

LAND & LIBERTY

MONTHLY JOURNAL FOR LAND VALUE TAXATION AND FREE TRADE

Fiftieth Year—No. 587.

4 Great Smith Street, London, S.W.1.

April, 1943. 2d.

Mr Churchill's Broadcast

The Prime Minister's broadcast speech on 21st March was his first extensive treatment of political questions not immediately connected with the prosecution of the war. Whether and how far it represented the result of consultation with his colleagues in the Cabinet is not entirely clear, but it is not unreasonable to assume that the views expressed were not the Prime Minister's alone. He described the programme which he outlined as a "Four Year Plan." This description accords with a trend of thought popular in some circles. It is, however, not unprecedented for a Government to have a plan, i.e., a legislative programme. Whether Mr Churchill's observations should be called a plan is questionable. Large stretches of extremely important and pressing subjects were barely, if at all, touched upon—for example, the matter so admirably indicated in the Atlantic Charter of "access on equal terms to the trade and raw materials of the world." This is a question which should be dealt with in the peace treaties, and also in connection with any proposals for setting up a new society of nations, or a council of Europe or of Asia, or any of the smaller groupings which the Prime Minister mentioned. One might inquire also how Mr Churchill's references to agriculture can be made to agree with equal access of food producing countries to the purchasers of food in this country. Many other questions arise. We need not pursue them at this moment, for it would perhaps be better not to take the speech too seriously until we see whether there is support for a Coalition Government after the war.

Municipal Housing Sites

Mr Ernest Brown, the Minister of Health, gave a shock on 5th March to the National Housing and Town Planning Council by announcing to them at their meeting on 5th March that preparations were to be made for an after-the-war housing programme which "need not await a pronouncement by the Government on the many important principles raised by the Barlow, Scott and Uthwatt reports." He was informing local authorities that they should proceed at once to choose sites and if the authorities did not possess sites and could not purchase them out of funds available to them he would sanction raising the necessary loans. He hoped they would be able to buy the land by agreement at a price below the 1939 value, he was prepared where necessary to entertain compulsory purchase orders. The shock to the planners is echoed in a leading article in the *Manchester Guardian*, 6th March, which infers from Mr Brown's statement that the Government either does not intend to adopt a radical planning policy or is content to see it thwarted in advance. A more correct inference would be that the Government is seized by the

urgency of the housing problem, that housing cannot wait upon all the delays of town planning legislation and the further procrastination of drawing up the legislatively directed or permitted town and country planning schemes, however ideal on paper they may prove to be. As the Minister rightly said, there are certain to be in each area sites which, whatever the future national or local plan, are bound to be suitable housing sites.

With Drum and Trumpet

Much more serious is the impetus which is given to the stiffening of land prices all over the country setting the ceiling price at not less than the market value of land as it was in 1939; that is to say, at a top monopoly figure. Lord Milner's "brass bands" by which was described the free-handed use of public money to buy land in the Transvaal after the Boer war will be at work again as they were after the 1914-18 war in all that was associated with the subsidized municipal housing schemes, and as in the Australian and New Zealand land settlement schemes which, backed in this way, came to crash. There will be no use of the municipalities resorting to the agents of secrecy or the "private buyer" to negotiate for them. Public notice is given that the municipalities are in the market. That is enough to send up land prices against the genuine private party and the land will be the dearer everywhere and for every or any purpose by the gift of good prospects which the Minister has thus presented to the landowners. Those suitable sites which the municipalities are asked to select and proceed to acquire are all of them either vacant or are being put to a temporary agricultural use. No matter how valuable they may be, they are exempt to-day from local rating. They should be assessed for rates and taxes on their real value and so taxed into use that house building and other development may proceed, and the process should be helped by the remission of rates on all buildings and improvements—a costless housing programme for a community whose Government has proclaimed that the public value of land is public property. Our Government however pledges more thousands and millions of money to be given to the landowners which they cannot come by except through the power of the Government to enforce the payment by tax exactions on trade and industry. It is not only what the landowners get in a value to which they are not entitled that matters. That is nothing compared with the affliction it causes to society as a whole and the certain frustra-

tion that is in store for every sort of scheme to improve the living conditions of the people.

Soaring Prices of Farm Land

Newspapers of 5th March reported the phenomenally high price of £1,700—about £283 an acre—paid at an auction sale at Boston for just under six acres of land in the village of Freiston. The former owner had paid £440 for the same land when he bought it before the 1914-18 war. This Freiston sale exceeds the high price per acre recorded in the same part of Lincolnshire, a highly fertile area, when in December last a 3-acre field made £770 and a 5-acre field £1,050; namely £256 and £210 per acre. Commenting on the Lincolnshire land sale the *Islington Gazette*, 9th March, said: "Only a few years ago every local authority wanting land for housing was met by demands for high prices. On the figures above an indication is given of what to expect after this war. Are people going to be content to fight a war and see thousands killed so that those who live by owning land may reap swollen profits through the sacrifices of dead heroes? The land should belong to the people."

Another example of high land prices, again from Lincolnshire, is that reported in the newspapers of 30th January, a farm of 43 acres at Freiston having fetched £9,200 which with the house averages £214 per acre. Again, on 4th September *The Times*, saying "farms continue to be keenly bid for," reported the Lincolnshire sales of 41 acres at Pinchbeck for £5,550 and 33 acres at Deeping High Bank for £3,550. On 8th September *The Times*, in a reference to East Anglia, said "Farms are so much wanted that would-be buyers are making substantial offers in order to avoid any risk of disappointment through auctions. The refusal of bids of over £10,000 for East Anglian holdings has been speedily followed by acceptable private offers." The same general note was struck in the estate market column of *The Times*, 15th December, saying: "The announcement of any auction of country freeholds seems to be the signal for private treaty, which in many cases forestalls public competition. This lessens the interest of tenants or other would-be buyers of separate lots, and leads to much disappointment."

Rare and Refreshing Fruit

The *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 2nd February, referred to the continuing large-scale purchases of Scottish land, London estate agencies on behalf of various clients constantly looking to Scotland for these transactions. The representative of one well known London agency stated that his firm alone had handled 100,000 acres. The manager of a Leeds firm said that last year he had sold 140,000 acres mostly agricultural land and forests.

"Farmers are able to pay more rent and

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prices are steadily improving." In these few trenchant words the operators in the investment market show what is happening to the subsidies and bounties in aid of agriculture. They are capitalized in higher land prices, laying under greater tribute still the work of man's hands for the enrichment of a purely parasitic interest. Thus new and more powerful forces are set loose to maintain the financial supports (at the expense of the community) that make land dear and to influence increased subsidies and bounties bringing these rare and refreshing fruit. Contentedly they can regard the hint in Mr Churchill's broadcast "Four Years Plan," that for the expansion and improvement of British agriculture "there are likely to be substantial charges which the State must be prepared to shoulder"; and balloon the ceiling of the land market.

England and Scotland for Sale

Among the sales of larger estates recently advertised or reported in the Press are 1,900 acres in Aberdeenshire; 6,000 acres in Dumbartonshire; 1,800 acres in Dumfriesshire; 1,555 acres in Forfarshire; 10,000 acres in Perthshire; 21,950 acres in Sutherland; 1,700 acres in North-East Scotland; 29,000 acres in North-West Scotland; 1,500 acres in South-West Scotland; 9,000 acres in South Scotland; 40,000 acres of the Lochaber lands in the Highlands; 863 acres in Berkshire; 1,800 acres in Devon; 798 acres in Glamorgan; 1,200 acres on the Hampshire coast; 835 acres in Kent; 1,023 acres in Northumberland; 1,760 acres in Shropshire; 1,002 acres in Somerset; 2,200 acres in Staffordshire; 7,400 acres in Suffolk; 1,330 acres in Surrey; 670 acres in Worcestershire; 113 and 2,250 acres in Yorkshire.

Obverse of the Picture

It lies with history to trace back the process by which some were enabled "to join house to house and land to land to the impoverishment of others" which the supplication in the Authorized Prayer Book (1552) of Edward VI's reign so devoutly condemned. After the Tudor spoils there came the century of greater robbery consummated in the General Enclosure Act of 1845. The extent of the wealth, power, opportunity and hold upon the lives and fortunes of others which landed privilege has concentrated in the hands of a few is illustrated in these present-day advertisements of estates for sale. In one case the property comprises ten mixed farms, three small holdings, nine cottages, ten enclosures of woodlands, a quarry and well-secured feu duties (*i.e.*, secured by the buildings which the feuar and not the superior landlord has built); in another, fifteen farms, cottages, limestone quarry, 150 acres plantations, building sites, accommodation land and ground rents (secured by the leaseholders' improvements); in another, eleven farms and small holdings, cottages, residential properties, etc. Some of the estates comprise whole villages. So the real estate catalogue runs, the obverse of which is the picture of a rent-paying community whose capacity to pay rent, or whose capacity to buy themselves free at a price, is for sale. Without that no landlordism could exist.

Thanks for the Propaganda

Who or what gives value to those lands (after all allowance has been made for every building or other man-made improvement on any lot or plot)? The political economists may well go to school again and learn some simple lessons from the land agents' puffs, with more eloquent teaching than in many text books. Among the advantages and attractions offered by the vendors are, for example: large and small areas of choice building land overlooking the sea—over 1½ miles of frontage to Southampton water—rich gravel bearing areas—ideally situated near famous salmon river—700 feet up in the Chilterns—about 400 feet of building frontage with main services available—450 feet above sea level, amidst glorious country enjoying extensive views—world famous sheep farms and moors and many miles of fishing (here obviously the hill sheep subsidy is at bargain)—situated in one of the most charming parts of the country some 500 feet above sea level—sites adjoining Newton Abbot and main road—the main Cardiff to Swansea road bounds the property for nearly 1½ miles—includes high-class residential and light industrial building land in Reigate and Redhill—yachting facilities and appreciation certain from the valuable building land for feuing—valuable enclosures of well-timbered accommodation and building land—providing many valuable accommodation fields and an extensive frontage to the main Leeds-York road—magnificent building sites, with sporting woodlands and four lots of fishing in the Test—farm land within and adjoining the city of Dundee—over and over again "a first class investment" indicating possibilities of re-sale at an increased price. But these natural attractions and facilities, these socially-created advantages, were they ever made by any landowner? If value attaches to them, does not that value belong to the community?

For Freedom and Equal Opportunity

Land speculation flourishes as the ugly accompaniment of the bloody battle which is now on. The building sites, the farm lands and other natural resources of our country will be held to ransom against access to them for our peaceful habitation and our peace-time pursuits. In our beleaguered citadel we see an internal blockade being erected, not by the enemy but by ourselves against ourselves, under laws and institutions for which we alone are responsible. The land monopoly must not rise out of the war stronger and more menacing; it must be disarmed and broken. That must be the first task of any domestic plan, let it be of Four Years or of any duration.

Scottish Rating Enquiry

In moving the second reading of the Hydro-Electric Development (Scotland) Bill on 24th February, Mr Thomas Johnston, Secretary of State for Scotland, referred to the observations of the Committee which had considered this subject that the system of rating pressed unduly upon hydro-electric generation as compared with other methods of generation. He said:

"I propose to set up forthwith a committee of inquiry to examine this and

certain other rating and valuation problems which have for some time been the subject of strong representations to the Government, including the vexed question of the effect on house building in Scotland of fluctuating liabilities in respect of owners' rates. The terms of reference of this inquiry will be:

"To review, with reference to post-war requirements, the law and practice in Scotland in relation to

(1) The valuation and rating of hydro-electric undertakings (with special reference to the recommendations of the Committee on Hydro-Electric Development presided over by Lord Cooper);

(2) The effect of the existing system of rating on the provision of houses, and the question whether it is practicable and desirable to limit the maximum amount payable in respect of owners' rates;

(3) The liability for rates in respect of empty or unused premises;

and to report."

In reply to questions by Mr Stokes on 16th March asking whether the terms of reference would cover the question of the rating of site values and what were the names of the proposed Committee, Mr Johnston referred to the statement quoted above and added: "The purpose of the inquiry is to examine only very limited aspects of the Scots rating system. The membership of the Committee is at present under consideration."

If the question of exempting improvements from rating and levying rates on site values instead is to be excluded from consideration, the inquiry is not likely to be of much value and will only result in making the present system more uneven and patchy than ever.

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CHURCH AND POLITICS. In future if any of the livings of which I am the patron should become vacant, I shall make sure of the political views of applicants before nominating anyone, which I have never done in the past.—Sir Thomas Carew in a letter to the *Daily Telegraph*, 5th March.

The complete text of the article on Features of the Beveridge Plan appearing in the *Retail Chemist*, from which an extract was given in our last month's issue, has been reprinted in leaflet form and on application to our offices copies may be had for distribution. Post free 1d. or 3d. per dozen.

The reform of the rating system so as to preserve for the community some of the gains from development which now go into private pockets... would probably be the most important contribution to efficiency and welfare that could be made.—Prof H. A. Marquand in *South Wales Needs a Plan* (Allen & Unwin).

PLANNING BY GUESSWORK

A SEARCHLIGHT WAS thrown upon the dangers and evils of land speculation when the bombs began to devastate parts of our cities. Buildings were demolished and sites were cleared, but with the disappearance of the buildings the value of the land remained, together with the prospect of future enhancement. Although in some quarters the speculation was belittled or even denied, newspapers of all shades of opinion joined in a chorus of protests against the gamble to derive unearned gains out of the war damage and destruction. We can recall the captions and headlines like "the country wants no bombed-site millionaires" (*Scotsman*), "blitz brigands" (*Star*), "bomb profiteers" (*Daily Mail*), "no blood money" (*Sketch*), "nation's emergency turned to private profit" (*Wolverhampton Express*), "birds of prey" (*Reynolds*), "land leeches" (*Economist*); and authorities like the city architect of Coventry were exclaiming: "Will the landowners again be allowed to smash the ideas of our twentieth century Wrens?" The Press was making capital out of the mood of popular indignation, but the agitation was wholly misdirected in these condemnations of individuals engaged in buying and selling land. The protest should be against the conditions which make possible the holding of land out of use for increased prices. As long as the value or rent of land can be privately appropriated it is false to blame individuals for striving to take advantage of the situation.

The Uthwatt Committee

The hue and cry about the traffic in bombed sites obliged the Government to take notice, and in this atmosphere, in January, 1941, the "Expert Committee on Compensation and Betterment" presided over by Mr Justice Uthwatt was appointed to consider among other things the "possible means of stabilizing the value of land required for development or redevelopment and any extension or modification of powers to enable such land to be acquired on an equitable basis." Thus at the outset the inquiry, where it relates to land values, was restricted to the acquisition of land by public authorities and the price of land when such acquisition takes place, which is an altogether minor part of the land question as a whole. Mr Justice Uthwatt had as colleagues Mr James Barr, Mr C. Gerald Eve and Mr Raymond Evershed, and they were assisted by two officials of the Board of Inland Revenue. They were required also to "make an objective analysis of the subject of compensation and recovery of betterment in respect of public control of the use of land and to advise, as a matter of urgency, what steps should be taken now or before the end of the war to prevent the work of reconstruction thereafter being prejudiced." Their report is a long and highly technical document of 180 pages.

Public Land Purchase

In the matter of "stabilizing the value of land," the Committee recommends that payment of compensation in respect of the public acquisition or public control of land will not exceed sums based on the standard of pre-war values, i.e., values as at 31st

March, 1939. The words I have italicized are important, for the so-called stabilization relates only to public purchases and amounts to a dictate that land can be compulsorily acquired *by the public* at not more than the value the land was deemed to have on the date named. The proposal does not in any way touch the transactions between private individuals, where land speculation is left full scope to flourish. Indeed, any talk of "stabilizing" land values is absurd, for the value of land rises and falls under the influence of factors which no such decree can govern. Moreover, the proposal, for what it is worth, has to face the fact that no valuation of land as at 31st March, 1939, or at any date, exists, which could serve as a criterion. It would be necessary to make a special valuation for every case, not of what the land is worth now, but what it was worth several years ago. It would be a task for valuers and arbitrators with any amount of scope for contest. The Committee are sparing with their suggestions as to how it may be successfully achieved.

The Making of Plans

The chief objective of the Committee, interpreting generously their terms of reference, is wise and well-ordered planning in the use of land. Reconstruction, development, compensation and betterment are all considered in relation thereto. They make a distinction between "developed" and "undeveloped" land, the former being the built-up town areas and, to put it generally, any land which has upon it buildings used for any business, trade or industry other than agriculture; the latter being land which is not built upon or not so used.

The Committee recommend that, within the town areas of "developed land," there should be improved provisions for making town planning schemes operative and extended powers of compulsory land purchase for such purposes as the redevelopment of war-damaged and reconstruction areas, and the planning and replanning of other areas; and that local authorities should have power to purchase land for future use without indicating what the requirement may be, and they should have other general purchase powers. It is apparent that subject to the "March 1939 ceiling," which in any case represents a price inflated by land monopoly the Committee are content to hand over vast sums of public money to the ground landlords of our towns as the price of their permission to proceed with the necessary reconstruction and redevelopment; and in the encouragement they would give to local authorities to purchase land in advance of requirements they discount the municipal land speculation which would be provoked, with social and economic effects as deleterious as any that private land speculation produces. As to the cost of all this land purchase and "to what

extent it should fall on local resources or be borne out of national funds," that question is airily dismissed by the Committee with the remark "it lies outside our terms of reference."

Landlord Compensation

The really startling recommendations of the Committee are those that relate to the undeveloped land, with the scheme for State purchase of all "development rights" and the idea that no private owner shall thereafter be permitted to develop (with buildings) any land except under licence from the State. The object is to secure a really effective and centrally controlled planned development of the whole country, including the reservation of land, where needed, for parks, green belts, beauty spots and the like; to prevent the undesired growth of large cities; to provide sites for new satellite towns; and to decide the location of new industries. After the purchase of the development rights has taken place, the owner is still left in possession with all his rights as owner, save that he is forbidden to develop until he (or other person by agreement with him) obtains the permission of the State. When the land, with only the value of the "owner's interest" now attaching to it, is required either for public purposes or for purposes of development, it has to be purchased by the State if necessary by compulsion and at a price agreed on at arbitration. The licence for development having been granted and the "owner's interest" having been purchased, the land is to be leased to the developer and the State is to collect the rent. A feature claimed for this scheme of things is that the increase in value which *thereafter* attaches to the land will accrue to the State. A point to be clear about is that the proposal involves the expropriation of the owner in two stages, namely, first the purchase of the development rights which are vested in the State, and later the purchase of the freehold (at its remainder value) when the land is used either for development or for public purposes.

Capricious Estimates

The Committee's proposal for effecting the first transaction is that the amount to be paid "should be fixed by the Government after taking expert advice"; that the value of all the individual "development rights" should be ascertained and aggregated; and that the amount that has been fixed by the Government should be divided among the owners in accordance with the "development value" of their various holdings.

How is it possible for any experts, however expert, to name a sum that the Government ought to pay, having nothing whatever to guide them in the way of a valuation? It may be true, as the Committee suggest, that if all undeveloped land having a development value came into the market all at one time the total price would be very much less than if the land was sold piecemeal as it is to-day. But that carries us no farther. It only presents, in this document, a piece of fantastic guesswork and the assumption of such arbitrary conceptions as to call for ridicule. It will be regarded as absurd to proceed with the valuation of every

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individual development right (a ticklish problem in itself, just as that of the remaining "owner's interest" will be) in order to ascertain the total and then to allocate it in proportion to a sum which has been quite arbitrarily fixed beforehand. Neither Parliament nor the other high contracting parties, the landowners, would tie themselves to such a bargain, which by the yet unknown and elusive nature of the values to be transferred cannot take as a precedent what happened in connection with the purchase of the mining royalties. The Committee themselves venture no estimate of what might be a fair sum. They escape from the dilemma by saying "it is outside our province to consider the amount of the fund."

What are "Development Rights"?

Let us look more closely at these so-called "development rights." It is a term that has crept into official parlance as a sort of euphemism for what is popularly known as the potential building value or speculative value of vacant or under-used land, of land which although it has a high market value is assessed for taxation at a nominal figure or is not assessed at all. By speaking of "development rights" a sort of respectability or legality is given not to landlord right but to landlord power operating under what is virtually landlord law; and the law is that which, by the methods of taxation it imposes, protects and endows the private appropriation of the rent or value of land.

We are all familiar with the two values which land appears to have where development is taking place, when builders want to build or municipalities are trying to secure ground for schools, houses, hospitals, parks and other public purposes. We are acquainted with what is rightly called the "iron ring of monopoly around our towns." Of the many hundreds of examples that could be cited here are a few, and they are by no means the most glaring:—

For 13½ acres for a school and play ground at Sheldon, Birmingham had to pay £5,400 for agricultural land that had no assessed value.

For 176½ acres to add to the Green Belt, Buckinghamshire had to pay £24,574, the previous assessed annual value of the land with a farm house being £19.

For 15½ acres for a playing field at Esher, in Surrey, the price was £11,000. The land had been agricultural and had no value.

When part of the Trent Estate came into the market for ordinary building purposes, 74 acres realized £116,000, being equivalent to £1,557 per acre. It was farm land and previously had no assessed value.

In Worthing, 17½ acres on the foreshore of Alinora Estate were bought for £13,527 to turn into a public park. The previous annual assessed value had been £14.

The Local Rating System

It is not necessary to multiply examples. They can be culled from every city and town and village in the country. They are significant of what is going on as a regular feature of land development, in which the landowner holds, as it were, the whip hand. That is not all. I have said that the tax laws protect and endow landlord power. This is particularly true of our local rating system, because while vacant and unde-

veloped land is exempt from any contribution to the cost of local government, however valuable the land may be, the weight of taxation is thrown on the occupation of houses, shops and other business premises.

In the old days we taxed windows and we saw the result in the blocking up of windows to escape the tax. To-day, however, we tax the whole building and every part of it, walls, floors, roofs and windows; and we see to it that if any improvement is made, as when a shopkeeper puts in a new window, the assessment is increased, so that more taxation must be paid. On the one hand we permit the landowner to appropriate the value of land which ought to be public revenue; on the other hand we tax and penalize the builder and the trades and occupations of those who produce wealth and serve the community.

Effects of Bad Taxation

In the circumstances what can be expected in the way of good, healthy, beneficial and harmonious development of the land? Think it out as a simple academic problem. Deliberately we have established conditions in which valuable vacant land escapes taxation, in which owners of empty properties can hold out for high rents without paying rates, in which the burden of taxation is so adjusted upon the occupier that the better his building is the more he pays. Who can deny that the result must inevitably be to produce the sporadic, haphazard and unsightly development about which there is so much complaint and for which a remedy must be found? And inside our towns with the ring of monopoly around them, what can be expected but congestion, much derelict property, prices of land reaching fabulous figures, prohibitive costs for widening streets, and those frontage values that skim the cream of shopkeepers' turnover so that they find themselves often working the best part of the week to pay rent and rates before they are left with a living for themselves and their assistants? The toll which land monopoly exacts is the substantial cause of low wages. From the shopkeepers' point of view, wages are purchasing power, and they and their customers are natural allies in seeking to overthrow the barriers which so hem it in.

In thus referring to the social and economic effects of bad taxation, which favours privilege and represses industry, I am not digressing from the discussion which the Uthwatt Committee has opened. On the contrary. They themselves by the interpretation given by Lord Reith in the House of Lords have stretched their terms of reference so as to include in what may "prejudice" reconstruction anything which may "hamper or delay" it. But in their analysis they have left the operation of the present rating system unexamined, although it is such a potent cause of the conditions they believe can be rectified. If their plans, which aim by administration to secure the better use of land, were to fructify, the future development as much as the present would have to battle against precisely the same handicaps so long as our present tax system, national and local, remains.

Mistakes as to Betterment

With regard to "betterment," the "unearned increment" in land values, the Committee show why the existing legislation has failed in its purpose and they produce a scheme of their own. They recommend an annual levy on all increases in site values to whatever cause the increase may be due. The "annual site value" of all "developed land" would be ascertained, thus automatically excluding agricultural land. This would be done every five years, and where the annual site value has increased beyond what it was on the date of the first valuation, an annual levy of 75 per cent of the increase would thereafter be imposed. There would, of course, be no levy until five years after the first valuation. What the Committee mean by site value in this connection is the annual value of the site in its actual physical state of development, that is, without structural alterations. But vacant land in towns would be valued on quite a different basis. The scheme is most sketchily described, and it would result in many anomalies, because it would operate on nothing resembling the true site value of land. It would not tax land values and it would have no effect in promoting the better use of land.

The True Solution

The solution of this and of most of the problems the Committee has discussed is to levy rates and taxes on the market value of all land, apart from buildings and improvements, whether the land is used or not, making no discrimination whether the value has risen or fallen between the dates of the periodic valuations. Correspondingly, we should reduce and remit the rates and taxes that now fall upon houses, shops and other buildings and improvements. By that means the monopoly price of land will fall and ultimately disappear. By that means every landowner will be induced to make the best use of land, and every good building and desirable improvement will be encouraged. The incidence of such taxation would wash away the precipitous difference between the "potential building value" and the "agricultural value" at the outskirts of towns, and towns would merge into country without all the straggling development we see to-day.

Town-Planning Standstill

To say more in exposition of this reform would require an essay in itself, and I leave it at that, only remarking that it by no means rules out the need for municipal regulations controlling the use of land. But town planning cannot operate unless it has for its basis the taxation and rating of land values. Long ago, when the first Town Planning Act (1909) was being debated, the late Lord Oxford, then Prime Minister Mr H. H. Asquith, said: "I agree with those who think its necessary complement is a complete reconstruction of our valuation and rating system." These wise words have not been heeded. They stand now as a prediction of the failure of the whole series of Town Planning Acts, admitted and emphasized by the Uthwatt Committee in the most illuminating of its pages.

[The foregoing article "Planning by Guess-work," contributed by A. W. Madsen to the *Retail Chemist* is reprinted with permission.]

"FULL EMPLOYMENT"

UNDER THIS title *The Economist* has reprinted in pamphlet form a series of articles and letters which have recently appeared in its columns. Whether we agree with the conclusions arrived at we may readily agree upon the importance of the topic. It is true "that the mass of people in every country rate full employment, and the security it brings, higher than almost any other political object. If liberal democracy is not compatible with full employment, then it is liberal democracy that will go; and plans for the future will have to be laid on the assumption that the principles of Fascism (or conceivably of authoritarian Communism) will win the peace, whoever wins the war."

The first question is whether it is possible to ensure full employment for all those who are willing to work. To this *The Economist* replies that the war has given additional and emphatic proof that it is possible, but "it has always been known that full employment could be had at a price. What has once more been proved in the last three years is that it can always be had at the price of war. But can it be had more cheaply?"

It is, however, a somewhat misleading metaphor to say that full employment has been had at the price of war. In an economic view the price that has been paid is something different. The price that has been is in wages. Some people it is true are earning higher wages than in peacetime but they are paying directly and indirectly much higher taxation and many have been putting large sums into war savings which are paid out again as wages for employment. Many others, and this applies particularly to men in the armed forces, are receiving less wages than in peacetime.

In short, if you can reduce wages directly, or reduce them indirectly by taxation, you can always employ more people. That is what the authoritarian states have done, so far as their policies have created full employment. That is one meaning of the choice between guns and butter.

It is in this sense that Lord Keynes is right when in his *General Theory of Employment* he pictures the merits of pyramid building as a means of giving employment. Moreover, if the pyramids can be built by slaves the problem becomes even simpler as they need be paid nothing except food and quarters.

But why trouble to build pyramids? The Beveridge plan omits that feature entirely. It takes part of the wages of those who are employed to give to those who are unemployed and without requiring the unemployed to do any work unless their unemployment lasts a long time.

This is not the problem of unemployment and its solution as the ordinary man sees it. What he wants is the opportunity to produce something which is wanted and valuable and which will out of its value yield him a wage and not as a subtraction from the wages of someone else.

What is the cause of unemployment? According to *The Economist* virtually every serious minded economist is agreed that "a depression occurs when the community spends less money than is needed

to buy the whole of the output of which it is capable." If this means that in a depression the community does not produce the whole output of which it is capable, and as a consequence spends only the equivalent of what it does produce, then it is certainly true; but it does not give any explanation—merely restatement of the fact to be explained. A few sentences later *The Economist* puts the matter in another way. It says: "But from time to time communities do get into depressions; they do spend less than is required to buy their output." This appears to mean that they spend less than the output actually produced. The reason for this, according to *The Economist*, is that "The community is trying to save in money without saving in real terms; it is trying to enrich itself by amassing claims on itself rather by accumulating physical property of lasting value." Unfortunately no reason is given why the community should act in this irrational fashion. In any case it is not the community which saves or which invests, but individuals. What is it that these individuals do when they "save money without saving in real terms"? Do they put their money in a stocking or bury it in the garden, or do they put it into the banks, building societies, and other investments? Surely the latter. And what do the recipients of these investments do? What queer impulse would induce them to agree to pay interest for the savings they receive and then keep those savings idle instead of productive?

There is one case, and only one case of any significance, and that is in land speculation. In that case an actual physical means of production is held out of use, and production is to that extent curtailed. The reason is that where land is increasing in value it may often pay to hold it idle and sell at a profit, because the holder pays neither rates nor taxes while he keeps the land unused, neither is the appreciation in capital value subject to taxation.

Apart from this important matter, which *The Economist* does not mention, what explanation can be given for "savings being in excess of investment"?

However, let us assume that this is the explanation. It amounts to this that people save, i.e., refrain from spending money on consumption goods in order that their money may be spent on production goods, but somehow the second step does not happen. How are we to correct this? *The Economist* says that there are two ways. The one is to give people more money to spend on consumption goods, and the other is to give them, or the State, more money to spend on production goods. The first alternative would be an attempt to frustrate the object people had in view in saving, and to give people money to spend which they have not earned is a policy likely to have doleful consequences, and one which it is difficult to stop when once started. Hence *The Economist* prefers measures which will lead to an increase of investment, i.e., an increased purchase of capital goods.

The method which has been popular in the past is public works but these usually result in roads, parks, public buildings and other capital assets which are not directly productive, and as *The Economist* says, "a

man who has saved all his life cannot live on the magnificence of the local town hall or on the smooth directness of the nearest by-pass." In fact such a policy tends, as we have already seen to totalitarianism. *The Economist* therefore would prefer to see "that private investment is kept steady at a high level." In other words, in its opinion, "the main endeavour of a Full Employment policy must, therefore, be to maintain a large and steady volume of expenditure on capital goods by persons and institutions other than the Exchequer itself." But how? One method is to reduce the rate of interest (by which is here meant the rate at which money can be borrowed and not the rate of return which it will yield when it has been invested in production goods). The idea is that the greater the difference between the rate at which money can be borrowed and the rate of return which can be obtained from the capital goods for which it is then exchanged, the greater will be the inducement to embark upon new enterprises. As *The Economist* itself observes that it would be "unwise to place too much reliance" on reductions of the rate of interest we need merely say that in any case reduction in the rate of interest must reach a limit unless the State embarks upon the course of printing money without limit with consequences that are well known.

One obstacle to investment is the apprehension of risk, and the trade cycle itself is a great risk. Investment would therefore be encouraged "if the State could firmly establish its ability to prevent cyclical depressions of trade." This, however, does not provide a solution but an example of reasoning in a circle.

It is suggested that much could be done by way of taxation. The allowances made from the income tax liability of industrial companies for depreciation of plant could be increased in bad years "provided the whole amount were spent." No doubt the amount would be spent. We should all welcome a reduction in our tax liability upon consideration of spending the amount remitted. Nothing could be more popular, but would it result in any more employment? If the State needs the money, it will find what it loses in this way in some other way.

We are all in favour of readjusting the incidence of taxation and one very important question is whether taxes are so laid as to encourage or discourage production. But this is not the point with which *The Economist* is concerned, because that would lead to the conclusion that bad taxes should be reduced at all times and not merely during depressions. Moreover the depression must already have arrived before this proposal can begin to operate.

The Economist supposes that at the price level of 1938 the requirement for full employment was that about £1,200 millions, or about one-fifth of the gross national output, should be spent on capital goods. It is not clear, although it seems to be implied, that this state of affairs would have to continue indefinitely. Apparently there is nothing queer to the writer of these articles in the idea that we can only be fully employed and happy if we are engaged in accumulating a considerable mass of additional capital. In other words it is asserted that if we are to be fully employed a large part of our labour must of necessity

to producing things which we consume and the only purpose of is to enable us to produce more at a time in the future. If this is true, it is high time that someone propounded an argument capable of demonstrating so remarkable a proposition. Meanwhile we wonder how it was that people were able to obtain full employment under conditions in which there was little capital and little annual addition to what there was.

The Economist admits that there are dangers in the policy it advocates. One is expansion of bank credit, inflation and monetary instability. It says that "some instability in the value of money may have to be accepted as the price of stability of employment." But what if instability of money should cause instability of employment? Is that not possible?

Another danger is that there would have to be "fairly far-reaching control over international trade and exchange." This would be "necessary to prevent a flight of capital: it would be impossible to regulate interest rates or credit policy by considerations of the balance of payments." *The Economist* adds that "depressions are worse saboteurs of international trade than any tariffs or quotas." Has it occurred to *The Economist* that tariffs and quotas are causes of depressions, and that if they have to be kept in existence in order to carry out this so-called full employment policy, they may very well cause more unemployment than they cure? *The Economist* suggests that the trouble can be avoided by the "working out of devices by which international trade can be kept under control without being restricted." We shall be interested to see the result when someone has worked out the device for reconciling the irreconcilable. Meanwhile we subscribe to Abraham Lincoln's belief that a nation cannot be half slave and half free.

Another danger admitted by *The Economist* is that these policies will lead to "economic ossification" which we may add would also lead to unemployment. In fact the plan is likely to lead either to inflation and still more violent fluctuations of employment, or else to monopoly, restriction of production and chronic unemployment.

After all what we really want is more production provided that there is equal opportunity for all to take part in it and to share in its proceeds. The production that is wanted is of the things which people need, or of things they can exchange for what they need. When *The Economist* can tell us what prevents such production from taking place, it will cease to tell us that the problem can be solved by employing people to make what they do not want.

We are indebted to Mr Harold S. Buitenheim for the October-December issue of the *Planner's Journal*, the quarterly publication of the American Institute of Planners, 1313 East 60th Street, Chicago. It carries the full text of the review in October *Land & Liberty* of the proposals of the Uthwatt Committee, and with acknowledgments. That examination of the Uthwatt proposals is printed together with the examination of the Scott Committee's proposals, on land utilization, in our pamphlet *Land in Post-War Reconstruction*, price 1d. from our offices.

FREE SPEECH IN STIRLING

ON 17TH MARCH Mr John Peter, M.A., Falkirk, addressed the Stirling Free Speech Club on the subject of "The Economic Basis of a Just Society," the large and appreciative audience showing by the subsequent questions and discussion how interested they had been. Mr Peter said that no national society, however just, will have much chance of standing, if it is liable to be attacked by aggressive neighbours. Behind the customs house there always is the military post, and nations are always ready to blame their neighbours for their economic misfortunes. Free trade is therefore a pre-requisite of a peaceful world.

Demands for a "New Order" and talk of "Poverty amidst (potential) Plenty" are evidence that our present society is admittedly unjust. This injustice is explained in many ways; most of these, however, mistake the shadow for the substance. Though a false credit policy, for example, may produce chaos where there is now merely confusion, no credit policy can right fundamental injustice.

The basis of a just society is the recognition by all of the equal rights of others. Since life itself depends upon access to land, private property in land and in land value is a violation of the principle of equal rights. It is patently absurd for individuals to claim ownership of the material universe. The ethic of private property is that a man is entitled to possess what his labour produces directly or by exchange. Land is not a labour-product and its possession enables some to reap where they have not sown while others are compelled to sow without reaping. The most practicable method of recognizing men's equal rights in the bounty of Providence is to make land value—rent—a communal possession.

Mr Peter went on to explain the causes of land values, why they were high here and low there; the effects of taxing land values; the effects of the present system of rating and taxation; that the cost of access to land is a vital difficulty in the housing question, in regional development and in the employment problem itself. The State cannot provide opportunities to work, only the land can. All reformers and planners find themselves up against the land question yet the usual way out is to "create a fund" which means simply to take from some, merely because they have it, and spend in behoof of others. The State has no magic method of creating wealth out of nothing for taxes only transfer wealth, they do not produce it.

The nature of the discussion that followed may be judged by the questions that were put and answered, so that all could agree it was a most instructive evening—questions and contentions such as that land value taxation had been tried and had failed, an erroneous conception of the Lloyd George Budget of 1909; that "land is already taxed in this country"—a venture by a tax-collector; that subsidies are sometimes a good thing and are not necessarily absorbed in land values; that we should tax and buy, which came from an elderly gentleman who claimed that his father was one of the pioneers of the Henry George movement, who had pumped Land Value Taxation into him in

his youth, but now, much wiser than his father, he regarded the Single Tax (which had not been mentioned) as an impracticable idea; the inevitable spectre of "bloody revolution" appeared; the proposal to tax land values was unsound because nothing had yet been done about it. More fruitful ground was occupied when methods of valuation were discussed to show how practical, after all, the proposal was. The most important point of all was that the fundamental propositions in the speech were not challenged by anyone. Books and pamphlets were provided to the members of the Club for sale and for passing on to others. Mr Peter therefore reports a "very successful outing." The meeting was brought about as one of the results of the Press publicity upon which Mr E. J. McManus, Castle Douglas, is engaged, one of the correspondents with whom he had got in touch (Mr Monteith, Stirling) asking for a speaker. The meeting had more than a column report in the *Stirling Observer*, 23rd March. The Free Speech Club is widely representative of varying political views and is attended by many prominent professional and working men and women.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL

IN HIS speech introducing the Annual Estimates 1943-44 of the London County Council at its meeting on 9th March, Mr F. C. R. Douglas, M.P., the Chairman of the Finance Committee, said: "There has been during the course of the war a considerable reduction in rateable values and this may continue for some time after the close of the war and will only tend to recover itself as damaged buildings are repaired and more buildings are erected and come into occupation. Moreover, a reduction in population may mean that rateable values will at the best take a very long time to return even to the pre-war level. If this be so, the burden upon the individual ratepayer will tend to increase. The arguments which influenced the Council to seek a reform of the rating system through the rating of site values thus obtain added emphasis. It would also be of great value in post-war reconstruction if there were a uniform valuation of sites established for rating purposes, which would form a check upon the price asked for land for public purposes. It is not opportune at this moment to pursue the discussion of these problems in greater detail but I think it is well that the people of London should be made aware that they are receiving earnest consideration and that the Council is determined to take all the steps which lie within its power in order to ensure that post-war reconstruction shall proceed as speedily as possible and upon a basis which will be fair and advantageous to the people of London."

MESSAGE FROM DENMARK

We are happy to convey to our readers a message from the friends in the Danish Henry George movement, received by Mr Austin Peake, of Cambridge, through the Red Cross agency. It gives warm greetings, speaks of active fresh interest and says "you are in our thoughts." Mr Peake has sent an answering greeting on behalf of the British movement.

DANISH GENERAL ELECTION

JUST OVER 2,000,000 votes were cast in the Danish Parliamentary election yesterday. Both the number and the percentage of voters—90 per cent—were the highest on record. Of the 148 seats the Social Democrats got 66, a gain of two; the Conservatives 31, a gain of five; the Moderate Liberals 28, a loss of two; the Radical Liberals 13, a loss of one; and the Justice Union two, a loss of two.

Clausen's Nazi party increased its vote from 31,000 to 43,000, in about the same proportion as the increase in the whole body of voters, and held its three seats. The semi-Nazi Peasants' party, however, lost over half its 50,000 votes, and one seat of its present three. The Dansk Samling (Danish Unity), the only undoubtedly patriotic opposition party, which has hitherto been unrepresented, got 43,000 votes and three seats, thus forming an exact numerical counterpoise to the Clausenists.

The Stockholm correspondent of *The Times*, 25th March, said that the Clausenist electioneering campaign, reported to have been financed by Germany, was fiercest in Copenhagen, and the party gained some success there. On the other hand, they lost ground in their traditional stronghold of South Jutland, although the German minority there abstained from voting and it had been expected that individual Germans would swell the Clausenist ranks at the polls.

The result of the election does not affect the composition and policy of the Scavenius Government, but it is valued by Danes as a demonstration of adherence to democratic rule and the integrity of the nation.

WEST INDIAN CONDITIONS

THERE WAS a debate in the House of Commons, 16th March, on Colonial administration in the West Indies. It related largely to the report of the Comptroller, Sir Frank Stockdale, on Development and Welfare in these Colonies. Colonel Stanley who, as Secretary of State for the Colonies, spoke for the Government, was able to survey the whole field without indicating that development or welfare had anything to do with the land question. We report however the remarks of some other speakers who were less negligent in the matter.

Mr CREECH JONES regretted that the House was still without the Report of the Royal Commission on the West Indies, for that Report might have furnished a very useful background to an appreciation of the problems which Sir Frank Stockdale had attempted to tackle. He said it was something of a tragedy that, however the circumstances of the years have changed and however world economic conditions have fluctuated, in the West Indies the problems of poverty, disease and economic instability have remained. One paragraph after another in the Stockdale Report refers to the increasing apprehension in regard to unemployment, particularly when the work on the military bases comes to an end. Yet there emerges from the Report very little constructive idea as to how the problem of unemployment is to be grappled with in any comprehensive

way in the various islands. The fundamental problems of land tenure and settlement and price levels are not discussed at all beyond the statement of the problems. He quoted what the Stockdale Report itself said that "It was obvious that there can be no agricultural advance or a contented peasantry until the relations of landlord and tenant are placed on a satisfactory basis which provides for unexhausted improvements. This reform is one of the most urgent for agriculture in the standards of life in the British West Indies"; and added that while these problems were stated in the Report, as in so many reports on the West Indies, no adequate answer is found anywhere.

Mr DE ROTHSCHILD referred to the need for land settlement schemes, illustrating the case of the Island of St. Kitts where all the land and all the houses belong to 66 estates and the inhabitants are without any independence. In the case of employed agricultural workers there work is for the most part seasonal and it leaves them idle for four months in the year. They need a plot of land of their own on which to produce subsistence crops. A further reference to St. Kitts was made by Dr H. B. MORGAN: "The poverty-stricken people cannot live on the estates but have to go down to the towns and pay high rents."

Dr HADEN GUEST said that the labour of the people in the West Indies should be directed to the production of food for their own consumption from land which is quite fertile enough to produce all that is necessary. The first new wealth they should produce should be new wealth of food which would nourish them properly. In Barbados many of the children do not go to school because for the last three days of the week there is no food. There should be created everywhere a self-sufficient peasant agriculture on which the population would support themselves otherwise the difficulties which have arisen and with regard to the freehold tenure of land in the West Indies will make the situation impossible. In that regard he quoted the reference in the Report to the "disastrous results of the freehold system of land tenure, especially the fragmentation of holdings, indebtedness on the land, and the accumulation of land by mercantile interests at the expense of the agricultural community." He concluded in saying that the marriage of health and agriculture meaning the setting up of peasant agriculture so that the first call of the labour of the people is labour on the land to produce food for their own sustenance will produce a revolution in the conditions of the people in the West Indies.

can fall below zero if one travels far North. Finance has been mentioned as if housing finance could be dissociated from land values. Is it not a palpable fact that when every other kind of security has disappeared the site will remain? Hence ground rents, feu duties, ground annuals, and other rent charges.

9 Woodside Cres., Yours, etc.,
Glasgow, C.3. WILLIAM REID.

Mr Andrew MacLaren, M.P. for the Burslem division of Stoke-on-Trent, has resigned from the Labour Party and wishes to be known as an Independent in future.

PRICE OF LAND FOR HOUSES

The Editor, Land & Liberty:

SIR,—The proportion of land rent included in total house rent is never so low as Sir John A. MacTaggart wishes us to infer. Whether the original owner parts with bare land at £200 per acre or £2,000 the disastrous effects of land speculation are quite apparent from the beginning to those who examine the facts. If the land were offered for nothing, as was done round Canterbury way after the last war, results would be just the same; land value would continue to increase as a proportion whether the value of the stone and lime remained stationary or declined in value.

The figures quoted by Sir John do not show a static or permanent condition. A land price of £10 or £12 per house, far from being the end of the story, is not even the beginning. Truly enough it represents what the owner of rural land gets when his land ripens for housing purposes, but not what the tenant has to pay in the way of ground burdens.

The estimated cost of acquiring and adapting slum clearance sites for a proposed housing scheme in Glasgow, is between £20,000 and £25,000 per acre. Actual costs of schemes, less centrally situated, have been between £5,000 and £10,000 per acre.

Sir John can be shown a bungalow in the outskirts of Glasgow offered at £1,000 during the house shortage which followed the last war. A house agent pointed it out to me. We were standing on land rated at £2 per acre per annum. The building sites round it had acquired a value of £40 per acre per annum. Present rent or rateable value of that house will not be based on anything like £1,000. But what of the land? Are we asked to believe that the ground burdens remain at £40 per acre per annum? They cannot go down; there is every likelihood that they have gone up, but that does not mean that the original owner gets more than the £40 per acre per annum fixed by the contract. In such cases it is possible for a builder to add a ground annual to the fixed feu duty, or alternatively to add the capitalised value of such a ground annual to the price of the house.

The University of Glasgow got £100 per acre for the land mentioned by Sir John. What one would like to know now is what ground burden, if any, is associated with the leases of the houses? Has there been any extension of the housing scheme? If so what increase was paid for the additional land? It would be unusual if it were less than 100 per cent. If such added proportion of land value entered into the annual rental of the later houses, would there be two prices for similar houses in the same market; would the rentals of the second lot fall to the same level as those of the first lot? The general anticipation would be that the first houses would rise in rental to the level of those built later. So much is this anticipated that such a speculative value may have been on the first houses all the time; not what they were worth when erected but what they might be worth at a future date.

All land is dearer than it should be. Land value is a meter for measuring social services. Like the thermometer, land value

(Continued in previous column.)

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

Except for a small supply of the book bound in green rexine (3s. 6d. per copy) the 38,000 copies, in three successive printings, of the 52nd anniversary edition of *Progress and Poverty* are now exhausted. Arrangements are in hand, which however may take a number of weeks to complete, for the production of 5,000 copies from the same text. The books will have a war-time aspect with binding in paper covers instead of cloth and for the saving of paper will have narrower margins, reducing it to the pocket size it had in the first two printings. The price will be 2s. 6d. per copy. It is a Henry George Foundation publication. Among the books that are unfortunately out of print with no present prospect of republication are *Gems from Henry George* and *Why Rents and Rates are High*. To conform with regulations our catalogues can only be sent out on request; application could be accompanied by 1d. stamp.

Elsewhere is mentioned the printing in leaflet form of the article on the Beveridge proposals which appeared in the *Retail Chemist* and of which we gave an extract in our last month's issue. This and the earlier leaflet *The Background of the Beveridge Report* are much in demand by correspondents for distribution purposes. Other leaflets equally in request are *The Immediate Need for Land Value Rating*, by Councillor S. Needoff of Manchester, also the larger *Rate Land Values and Land in Post-War Reconstruction*, the critique of the Scott Report on Land Utilization and of the Uthwatt Report on Compensation and Betterment.

On Saturday, 3rd April, 3 p.m., at the rooms of the Jacob Ehrlich Society, St Peter's Vicarage, Belsize Square, N.W.3, Mr Madsen is to speak on "Social Security and the Land Monopoly."

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

The searching criticism of the Beveridge Report, reprinted from *Land & Liberty*, is proving very useful to members of the League who are taking part in the discussions on this much advertised document. For instance, a member in Surrey asked for two dozen copies of *The Background of the Beveridge Report*, for use "at a Discussion Group which I attend, where they are having two meetings to consider the Report."

Mr Herbert Morrison is disturbed because "there has been a great deal more 'hot air' and enthusiasm about the (Beveridge) plan than there has been understanding of it." There can hardly be any members of the League in this country who cannot do something towards promoting a better understanding of the Report in the circles in which they live and move. They can then range themselves in one of the three categories Mr Morrison named rather quizzically in the same speech: the people who are for the Beveridge report, the people who are against it, and the people who have read it!

Members of the League who have heard of the serious illness of its veteran Treasurer, Mr H. G. Chancellor, will be glad to know that he is making a good recovery.

The General Secretary will be grateful if any member who has a spare copy of any of the following pamphlets, will kindly send it to the office: *The Great Problem of our Great Towns*, *Methods of Land Nationalization*, and *Our Daily Bread*. The last copies of these in stock were destroyed by enemy action.

WELSH LEAGUE: Eustace A. Davies, Hon. Secretary, 27 Park Place, Cardiff. (Telephone: 263). Hon. Organizing Secretary, I. T. Rees, 2 Southey Street, Cardiff.

The Annual Business Meeting of the League will be held in the Park Hotel, Cardiff, on Friday, 9th April, beginning at 5 p.m. It will be followed by a Public Meeting at 7 p.m. with the Lord Mayor of Cardiff in the Chair and addressed by Mr A. W. Madsen introducing a discussion on "Social Security and the Land Question: the Dominant Influence of Rent, Rates and Taxes and the Price of Land in the Post-War Reconstruction."

The Executive of the League has submitted a Memorandum on the Proposals of the Uthwatt Committee to the Welsh Advisory Council for Post-War Reconstruction to the Members of which the Memorandum has been circulated. (The text of this Memorandum is held for publication in next month's issue.—EDITOR, *Land & Liberty*.)

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

Our President, Dr S. Vere Pearson, M.A., addresses a lunch hour meeting on Friday, 2nd April, in the Houldsworth Hall, 90 Deansgate, Manchester. His subject is "Civilization and Tuberculosis, with Side-lights on Beveridgism."

A number of Meetings have been organized under auspices of the League at which Mr A. W. Madsen will speak on the subject of "Social Security and the Land Question": Public Meeting in the Houldsworth Hall, Manchester, on Thursday, 29th April, at 7 p.m.; lunch-hour meeting in the same Hall on Friday, 30th April; a public meeting in the Hall of the Weavers' Institute, Clitheroe, on Sunday, 2nd May; and a public meeting under auspices of the Friends' Social Order Committee which will be held in Stockport either on Friday evening, 30th April, or Saturday afternoon, 1st May.

The meeting in the Houldsworth Hall on Friday evening, 29th April, will be preceded at 6.15 p.m. by the Annual Business Meeting of the League for the consideration of reports, the election of officers, etc.

Addressing a meeting of the Clitheroe Women's Co-operative Guild on the Taxation of Land Values Mrs. Sumner said that if the public realized what unemployment really was, it would be ended in one session of Parliament. We could set an example to the whole world and offer to all States, great or small, victor or vanquished, butter instead of guns. "And what nation would want to kill us for doing that?" asked Mrs. Sumner.

Mr James B. Hain was recently invited to address the members of the Practical Psychology Class in Newcastle-on-Tyne, and chose for his subject, "What is equal natural opportunity to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness?" By his judicious distribution of pamphlets and the loan of books Mr Hain is arousing keen interest in the Georgian solution of the social problem.

An economic class of from 15 to 20 members is being organized by Mr John H. Hamilton in Todmorden, where he now resides. It is good to know that Mr Hamilton's removal from Clitheroe to this hitherto "uncultivated" district is having such good results.

YORKSHIRE AND NORTHERN LEAGUE: F. Skirrow, Secretary, 129 Skipton Road, Keighley.

The well-continued correspondence, almost day by day, in the *Yorkshire Observer* in which Messrs. Booth, Oliver, Froggart and the Secretary have been taking up the points of critics or opponents of Land Value Taxation has aroused much interest, of which letters received at the office direct is a sign. Demands for literature are increasing satisfactorily. Progress is being made in quarters hitherto

difficult to penetrate. It may be that the Beveridge Report with all the publicity it has given to the fact of unemployment and the need for treatment of the problem has stimulated matters. In that connection "Mastiles" had a good letter in the *Keighley News* from which we quote:

"The Report has no concern with, much less challenge of, such a basic injustice as the monopoly of land and the private appropriation of its economic rent, from which concentrations of capital arise and through which labour is deprived of its earnings. Of what avail would be a redistribution of wealth 'among wage-earners themselves' in the face of the private ownership of natural resources which gives to a few an ever-growing proportion of total wealth production at the expense of what remains to be shared somehow by labour and the owners of capital?"

On Sunday, 4th April, Mr Ashley Mitchell, President of the League, will be addressing a meeting of the Keighley Fabian Society.

Mr Charles H. Smithson has contributed an article "Common Wealth and Compensation" to the first number of the new magazine *Youth Calling*, the organ of the Halifax group of the Common Wealth.

LIVERPOOL LEAGUE: Correspondence Secretary, Miss N. McGovern, 74 Osmaston Road, Prenton, Birkenhead.

It is pleasing to record that Two Groups studying the Social Science Course with *Progress and Poverty* as textbook are being run in Liverpool District.

Literature and leaflets are being distributed to secretaries of one or two large Movements in Liverpool who are influenced by our Reform. It is probable that there will shortly be a public meeting with one of our speakers.

F. R. Jones spoke recently to the Fabian Society, Blundellsands. As a result it is hoped that one or two Social Science Classes will be run in Crosby and Bootle Districts.

HENRY GEORGE FELLOWSHIP, 48 Kingsway, Waterloo, Liverpool 22. C. C. Paton, Hon. Secretary, 11 Tudor Road, Liverpool 23. Meets first Sunday each month.

The meeting discussed in a very full manner ways and means to bring Henry George's philosophy to the public. Of the divers methods suggested, the class method stood out at the most efficient and satisfactory. We feel there are many awaiting the opportunity, the difficulty being to make contact with them. It is hoped by attending meetings, the nature of which show that it is a gathering of people interested in a better social order, to make contacts and have classes started once again.

ADDRESSES

International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade: Ashley Mitchell, Hon. Treasurer, Henry George Foundation of Great Britain, Henry George School of Social Science, 4 Great Smith Street, London, S.W.1. Telephone: Abbey 6665.

Henry George Freedom League: Wm. Reid, Secretary, 9 Woodside Crescent, Glasgow, C.3. Telephone: Douglas 5599.

Midland Land Values League: John Bush, President, 20 Cannon Street, Birmingham, 2.

Portsmouth League for the Taxation of Land Values: H. R. Lee, Hon. Secretary, 13 Lawrence Road, Southsea.

Derbyshire Land Values League: George Musson, Hon. Secretary, 29 Denby Lane, Codnor.

Edinburgh Taxation of Land Values League: Hon. Secretary (pro tem.): A. Davis, 8 Kirkhill Terrace, Edinburgh, 9. Telephone: 43588.

Highland League: Isaac Mackenzie, Hon. Secretary, Queensgate Arcade, Inverness.

1s. MY NEIGHBOUR'S LANDMARK. Short studies in Bible land laws. By Fredk. Verinder. New (fourth) Edition.