal point of view the answer is obvious. From Society's viewpoint, the answer would be the same as a matter of principle; but to the average person, such a truism may sound rather far-fetched; because most of us do not realize that Great Britain has an income of nearly £45,000,000 every month, that it is *not getting*.

The rent of land (or what is commonly known as the "location value" of land) is the result of population and its activities. "Activities" include the services rendered by government (roads, schools, sewage, police and fire protection, etc.); plus the services offered by individuals, in their chosen way of getting a living (manufacturers' stores, garages, theatres, doctors, etc.), the more people, the more of all such services there will be—and *the more rent*.

Consequently, as the people create the rent of land, it plainly belongs to the people, to us, just as what the individual produces (or the money he gets for doing so)—belongs to him.

One of the simplest ways to get "our rent" would be to have government (as trustee for all of us) do the collecting, just as it now collects current taxes.

Whenever we do decide "to get what belongs to us," taxes on labour products (buildings, machinery, food, clothing, luxuries, etc.), could be done away with—as they should be; because—

Taxes on the products of labour (always switched to the consumer) increase prices; increased prices result in lessened consumption; lessened consumption means poor business; poor business causes unemployment; unemployment necessitates more taxes, "broadening the tax base" to finance relief—a vicious circle, if there ever was one.

This "collection of our rent"; this "getting what belongs to all"; this "payment to government for services rendered by government"—call it what you like—should receive more than superficial consideration; because it is imperative (if we are to escape bankruptcy) that we become better acquainted with the effect which taxes on labour products have on business and capital and particularly on all of us—as consumers.

Nearly everybody has some definite theory as to what is wrong with our economic set-up—and a remedy; but, let's get what belongs to us first; after which, each can return to whatever earlier concept for bettering society he may have had.

Adapted from a statement by Hollis J. Joy.

PERVERTED INDIVIDUALISM — By Frank Dupuis

IN THESE days of Big Business and Big Unions, of Planners and Bureaucrats, there is little opportunity for self-reliance either in thought or action. Nevertheless, human nature sometimes re-asserts itself against excess, and the well-written pamphlets of the Individualist Bookshop may possibly foreshadow healthy controversy which even the big newspapers will be obliged to notice.

In one of these pamphlets, *The Socialists' "New Order,"** Professor F. J. C. Hearnshaw brings the historian's insight to bear on some collectivist proposals—popular perhaps for the very reason that they are superficial—and exposes fallacies with a directness refreshing after the hazy tempering of so many contemporary publicists. He might have been more persuasive, however, had he avoided all reference to this clash of meaningless *isms*, and, in the search for truth, started neither on the Right nor the Left, but, in Lamartine's famous phrase, "*Au plafond*." Such an appeal, to be most useful, must surely address itself not to a restricted circle already half-convinced but to the average man, in average conditions of economic struggle, yet with some desire for a future in which human character may have greater opportunity for free development than before the war.

Professor Hearnshaw's picture of the Old Order, in which, apart from some unspecified "inconveniences and anomalies, the individual was at liberty to reap the rewards of ability and diligence," and in which government regulated and supervised industry so that reward was not secured except in return for some "beneficent service rendered," is in keeping with his explanation that Socialism arose in nothing more than "the envy and jealousy of the less successful" during Victorian prosperity; but it does not complete a picture many will recognize. An argument proceeding from the assumption that the Old Order was well-nigh perfect is likely to incite more readers to search for flaws in his reasoning than to accept his conclusions. Their search might not be unfruitful if they were to follow a method the author himself employs, namely: to suspect that the hazy phrase masks confusion of thought.

Discussing the rewards due to industry Professor Hearnshaw states that "land has been assimilated to other forms of property and has been transformed by the capital and labour of countless generations of cultivators. Hence it too has its just claim to the rewards of industry. The final product of industry is due to the raw materials provided by the land, to the capital provided by thrifty financiers, and to the labour provided by the working man. Each plays an indispensable part and each has his just claim to recompense."

Though land in the last sentence becomes masculine it would be interesting to know on what occasion it was known to plough its own bosom, disgorge coal from its own gullet or even sign a receipt for its just recompense! It is difficult to understand why land and capital are declared practically identical and then shown to be

distinct. If Professor Hearnshaw's clarity most unfortunately deserts him on this crucial matter it can at least be said that haziness on this subject is as prevalent on the Left as on the Right, and in claiming that the community should deal in the same way with land as with capital he has the great body of Marxists on his side. Yet that land and rent, and capital and interest, are distinct in practice as in theory is demonstrated, apart from the testimony of standard economists, by every speculator in a bombed or vacant site, by every assessor where any measure of land-value rating is in operation, and, by implication, in thousands of estate agents' advertisements. By overlooking this question one can overlook the distinction between the true capitalist who contributes to production and the landowner who draws a toll upon it, and can avoid considering if the State by granting one man power to levy a toll upon the production of others is regulating competition in the fairest manner and securing that each obtains a reward in proportion to beneficent service. Professor Hearnshaw reminds his readers that during the era of least "protection" and "planning" wages under "cut-throat competition" rose 70 per cent. With equal advantage he might have mentioned that with the progress of industry land values have risen at an incomparably greater rate. By indicating how this community-created value by every right of property might be collected on behalf of the community instead of privileged individuals he might have shown some of his readers the way to a true individualism they hardly dared hope for.

There must be many who have long watched with misgiving the trend, in our own country as well as in others, away from self reliance. It is uncomfortable to recall the warning of Stuart Mill, that "the worth of a State, in the long run, is the worth of the individuals composing it. A State which dwarfs its men will find that with small men no great thing can really be accomplished." But it is not only directly by the State that men can be dwarfed. Where the great mass of citizens are cut off from and made dependent upon others for the raw materials God makes freely available, as well as indispensable, to all men, no sound, healthy individualism can permanently endure. With increasing material progress men will become increasingly dependent. There fallacies will surely grow; to combat these fallacies is of no avail unless it leads up to consideration of the fundamental injustice which makes individualism an impossibility except for the few.

"By the early institutions of Europe, property in land was a public function, created for certain public purposes, and held under condition of their fulfilment; and as such we predict, under modification suitable to modern society, it will come again to be considered."—J. S. MILL (*Essay on Coleridge*).

The value of this paper does not end with YOUR reading it. Your business associate, your neighbour or your fellow worker may not have seen it.

MAN'S RIGHT TO WORK

Out on the roads they have gathered, a hundred thousand men,
To ask for a hold on life as sure as the wolf's hold in his den.

Their need lies close to the quick of life as the earth lies close to the stone;
It is as meat to the slender rib, as marrow to the bone.

They ask but leave to labour, to toil in the endless night,

For a little salt to savour their bread, for houses water-tight.

They ask but the right to labour and to live by the strength of their hands—

They who have bodies like knotted oaks, and patience like sea-sands.

And the right of a man to labour and his right to labour in joy—

Not all your laws can strangle that right, nor the gates of Hell destroy.

For it came with the making of man and was kneaded into his bones,

And it will stand at the last of things on the dust of crumbled thrones.

EDWIN MARKHAM.

One cannot hold another down in the ditch without staying in the ditch with him; in helping the man who is down to rise, the man who is up is freeing himself from a burden that would else drag him down. For the man who is down there is always something to hope for, always something to be gained.—

BOOKER WASHINGTON.

Special Offer

Why the German Republic Fell

Authorized by the Publishers, Messrs. Hogarth Press, we are able to offer this 28 chapter book of essays, reviews, writings and speeches on the problems of war and peace, at the reduced price of

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Besides the first chapter, which gives the general title to the book, the theme throughout is economic freedom and the *equal opportunity of the individual* (as against the coercive State) which can alone secure real democracy and ensure social justice. These principles are expounded and applied to most if not all the topics that have been in the forefront of public discussion in these latter days.

It is rightly described as a "Land and Liberty Book," a book with a mission, making a distinctive and an outstanding contribution to the "New Order" which is the aspiration of every social reformer.

In its 171 pages, these are some of the subjects: What is *Lebensraum*; problems of Federal Union; the Danish example; pacifists and totalitarianism; natural law in social life; democratic ideals and practical policy; "our" struggle; preparing for peace; the great illusion; civilization and liberty; Mr Winston Churchill on the Land Monopoly; the state and the individual, etc., etc.

Why the German Republic Fell. 171 pp. Published by the Hogarth Press. From our offices at the reduced price of 1s. net; by post 1s. 3d.

* *The Socialists' "New Order,"* by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, Emeritus Professor of History, London University. The Individualist Bookshop, 154, Fleet St., E.C.4. Price 6d.

THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE IN NEW YORK

Change in the Directorship

IN A letter from Mr Lancaster M. Greene, member of the Board of Trustees, we are informed that Miss Margaret E. Bateman, former Canadian promotion director of Standard Brands Inc. and former extension secretary of the Henry George School of Social Science of Montreal, is now the director of the Henry George School of Social Science of New York. Miss Bateman made a world survey of Henry George progress for the 1938 Henry George Congress in Toronto. She was especially impressed in her travels to Europe and the Scandinavian countries with the results of the Danish Folk Schools, which have been supplemented by Henry George Schools as a result of the Fifth International Conference in London in 1936.

The new Editor of *The Freeman* is C. O. Steele, four years a teacher at the School in N.Y. and a much sought after member of the Speakers' Bureau for gatherings and for the radio. He is giving his work as editor as a voluntary contribution to the Georgeist cause; professionally he is a member of the editorial board of a statistical service. Mr Greene adds: "While we are losing many of our faculty to the military services, we have secured a fine response to our invitations to classes. We have over 800 students in our spring classes now in session. Three keen business men that I have been asking for years have felt impelled to start class at this time in order to understand the grave situation in which they see the world. This seems a not uncommon reaction."

The School has had much publicity as the result of complaints made against the attitude of the School's journal, *The Freeman*, in its references to the war. Allegation was that it was taking a political line not in conformity with the charter under which the School had to eschew politics, a former teacher of the School, Mr Michael J. Bernstein, having filed complaint to that effect with the State Education Department, the F.B.I. and the Treasury. The *New York Sun* and the *New York World-Telegram* give much space to the case. Meanwhile the School, owner of a former telephone building at 30 E. 29th Street, has been removed from the tax-exempt rolls, an automatic procedure pending an investigation which was then nearly completed. We eagerly await, and in suspense, the outcome of this serious development which Mr Bernstein has brought to a head. The statements on which his charges were based were all made before America entered the war, the trustees maintaining they were ripped from their context and their meaning distorted. The School categorically denies that it "disseminated anti-democratic and pro-appeasement propaganda" and they wish and welcome investigation by any group in the United States. The School is supported by voluntary contributions; its teachers and most of its staff serve without pay; it offers free classes in fundamental economics and social philosophy with the works of Henry George as texts; it espouses no political ideology and sponsors no organizations; it was against taking any political sides, Miss Bateman declared, for according to Henry George

correct thought, not parties or revolutions, was the only way to secure social reform. The one thing they were opposed to was totalitarianism. In her statement, Miss Bateman referred to one of the new and widely circulated publications of the School being the pamphlet "On Human Rights," consisting of extracts of speeches by the Rt Hon Winston Churchill (this includes the famous Edinburgh speech on the Land Monopoly); and she recalled that Josiah Wedgwood, M.P., whose criticism of isolationists during a visit to the U.S.A. led an American first chapter to demand that he be ousted from the United States, had represented the School at the round table discussion of public affairs at the University of Virginia last July. The chairman of the board of trustees is Mrs Anna George de Mille, the daughter of Henry George; other trustees are mostly business men, some retired, and one is Francis Neilson, a former member of the British Parliament.

REAL NATIONALISM

BY A nation Grundtvig understood not only a number of people who happen to live within the same frontiers or under the same ruler, but a real spiritual fellowship between people of the same descent, the same way of thought, and the same purpose in life—an organism embraced and held together by the bond of the mother tongue. "National" meant for Grundtvig not merely "popular" in opposition to "aristocratic," nor merely "democratic" or "national" in a purely political sense. It signified the conscious fellowship of a people united around its historic and spiritual values. This unexplainable but unbreakable fellowship was due to a hidden but active life-force, which Grundtvig calls "the national spirit." The national spirit is not the result of the fellowship but the cause of it. It is this deep hidden life-force which calls forth and stamps itself upon the life of the nation. The flourishing of national life demands a free and fruitful interaction between the different generations and social classes of the nation, not only a historic fellowship between past, present and future, but also a social fellowship which transcends all class differences. All Grundtvig's activities as a clergyman, poet and educator of the people were directed to create this fellowship within the Danish nation.—From *The Folk High School in Denmark and its Extension to Other Countries* by Borup and Manniche. International Observer, 1939-40.

TRUE ALSO OF INDIA

IN DEALING with those families of the British Empire who were not able to stand on their own feet, care should be taken that they should not be the victims of monopolists. The activities of the big monopolists which affected the lives of millions should be controlled. In most of the countries he had served in, he said, the big question was not political but economic.—Sir Selwyn Grier at a conference in London of the Fabian Colonial Bureau, *Manchester Guardian*, 24th March.

SOUTH AFRICA

MR F. A. W. LUCAS, K.C., writing on the work being done by the journal *The Free People*, says: "Every day we get fresh encouragement. The Army Education Chief has taken 50, 70 and 70 copies English and Afrikaans of the last three issues to send to his Information officers 'with a suggestion that they discuss them with the soldiers and encourage the men to subscribe.'" He quotes the letter to this effect from Lt H. J. Rousseau of the Department of Defence who had received specimen copies of the journal from Major E. C. Malherbe. *The Farmer's Weekly*, the most influential paper for farmers, and other periodicals, give the views of *The Free People* much space and prominence. The sale of Henry George's works is growing in volume steadily and surely, and to replenish stocks Mr Lucas sent payment for a further large supply. In the January issue of *The Free People* the main article, by Mr Lucas himself, is entitled "When the war is over, shall we get a better world?" It states so well the general argument of *Progress and Poverty*, how to ensure the equal rights of all to the use of land, and for all the whole produce of their labour, that we can say it is a message those soldiers "fighting for the land" will most appreciate.

The Johannesburg *Star*, 27th January, gave a full column report to Mr Lucas's address at the Johannesburg Rotary Club on post-war reconstruction problems in the course of which he said "we must prevent speculation in land values and break the power of the land monopoly, the mother of all other monopolies . . . if there had been no poverty in Germany there would have been no war, and if there were no poverty here, racialism and the fear which led to repression of the natives would wither away."

ARGENTINA

MR ABELARDO J. COIMIL, who recently translated and caused to be published in Spanish Mr W. R. Lester's *Natural Law in Social Life*, has now translated two other of his pamphlets, namely, *Unemployment and the Land* and *Free Trade and Laissez Faire*. Publishers of *Natural Law in Social Life* are the Bernardino Rivadavia Lodge of Buenos Aires and a Member of Parliament is being interested in the publication of the other two. In a letter to the author, Mr Coimil writes in high terms of his clear and convincing style and the pleasure that the work of translation has given. Mr Coimil also states that the booksellers, Mitchell's, of Buenos Aires, impressed by the book *Why the German Republic Fell*, had decided to order a supply.

One Penny Each. THE ONLY WAY OUT OF UNEMPLOYMENT, by H. G. Chancellor; WHAT IS LAND VALUE TAXATION? by W. R. Lester, M.A.; CITIES HELD TO RANSOM, by M.; THE FUTURE IS TO THE GANGSTER—UNLESS; NOTES FOR SPEAKERS, a pocket folder; and the following Lectures and Addresses by Henry George: JUSTICE THE OBJECT, TAXATION THE MEANS; LAND AND TAXATION; THE LAND FOR THE PEOPLE; THE REAL MEANING OF FREE TRADE; THE STUDY OF POLITICAL ECONOMY; WHY THE LANDOWNER CANNOT SHIFT THE TAX ON LAND VALUES.

Twopence Each. LAND VALUATION AND LAND VALUE TAXATION IN DENMARK. By K. J. Kristensen, Chief of the Danish Land Valuation Department. THE CRIME OF POVERTY, by Henry George; UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE LAND, by W. R. Lester, M.A.; MOSES, by Henry George; THE NEW POLITICAL ECONOMY, by John B. Sharpe; Also (by Henry George):—SCOTLAND AND SCOTSMEN, THOU SHALT NOT STEAL, and THY KINGDOM COME.

THE UNITED COMMITTEE FOR THE TAXATION OF LAND VALUES LTD.,
4 Great Smith Street, London, S.W.1.
W. R. Lester, Hon Treasurer; A. W. Madsen, Secretary; F. C. R. Douglas, Assistant Secretary. (Telephone: Abbey 6665; Telegrams: "Eulav, Parl, London.")

The revenue account, year 1941, of the Committee showed net expenditure as follows, corresponding figure for 1940 being given in brackets (to the nearest pound): Printing and publishing *Land & Liberty* and editorial services, £917 17s. 10d. (£995); meetings and travel expenses, postal campaigns, printing and circulating literature and grants to Leagues, £435 19s. 4d. (£428); office rent, rates, heat, light, etc., £181 4s. 8d. (£234); secretarial and staff salaries, extra clerical assistance and superannuation fund, £1,361 14s. 0d. (£1,227); general correspondence, postages, telephone, stationery, newspapers and official publications, £148 8s. 8d. (£128); miscellaneous, including auditor's fees, £50 2s. 4d. (£72). (Also, in 1940, £225 went to reserve.) Total, £3,095 7s. 4d. (£3,309): made up by revenue account net income, £2,483 15s. 10d. (£2,758), from balances carried over £461 (£288), transfer from capital account £150 11s. 6d. (£263).

These accounts were adopted by the Executive for report to the annual meeting of the Committee being held on 9th April. So also the accounts of the Henry George Foundation which showed cost of books published and bought £270 15s. 6d. (£151); advertising, warehousing and insurance, £267 9s. 7d. (£80). On the other hand the sales of books were £233 9s. 7d. (£281). In 1941 the accounts had to be adjusted not only to the costs of dispersing what remained of the stocks of books, but also to compensation and insurance. Lost were 10,420 books and 48,050 pamphlets, leaving (as at 31st December, 1941) a stock in hand of 20,170 books and 47,660 pamphlets.

Mr Douglas's correspondence on local income tax in *Local Government Service*, a journal with a very wide circulation, brought a number of requests from municipal officials for the memorandum Town Planning and Land Values. The Committee has since sent to each of these enquirers a copy of his book *Land Value Rating*. Another complimentary issue, to several hundred well selected names, has been that of the book *Why the German Republic Fell*.

OUR POLICY

THE OBJECT of Land Value Taxation is to bring about the equitable distribution of wealth by the recovery of communal property—namely, the economic rent of land—for public purposes, and the abolition of all taxation interfering with or penalizing production and exchange.

Land Value Taxation is not taxation on land, but on the value of land. Thus it would not fall on all land, but only on valuable land, and on that not in proportion to the use made of it, but in proportion to its value. It would thus be a tax, not on the use or improvement of land, but on the ownership of land, taking only what would otherwise go to the owner as owner, and not as user of the land.

In assessments under Land Value Taxation all value created by individual use or improvement would be excluded, and the only value taken into consideration would be the value attaching to the bare land by reason of neighbourhood, public improvements, etc. Thus the farmer would have no more taxes to pay than the speculator who held a similar piece of land idle, and the man who on a city site erected a valuable building would be taxed no more than the man who held a similar site vacant.

Land Value Taxation would call upon men to contribute to the public revenues not in proportion to what they produce or accumulate, but in proportion to the value of the natural

opportunities they hold. It would compel them to pay just as much for holding land idle as for putting it to the fullest use.

By taking for public uses that value which attaches to land by reason of the growth and improvement of the community, it would make the holding of land unprofitable to the mere owner, and profitable only to the user. It would thus make it impossible for speculators and monopolists to hold natural opportunities—such as valuable land—unused or only half used, and would throw open to labour the illimitable field of employment which the earth offers to man.

Form of Bequest

I bequeath (free of duty) to the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, Limited, the sum of £.....

ENGLISH LEAGUE: Frederick Verinder, General Secretary, 4 Great Smith Street, Westminster, London, S.W.1. (Telephone: Abbey 6665.)

The Recorder, organ of the Battersea Parliamentary Society, which meets at the Battersea Men's Institute, contains in its March issue the first of a series of articles on "Personalities which appeal to me." It is headed: "No. 1.—Henry George," by W. E. Fox, and contains a brief and interesting account of the man and his writings. The paper also records a contribution by Mr Fox of a paper on "The Nature of Society," read at a meeting on 5th February.

Mr Fox, who is a member of the Society as well as a member of the League Executive, never loses a chance of "spreading the light," either by his voice in private conversations or at public meetings, or by his pen in letters to friends or to the press, or by circulating our publications. The *Daily Herald*, on 2nd April, printed the following letter over his name:—

"Alistair Cooke says that one farmer in the United States has a farm the size of Wales. Wrong land laws have allowed the emigrant's acres to swallow up the lots of 100,000 other emigrants. The Germans are fighting for land, so they say.

Henry George said the emigration to America, in full flood in his day, was the safety valve of Europe, and that when it was shut down a big explosion would occur. He died in 1897."

Clifford Dean, who had nearly reached the age of ninety years, maintained his interest in our cause to the last. His letters and occasional visits to the office will be greatly missed. The secretary tenders his sincere sympathy to his surviving daughter who reports his death on 7th March.

Lord Latham, Leader of the London County Council and one of the Vice-Presidents of the League, met with an accident when riding on 6th April, and is suffering from two broken ribs. We hope that he will make a good and speedy recovery. He was chairman of the L.C.C.'s Finance Committee which sponsored the Council's Bill for the Rating of London's Site Values, and was succeeded in his chairmanship, when he became Leader of the Council, by Mr F. C. R. Douglas, another of the League's vice-presidents.

WELSH LEAGUE: Eustace Davies, Secretary, 27 Park Place, Cardiff. (Telephone: 1563.)

The 30th Annual Meeting of the League was held at the Park Hotel, Cardiff, on Saturday, 21st March, at 3 p.m. The business included the secretarial and the treasurer's report and the election of the officers for the ensuing year, re-elected being: Dr D. G. Taylor, M.A., president; Captain F. Saw, chairman; G. A. Gardner, hon. treasurer; Eustace A. Davies, hon. secretary; and the committee. Tea was served during the afternoon. An instructive address was delivered by our President, Dr Taylor, on "World Conflict and Home Policy" of which a report

has been forwarded. Dr Taylor's audience was critical though appreciative. At the close he said he could not essay to reply to all the points raised, though his view was that Henry George was not to be classed with the millennialists, for he foresaw the possibility of catastrophe. There was an account of the meeting in the *Cardiff and Suburban News* which referred to the secretary's interesting report, made special mention of the book *Land Value Rating*, by F. C. R. Douglas, and spoke of what was being done to place the Henry George Literature with all the bookshops in Cardiff. In the latter work Mr T. C. Morris is acting as canvasser and he has already met with some success. Excellent is the display of the books of various titles made by Messrs W. H. Smith, which was much commented upon at the meeting. *Postscript*.—All the members of the Committee were re-elected with the exception of Mr and Mrs W. Fenton, they having left Cardiff to take up residence in Somerset. The meeting was also briefly reported in the *Western Mail*.

YORKSHIRE AND NORTHERN LEAGUE:

F. Skirrow, 129 Skipton Road, Keighley.

The League, in association with the United Committee, is making arrangements for the holding of a Saturday afternoon Conference toward the end of May or in the beginning of June. We hope to announce full particulars in the next issue of this Journal.

Mr Charles H. Smithson has been taking an active part in the discussions at the Halifax Branch of the League of Nations Union which has been meeting regularly for the consideration of the new order that must follow the war. Among the subjects treated is that of Federal Union on which Mr Smithson has provided and circulated an instructive memorandum bearing particularly upon economic and social well-being and discussing the question: what kind of services should an International Authority render to its member states, and what kind of powers should it possess? Arguing from the basic principle that, irrespective of race or colour, every human being has an equal claim to life and liberty, limited only by the equal claim of every other human being, he insists that this principle applies not only to the relationship between individual citizens of a State but also between the States themselves, and it must be for the International Authority, to which the Sovereign power of the several States would be subordinated, to give effect to it. The Earth and the fulness thereof should be treated as the common heritage of mankind, and should be made equally accessible for every would-be user on payment of the economic rent to the community. The old fight against slavery was by no means ended and economic servitude at home and in the colonial field had still to be abolished through far-reaching economic changes. Further discussing the powers that an International Authority should possess, Mr Smithson listed such functions as foreign affairs, control of armed forces and manufacture of arms, all questions relating to tariffs, subsidies and quotas, international labour conditions, currency and banking, colonies, transport, aviation, public works, and taxation. As for what is called "power to regulate inter-State trade," the simplest and best solution in the interests of all concerned was the establishment of complete free trade. Most important of all was the question of taxation and where the International Authority was to get the revenue to carry out its functions. Here Mr Smithson gives much needed advice to all who are thinking in terms of Federal Union, for no clear and definite pronouncement has as yet been given in responsible quarters on this subject. If the International Authority promotes a free interchange of trade between nations as an essential factor for preserving the peace of the world it follows that revenue-producing tariffs will be eliminated, necessitating the adoption of direct taxation. But

what kind of direct taxation? The memorandum concludes with a powerful plea for taxation based on the value of land—because the value attaching to the free gifts of nature is a value which should be utilized for the benefit of mankind in general and not for the enrichment of individual citizens within a nation or exclusively for any individual nation. He therefore would find the revenue for the International Authority by each nation contributing to its treasury in proportion to the value of its natural resources. Here then is the principle and the specific proposal which certainly deserves the consideration of all advocates of Federal Union.

Meanwhile Mr Smithson is to be congratulated on the valuable education work he has been doing in that Halifax circle.

Mr Wm Thomson had a letter in the *Keighley News* and among other members always active is Mr C. H. Jones of Keighley.

MANCHESTER LEAGUE: Arthur H. Weller, J.P., Secretary, Pytchley, Bean Leach Road, Offerton, Stockport.

The Annual Meeting of the League will be held in Manchester on Saturday afternoon, 25th April. At the time of writing arrangements are still to be completed. Members and friends will receive due notification.

The Secretary was invited to pay a second visit to the Hazel Grove Guild on 10th March when he spoke on "The Price of Peace." All the books taken to the meeting—including *Progress and Poverty* and *Protection or Free Trade*—were sold, and a further supply was afterwards sent to the Guild Secretary.

On 11th March, Mr D. J. J. Owen addressed the members of the University Students' Christian Movement, his subject being "The Earth's Resources."

In response to an invitation to readers of the *Stockport Express* to forward their definitions of "A Living Wage," a letter from the Secretary appeared in the next issue of the paper asserting that the principle of the living wage, accepted by both wage-payers and wage-earners, was that the latter were entitled to no more than a bare livelihood. The alternative was a Just Wage, and the cost of living had no relation to it.

Mrs Sumner continues her work of peaceful penetration in the local W.E.A. classes. At a recent meeting she challenged the teacher, Mrs Kelly, to debate, but the challenge was not accepted.

MIDLAND LAND VALUES LEAGUE: John Bush, President, 20 Cannon Street, Birmingham 2. (Telephone: Mid 0585).

All who are associated with this League mourn the loss of Chapman Wright who has been its leader and inspirer ever since its foundation in 1909. His industry as Secretary in all these years is beyond praise, a work carried on to the very last moment, he dropping unconscious in the office on the 13th March. The Rev Leyton Richards officiated at the funeral and spoke of the many years of devoted service to the cause for truth and justice which Chapman Wright had given. Mr Bush represented the League and as its President he conveys to Mrs Wright and her daughters on behalf of all co-workers, sincere sympathy in their bereavement. He himself feels the blow, for only two days before he had been at the office making arrangements for coming meetings. With Mr Houghton he is keeping the office on for the time being and there will be a meeting of the management committee to decide future activities. With one like our able secretary so difficult to replace, it is nevertheless hoped there will be no cessation of the League's work. There are a number of standing engagements which Chapman Wright had made and Mr Bush hopes to undertake them all.

The postponed meeting of the People's Forum Association of Wolverhampton, addressed by Mr Bush, was held on 24th March in the Central Public Library. The subject was "Land and Agriculture," one of the series

of discussions conducted by Mr B. D. Whiteaker, editor of the *Express and Star*, and organised by Mr Norman Pritchard. There was a useful report in the *Express and Star*, another speaker being Professor G. H. Bates, of the Staffordshire Farm Institute, who dealt with the technical side of agriculture. The meeting was a great success there being about 150 in the audience. Mr Bush had the opportunity of dealing with a number of points raised in the discussion and for 45 minutes by question and answer made the most of his case which summed up in the newspaper report was "we do not want nationalisation of the land but of the value of the land." He emphasised the urgency and the necessity of the rating and taxation of land values for the reconstruction after the war.

PORTSMOUTH LEAGUE: H. R. Lee, Hon Secretary, 13 Lawrence Road, Southsea.

The Secretary has had two letters (which were somewhat cut down) in the *Portsmouth Evening News*, but in these days of paper shortage one is grateful for just enough space to state the main case that the plans of the planners will never fructuate while the seed bed is choked by the present land and taxation system. Controversy was with Mr F. Devenish who, for garaging cars, would burrow cellars beneath or erect four-storey buildings above ground. Your correspondent pointed out that back of Palmerston Road, which has become a shopping centre, there is enough land to park 500 cars. It is land truly "held in speculation," well over an acre, which with but one house upon it has been paying no more than £80 yearly in rates. By contrast the smallest shop in Palmerston Road, 18 ft. front and 80 ft. deep (area 1,440 square feet or about one-thirtieth of an acre) has been paying £110 a year in rates. Mr Devenish himself cited his experience in Southsea where he had to pull down a large house to get a site for building houses and the land worked out at £23 10s. per foot. But that's no reason for cellar or warehouse garages in Portsmouth when, as stated, there is an acre of surface car park available nearby. It's a first-class argument for smashing the monopoly price of land which stands in the way of every kind of enterprise whether public or private.

Our Portsmouth co-worker, Mr James McGuigan, now resident in N. Ireland, on hearing of the death of S. R. Cole, devoted a letter of tribute to his memory, saying "For over 40 years he never grew weary working for the cause. To have known such a man induces courage and hope. Southsea can never be quite the same for me again," an understandable sentiment, for those two, working so earnestly and so effectively in their companionship, gave this League its greatest strength.

EDINBURGH LEAGUE: Walter N. Alexander, Hon Secretary, 63 Baronscourt Terrace, Edinburgh 8. (Telephone: 75306).

The Annual General Meeting of the League was held in the Goolld Hall, on 11th March, the Chairman Mr T. O. Macmillan presiding. After reports were received on the past year's work (Mr Madsen who has now returned to London having acted as hon secretary during the period) and on the accounts of revenue and expenditure, office-bearers for the ensuing year were elected as follows: Hon President, A. W. Madsen; Hon Vice-Presidents: A. D. Haxton, J. D. C. MacDonald and John Peter; Chairman of Committee, T. O. Macmillan; and a Committee consisting of Mrs. Armit, Miss A. Rattray, C. J. Cownie, A. Davis, Alex Glen, and Wm Gray. A cordial welcome was given to the new secretary which he much appreciates. The rest of the evening was spent in a most interesting discussion on Land Value Taxation and Free Trade as the essential first thing. This was the more stimulating because of the opposing arguments

of a lady member of the audience who wanted answers to her doubts and difficulties. In addition to carrying on our postal campaigns, arrangements are being made to hold monthly discussion meetings with the Goolld Hall as our centre.

HIGHLAND LEAGUE: I. Mackenzie, Hon Secretary, Queensgate Arcade, Inverness.

Mr Donald Noble, Solicitor, Inverness, passed away suddenly on the 10th of March. He was a member of the League since 1912 and on the outbreak of war in 1914 joined the Cameron Highlanders and served as an officer in the war, in which he was severely wounded and lost his left arm.

He became a member of the Town Council in 1919 and supported the late Bailie Jas. MacDonald in his motion to change the present system of rating to that of land value rating. He made a study of Land Acts and defended Crofters and smallholders in various courts in the north. He also was a generous yearly contributor to the League.

In two long letters to the *Ross-shire Journal* "J.M." wrote on "Economic Freedom and Peace" and "Henry George and the Science of Hope." The second letter answered a correspondent "Obiter" who had asked for a statement of practical policy and he was advised to read *Progress and Poverty* to see that: "In the world of to-day there is no peace nor can there be unless the economic causes of war are removed, which again are violation of natural law. It is to the student quite clear that with our present social foundation the evils of peace will be as great, or even greater, than the evils of war between nations, because peace without economic justice will eventually bring internecine war, with a dreadful attack of the 'have-nots' upon 'the haves.' War between nations will be of short duration. The internecine that will follow will be long and terrible. Both can be prevented now by removing the causes."

The *Hindhead Herald* reported that Mrs M. M. Jones, a member of the staff of Shottersmill Council School, was the speaker at the lunch of the Haslemere Rotary Club on Thursday, 26th February. Taking for her subject "The Land and Liberty Movement" she advanced arguments in favour of the taxation of land values, and afterwards answered a number of questions. The President (Mr H. E. Dudeney) was in the chair and thanks to the speaker were expressed by the Rev David Ball. Mrs M. M. Jones is the daughter of Mr H. R. Lee of Portsmouth.

Principal speaker at a meeting in the Co-operative Hall, Ipswich, on 15th March, Mr Glenvil Hall, M.P., said war and unemployment were closely related. People wanted shelter, clothing, food and warmth and the only way to get them was by working. All wealth came in the first instance from the soil. The value of land was built up by the community and the community should get the benefit. He commended *Progress and Poverty* and spoke of the influence of that book on social thought. Mr R. R. Stokes followed and further developed the argument in favour of Land Value Taxation.

R. Colnet Wright in a letter to the *News Chronicle* of 31st March: "Is it not time that, as a measure of social reform long overdue and as a means of raising a very large additional revenue, the taxation of land values in urban areas be introduced? This would cheapen land, reduce rents, and be a great step forward towards the solution of the two great problems of housing and unemployment which must be dealt with in the after-the-war period of social reconstruction."

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