

LAND & LIBERTY

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Beginning with next month the price of "Land & Liberty" will be raised to 2d. and the annual post paid subscription will be 2s. 6d. (50 cents in U.S.A. and Canada). There will be no increase on existing annual subscriptions till they fall due for renewal.

The Government and the Unemployed.

The inability of the Government to deal with the problem of unemployment has long been evident, indeed, is almost self-confessed. Its endeavours to care for the unemployed are even more lamentable. The operation of the new unemployment assistance regulations has raised a storm of resentment all over the country. Many of the unemployed have been pressed down into deeper poverty and nearer to actual starvation. Demonstrations of protest are being held everywhere. Unlikely as that appeared to shrewd observers some time ago, it is not too much to predict that the Labour Party will win a majority of seats at the next General Election, which cannot be long delayed. The measure of its responsibility in that event will only be equalled by the opportunity that will then be open to it. Let us hope that it will not attempt to palliate the situation with a continuation of the patchwork of quotas, subsidies and restrictions, that it will not be afflicted with the delay and irresolution which has so often ruined democratic parties but will immediately set to work upon the primary task of breaking down land monopoly and opening natural resources for the production of wealth.

The New Housing Bill.

The Housing Bill introduced by the Minister of Health is intended to deal particularly with the evil of overcrowding. It lays down certain standards of overcrowding and it makes it a punishable offence to exceed them. One of the outstanding features of the Bill is provision for "an Exchequer contribution towards the expenses of local authorities in erecting blocks of flats of not less than three stories on expensive sites." The subsidy will be graduated according to the cost of the site. "The basic figure proposed is £6 a year per flat, payable for 40 years, where the cost of the developed site exceeds £1,500 per acre but does not exceed £4,000 per acre, increasing by £1 per flat for each £1,000 per acre increase in site costs up to £6,000, and from that stage by £1 per flat for each £2,000 or part of £2,000 increase."

The Financial Memorandum to the Bill estimates that "for every 10,000 flats on expensive sites the charge on the Exchequer will be approximately £100,000 per annum for 40 years" as against a charge of £50,000 per annum for 20 years for a similar number of houses or flats on cheaper sites. These figures give some indication of the extent of the Government's surrender to the landlord interests. Instead of pursuing a policy which will reduce land values, it is encouraging the land speculator to hold out for the highest possible price.

The Bill also proposes to alter the established basis of compensation to be paid for property in clearance areas. The details of these provisions are somewhat complicated, and it is unnecessary to deal with them here.

It is estimated, however, that in certain cases they may increase the cost of acquisition by as much as 50 per cent.

It is a long time since there has been a Government so friendly to landlords as the present one.

"A Criticism that has not been Met."

In a leading article dealing with the second Report of the Council for Research on Housing Construction *The Times* (14th January) said:—

The third factor in building costs is land. In so far as the proposals put forward by the Council in their first Report imply building high, the cost even of expensive sites would work out as a small proportion of the total cost of providing new accommodation. But the danger of a rise in land values remains and must be combated by every possible means. It would be foolish to assume at this stage that existing or extended powers of compulsory purchase at a valuation settled under the terms of the Acquisition of Land Act will be insufficient to prevent extortionate prices for land; and a danger, which may in practice disappear, should not be made the excuse for enacting arbitrary deductions from the price of land, such as result from the "reduction factor" now operating in slum clearance schemes, or for any revival of objectionable theories about the taxation of land values.

This appeared before the Government's Housing Bill was published. After the Bill appeared *The Times* (26th January) wrote: "The criticism that has not been met is that the Bill may lead to a rise in land values. That may not happen; but it is not altogether satisfactory to feel that, if the attempt to raise land values is made, an important factor in the crucial matter of building costs will be uncertain."

Sir Raymond Unwin's Opinion.

Another eminent authority on housing and town planning who has condemned the Government's Housing Bill is Sir Raymond Unwin. In a letter to the *Manchester Guardian* (30th January), while admitting that in central London and a few other large cities tenements are the best that can be hoped for, he condemns the Bill as a reversal of the settled policy of the country by encouraging the warehousing of people in blocks of flats instead of housing them in single family dwellings. He says: "The subsidy arrangements seem calculated not so much to provide dwellings at lower rents as to enable higher land values to be paid. A large part of the subsidy must be spent in concentrating a high rate of increment on the land of those fortunate owners of the kind of property that is to be cleared, instead of distributing a more moderate increment over a considerably larger area. The method of paying a grant per flat, on the basis of costs per acre, seems to offer considerable inducement to choose high-priced land and to put upon it the maximum number of flats which a complacent Minister of Health may be willing to sanction, and no standard for this crowding is prescribed."

Tariffs and Unemployment.

Protectionists have tried to derive some comfort from the Survey of Industrial Development, 1933, issued by

the Board of Trade according to which "the new factories opened in the years 1932 and 1933 provided employment for 83,250 persons." This does not interest Scotland, because, as is pointed out in the Report of the Distressed Areas, while 14 new factories were opened, 29 were closed in that country. The employment afforded by the new factories was 29,500, but the "contraction of employment through the closing of factories cannot be stated." The Distressed Area reporter on Scotland (Sir Arthur Rose) pertinently dismissed the Protectionist notions in his declaration, paragraph 100 of his report, that:

The long term view is that reduction in tariffs and other hindrances to trade would go far to remedy matters, and possibly that is the only real solution.

Sir Arthur Rose was describing conditions in industrial areas (apart from Glasgow) affecting a total population of 800,000. According to his report, the total of males over 18 years of age registered as unemployed in April, 1934, was made up approximately of 124,000 wholly unemployed claimants to benefit and 42,000 other unemployed, including casual and temporarily stopped claimants, making a total of about 166,000.

What, then, have tariffs done in an industrial area where of all places, according to legend, they should have the most potency for good?

The Reasons for the Failure?

Capt Euan Wallace, who reported on the Durham Distressed Area, also made reference to those Board of Trade figures about the new factories, which he declared had found work for no more than 900 persons in Northumberland, Durham and the North Riding of Yorkshire, and added: "It might have been hoped that the enquiry conducted by the Board of Trade would have furnished conclusive evidence as to the reasons for the failure of this area to attract new industries."

The fact is that tariffs have destroyed trade, ship-building yards are rotting; and that fact, with the way in which the products of industry have been rifled by the toll taken in the name of rent for its natural resources, is quietly suppressed, as the reporter goes on "to identify the causes of the trouble by means of evidence locally obtained." Yet here, with the tariff wall now superimposed on the barriers to occupation erected by landed monopoly and privileges, is an area of which it is written: "The real gravity of the situation may be illustrated by the fact that 63,046 persons have already been out of employment for more than two years, 40,739 for more than three years, 18,540 for more than four years and 9,246 for more than five years."

The Report is a terrible document, but one should consult J. B. Priestley's *English Journey* to get a more real and more vivid picture of the ghastliness of this ruined countryside—only one would wish that Priestley with his declamations of the injustice of it all had put his finger on the cause and pointed the remedy.

The Labour Party Programme.

The revised edition of the Labour Party's policy under the title "For Socialism and Peace" has now been issued. As mentioned in our November issue the section of the programme dealing with taxation was withdrawn at the annual conference of the party held at Stockport in order that it should be redrafted—a large number of local labour parties having sent in amendments drawing attention to the omission of any reference to land value taxation.

The two significant changes made in the revised version are the omission of the sentence: "Ability to pay is the only canon of taxation which is built on

rational assumptions," and the insertion of the following new clause:—

The public ownership of the land is a primary Labour objective, while the proper utilization of the land must be determined in accordance with national planning; subject to these considerations, Labour will provide for the taxation and rating of land values.

This statement is much more in accordance with the declarations which the Labour Party has many times made in former years, and particularly with the considered set of resolutions adopted at the Liverpool Conference in 1925 as the outcome of a report made by an advisory committee of the party which had made a comprehensive report on all the aspects of the subject.

Subsidizing the Purchase of Allotments.

The Commissioner for Distressed Areas, Mr P. M. Stewart, has sent to all local authorities a request that they should provide more allotments. The Commissioner offers financial assistance out of the Special Areas Fund where the cost of acquisition of the land exceeds £160 an acre but does not exceed £250.

The proposal has been criticized on the ground that the financial assistance is not generous enough. The Chairman of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Unemployed Welfare Allotments Committee said: "Where are we to get land within easy travelling distance of our workless at £250 an acre? People are asking up to £1,000 an acre for building land." (*Newcastle Journal*, 16th January.) The Director of Agriculture of the Durham County Council remarked that landowners were sympathetic to the scheme.

All this illustrates the futility of plans which take the present monopoly prices of land for granted. Under existing monopoly conditions the price asked for land in the neighbourhood of Newcastle or any large city is based on the assumption that it is potential building land. In fact not all of it could be used for that purpose, but so long as there is a chance of any plot being bought for a high price, all plots will be held for high prices.

In the long run the offer of subsidies of public money will only aggravate these conditions. What we predicted in December *Land & Liberty* is coming true. The spending of the £2,000,000 in helping the distressed would mean tidy gifts of public money to landowners in land acquisition and in the increased values brought about through public development.

London's Green Belt.

At a conference of representatives of the London County Council, the County and County Borough Councils in Greater London and the London Regional Planning Committee held on 22nd January it was announced that the London County Council was prepared to spend up to £2,000,000 during the next three years for the purpose of preserving a green belt of open spaces round London. The proposal is that the local authorities in Greater London shall acquire the land with the assistance of grants from the London County Council not exceeding in any case 50 per cent of the cost, and graduated according to the importance of the open space to London. The local authority would be responsible for the laying out and maintenance of the open space after acquisition.

The ideal aimed at is one that commands general approval. The most acute criticism of the proposal so far is made in an interview with the *Manchester Guardian* (24th January), by Professor Adshead, the eminent architect and town-planner. He said: "The immediately important thing, once the green belt scheme became practical politics, was for a short Act of Parlia-

ment—it would not be easy to draft—to be pushed through to govern conditions of purchase in the contemplated zone. Then all owners on the far side of the zone should be made to pay a contribution towards the cost of the green belt purchase from which they would benefit. It would advance the development of their land from 14 to 16 years—that is to say, their ground would be immediately marketable at building land prices so many years before it would otherwise have reached that stage."

"The all-important thing," Professor Adshead added, "should be that the green belt should be pushed as close as possible to the present built-up areas, and special rates should be levied, too, on the houses on the inner side who are having the advantage of the great increase of their amenities through the creation of the public open space."

This comment indicates very clearly the economic effects of the project in raising land values on either side of the green belt. It indicates, also, how much more equitably it could be carried out if local authorities raised their revenues by land-value rating. It may also be observed that with the rating of land values in operation public authorities would not be called upon to pay the high prices that necessarily prevail at present when so much land is held out of use for speculative prices.

Milk Marketing Scheme.

An interesting article on the Milk Scheme by Mr C. S. Orwin, Director of the Agricultural Economics Research Institute of the University of Oxford, appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* of 16th January. Mr Orwin points out that with the development of transport and of means for keeping milk fresh, the producers of milk near the big consuming centres had begun to feel severe competition from milk from other districts. The result would have been a severe reduction in the prices obtained by farmers in the more expensive areas. The object of the marketing scheme, as Mr Orwin envisages it, was to let these privileged farmers down lightly by pooling the receipts from milk. "In this way the competition from the areas of cheap production was to be bought off, while at the same time the reduction of the old monopoly price would compel producers in the expensive areas to reconsider their methods or to find some other application for their land and capital."

Exploiting the Consumer.

We thus have an authoritative statement that the object of the scheme was partly to keep up land values and partly to keep in use obsolete capital. Like all such attempts to pursue uneconomic ends the scheme has come up against difficulties of its own creation. The higher price obtained by the cheaper producers encouraged them to produce more freely. The Milk Marketing Board could not dispose of all the milk offered to it, because the prices fixed for the consumer were too high. Last summer the Government came to the rescue by guaranteeing that the price of milk sold for manufacturing purposes would be made up by the Exchequer to a certain figure, and by subsidizing the supply of milk to schoolchildren.

It is little wonder that Mr Orwin says that "in the effort to maintain the average price of all milk at the highest possible figure, consumers of new milk are being exploited to the full." He adds: "On the one hand the public, as consumers, are charged the highest prices that they will stand for family milk; on the other hand, as taxpayers, they are mulcted to subsidize the production of milk at that price."

He comes to the conclusion that the wholesale price of milk has got to come down. The price of milk must be cheapened to the consumer, for there is no other way of increasing the demand for milk. So that in the end we must come back to the point at which we should have started.

Major C. H. Douglas on Henry George.

We are indebted to *The Standard* (Sydney, N.S.W., 15th November) for drawing our attention to a statement by Major Douglas in *The New English Weekly* in which he states the attitude of the Social Credit movement to land value taxation in this way:—

Henry George proposes to deal with a rise in *price values* of a specific article, i.e., land, by taking from the public in the person of one of its members—the owner of the land—a certain amount of *money*. He does not reduce the price that a second member of the public, i.e., the buyer of land, has to pay for the land, he merely intercepts a portion of the payment between the seller and buyer for "State" purposes.

Now, as an inspection of the back of an income tax form will show, more than half the money collected for State purposes goes to the owners of State securities, i.e., national debts, and we know quite well that the National Debts are preponderantly held by banks and insurance companies. We also know quite well that sums paid to banks and insurance companies for the most part result in an actual destruction of money.

The plain simple meaning of the Henry George proposals, therefore, is that they are one of the most drastic deflationary methods which have ever been put forward. For this reason they do, in fact, as I am in a position to testify, receive the covert support of banks everywhere, and it is not an accident that the Single Tax organizations have almost everywhere been distinguished for their attacks upon Social Credit or other monetary reform proposals.

An adequate exposure of the multitudinous fallacies and mistakes of fact contained in this statement would take more space than the subject, perhaps, deserves. The first point is that Major Douglas evidently does not understand what Henry George proposed, nor the economic basis of the proposal. George did not propose to deal with a "rise in price values" of land. He did not propose an increment tax. He did not propose to "intercept a portion of the payment between the seller and buyer" of land. His proposal would have been equally valid if land were never bought or sold, and if land never increased in price. What he did propose was to take economic rent in taxation.

Undisputed Propositions.

Secondly, it is not true that Henry George's proposal would not reduce the price of land. It would do so in two ways. On the one hand, as the land value tax would fall upon unused land as well as upon other land, it would force unused land into the market and the price would drop. On the other hand, the price of land depends upon the net revenue which the owner can obtain after paying the tax. As the net revenue fell, the price would fall correspondingly. The price of land is the capitalization of what is left to the owner after paying the tax. As the tax rises the price must fall. If there is one proposition in the whole range of economic science which is undisputed, it is this.

Curiously enough Major Douglas himself asserts that this is "one of the most drastic deflationary methods which has ever been put forward." It is deflationary of

the price of land, and that is no objection but rather a merit, as Major Douglas's misguided complaint that it does not reduce the price of land admits.

Land Values and the Banks.

As for the statement that Henry George's proposals "receive the support of the banks everywhere," this is a mere phantasy. One might well wish that the bankers were broad-minded enough to support land-value taxation, but as they and their large customers are deeply interested in land owning, this is still a consummation devoutly to be wished.

One would not refer to such nonsense if it were not for the insinuation that the attitude of the Henry George movement towards currency proposals is influenced by support received from bankers. It may therefore be as well to invite Major Douglas to withdraw this slur, or else produce the evidence which he hints that he holds.

Questions for Social Creditors.

As a pendent to this incursion of Major Douglas into the realms of economic discussion, it may be interesting to record that when he was in Sydney he refused to answer questions. The Henry George League of New South Wales thereupon submitted a series of ten questions in writing of which we will quote those bearing most directly on the land question:—

Why do you deny that rent for the use of land is purchasing power? It cannot be classed as salaries, wages or dividends, and yet it is a continuous payment by industry?

Assuming that your plan is a valuable invention, how do you propose to prevent the landowners absorbing the benefits in increased land values?

As land is the only source of wealth, how do you propose to enable landless workers or groups of workers to get land?

Has the State any credit apart from its power to impose taxation and so take from its citizens part of their credit, thus lessening their purchasing power?

Has the ordinary individual credit or money apart from the value of his production or the value of the service which he performs, except of course what he may receive by way of gifts or charity?

What are the factors of production from your point of view and how would the value of production be apportioned to them?

Suppose you and I were leading citizens of a country; you were plentifully supplied with Douglas Credit or money and that I owned the land, what would you do if I put the law in motion and gave you notice to quit?

The following reply under date 6th February, 1934, was received from Wellington, New Zealand:—

Dear Sir,—In reference to your letter of the 25th January, you will realize that on a hurried tour such as I am making, I cannot deal with long technical letters such as that with which you have been good enough to favour me.

If you will address your inquiries to the Social Credit Secretariat, 6-8 Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, you will obtain a full reply.

Yours faithfully,

C. H. DOUGLAS.

The questions were forwarded as suggested on 13th February, 1934, but no reply has come to hand.

FORM OF BEQUEST

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

WAVERTREE BY-ELECTION

Considerable prominence has been given by both the Labour and the Liberal candidates in the Wavertree (Liverpool) By-Election to the taxation of land values. We quote the following reports of speeches from the *Liverpool Post and Mercury*:—

"The importance to a division like Wavertree of a policy which includes the taxation of land values was urged by Councillor J. J. Cleary, the Labour candidate, at a meeting on 15th January.

"He quoted the experience of the Liverpool City Council during the 25 years up to 1929, when they paid £880,000 for land on which to build houses, the rateable value of which was £12,000. That illustration would give the electorate some idea of the tremendous sums of money which were spent to buy land on which to build houses, and which resulted in at least 2s. per week being added to the rental of the houses built.

"In Wavertree there were certain noble lords interested in large tracts of land, and he (Mr Cleary) could not understand why they should be able to sleep, like Rip Van Winkle, and come back in forty years to find that the value of their land had increased from three to six times its original purchase price. 'Surely some of the value of communal effort should be reaped by the community at large,' he added.

"The rates of Liverpool would not be more than 4s. in the pound if the Liberal policy of the taxation of land values had been carried out in the past, Mr Artro Morris told his meeting at Childwall on 22nd January.

"The rates are now 15s. or 16s. in the pound, he said, but if the City had had the increment value duty thirty or forty years ago it was fair to assume that the rates to-day could not be more than 4s. Hundreds of thousands of pounds of the value of the land had gone into the pockets of the ground landlords. The rate-payers were duped and oppressed by the present system.

"The ground landlords, while the City was expanding, held up the land, paying no rates, suppressing the advance of industry until the time came when they could demand a blackmail price. Though Mr. Lloyd George only asked them to pay a halfpenny in the pound of those profits made by the community, they opposed it. If idle land were taxed it would be forced into the market and put into use. The land value tax was vital to trade and especially to housing reform."

J. H. WHITLEY

As we go to press we regret to announce the passing of the Right Hon. J. H. Whitley, ex-Speaker of the House of Commons and Chairman of the British Broadcasting Corporation, who died in London on 3rd February. He entered public life as a member of the Halifax Town Council and as a Liberal represented Halifax in Parliament from 1900 to 1928, being elected Speaker of the House in 1921. He will ever be remembered for the prominent part he took in the advocacy of Land Value Taxation in the municipal campaign and in all the public agitation that led up to the Budget of 1909. He was one of the first members of the United Committee and was President of the English League from 1904 to 1907, continuing to be a vice-President till his election as Speaker. Sir John Reith, of the B.B.C., in a broadcast, paid a worthy tribute to his memory, and the newspapers have long biographical sketches. We hope to refer further in our next issue to the services he rendered in his time to the Henry George Movement.

NOTES AND NEWS

You can rent a mountain in the Lake District for a year or longer—if you are a sheep farmer. Quite a few mountains centred in the middle of large sheep farms will change hands this Candlemas—2nd February. Flockmasters who pay for large holdings, extending to 1,500 acres, pay not by the acre but by the value of sheep on the land. The same number of sheep as are taken over must be left on the land when a further “change-over” takes place.—*Sunday Chronicle*, 13th January.

* * *

According to the *Daily Mail*, 11th January:—

In London many millions of pounds are being paid out for ground rents, and fortunes exchange hands for tiny strips of land, although the investment returns are often as low as 2 per cent. or 3 per cent.

In many suburbs where building is being carried on at top speed land has increased to 10 times its value six years ago.

In outlying districts, such as Morden and Edgware, there are many cases where land has been sold for £3,000 or £4,000 an acre which six or seven years ago would have fetched not more than £300.

* * *

DID “L. G.” FORGET?

We suppose most people were surprised to find no suggestion for a land tax in the preliminary outline of Mr Lloyd George's new plan. Now, we are told, he is being bombarded with letters urging him to remedy this strange omission.

But it is strange he should have to be reminded of his great pre-war aim.—*John Bull*, 19th January.

* * *

“The Challenge to Youth of Liberalism and Liberty” is the title of a new pamphlet by Mr James Scott, S.S.C., ex-M.P. It deals with a variety of political and economic topics, including the taxation of land values.

* * *

Every day I see in my daily work obvious reasons for our poor condition. Why cannot we pay our debts to America? Because she will not take our goods in payment. Why was Australia unable to send her barley to Belgium? Because she refused to accept Belgian glass. Why could we not sell our coal to Italy, and why were thousands of our miners idle in consequence? Because we would not buy Italian marble. Why cannot Manchester sell her goods to South America? Because exchange restrictions in that country prevent the despatch of the purchase price. If our well-being depends on trade and if trade is the exchange of goods between man and man and between nation and nation, these obstacles must be removed if trade is again to flow freely.—Mr J. W. BEAUMONT PEASE, Chairman of Lloyds Bank, 25th January.

* * *

Birmingham City Council, on 8th January, discussed the town planning of the newly added area of Sheldon. During the discussion, Councillor W. S. Lewis said: One of the Committees of the Council had been offered land at Sheldon at £75 per acre. The offer had been refused. Then, after the city had spent on the area £180,000 for sewage schemes, and another sum, £75,000, the Council had suddenly awakened, and the city was now paying £500 per acre for the land that it could easily have secured at £75 per acre.—(*Coventry Standard*, 11th January.)

* * *

Plymstock (Devon) Parish Council, at its meeting on 7th January, discussed the purchase for building purposes of land rented from the Devon County Council for allotments. One member stated that the land was purchased for £81 an acre and was now being sold for £1,200 an acre.

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At the meeting addressed by Mr J. S. Travis in Southampton, 11th January, a Town Councillor present said that the site of Thorne's Almshouses was bought 100 years ago by Mr Thorne for £100. About two years ago the Southampton Corporation bought it from the Trustees of Thornton's Charities for £90,000, and it is now leased to a Picture House Company at a ground rent of £4,500.

* * *

TO SOME PRICE FIGHTERS

Landlords are asked to give generous co-operation to the L.C.C.'s plan for preserving a green belt of open spaces round London.

Dear landlords, if you've ever felt

An urge to help, please, show it;

We ask for but a little belt,

So do not hit below it!

GNAT (in the *Star*, 24th January).

* * *

LIVERPOOL GROUND RENTS

The Press of 22nd November reported that freehold ground rents formerly belonging to the Earl of Derby had been sold by Covent Garden Properties Co., Ltd., at Liverpool on 21st November for £280,000, which the auctioneer, Mr Goddard, declared was a disappointing price. The purchaser was a Liverpool solicitor acting for a client, whose identity was not revealed. The ground rents amount to £8,384 per annum and 86 peppercorns secured upon properties in Liverpool and Bootle. It is stated that the income will rise to £46,000 in 30 years.

* * *

In answer to a question in the House of Commons (17th December), the Minister of Agriculture stated that the total amount collected up to 13th December by way of quota payments from millers and flour importers was £14,121,635.

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MR LLOYD GEORGE'S NEW DEAL

Whatever may be added in subsequent speeches, the ideas upon which Mr. Lloyd George's New Deal campaign is based are quite clearly revealed in his speech at Bangor on 17th January. He sets out from ground that is unassailable. We can all agree that it is shameful that millions of hardworking men and their wives and families should be living below the poverty line. We all deplore unemployment and low wages.

The real question is: Why are people so poor and how is that to be remedied? Mr. Lloyd George's answer is: "It is because of over-abundance. That is the supreme paradox of our generation. We are producing too many and too much of the commodities that these poor people need, therefore they must go without. The prolonged flood of good things has created a drought."

That is the argument of the protectionist. It is the argument of Mr. Walter Elliot in support of quotas and restrictions. Mr. Lloyd George, it is true, does not advocate tariffs, quotas or trade restrictions, but if his premises are wrong it is not surprising that his conclusions are equally wrong.

We deny entirely that the world is suffering from over-production. On the contrary, production has fallen during the past few years in all countries, and most of all in those countries in which the depression has been greatest. Such slight recovery as has taken place is associated with an increase in production and not a diminution.

To assert this is not to condone the gross inequalities in the distribution of such wealth as is being produced. On the contrary, these two things are closely connected. But it is noteworthy that Mr. Lloyd George says nothing about the mal-distribution of wealth. There is nothing in his speech of the old fiery indignation when he asked: "Who is responsible for the scheme of things whereby one man is engaged through life in grinding labour, to win a bare and precarious subsistence for himself . . . and another man who does not toil receives every hour of the day, every hour of the night whilst he slumbers, more than his poor neighbour receives in a whole year of toil?"

In 1909 Mr. Lloyd George had an answer to that question, but there is no answer to-day.

So much for the diagnosis; what of the remedies? One is that a determined effort should be made to get rid of the obstacles to world trade, commerce and shipping that have been created by tariffs, quotas and currency restrictions. We can heartily sympathise in this, though we may question whether using tariffs "ruthlessly and to the full" is likely to achieve the purpose. This is the kind of argument that the protectionist has often used to the free trader. Experience, however, has shown that tariffs are not a means of

reducing tariffs. In any event those who believe in tariffs do not really advocate them for this reason, but because they consider them to be beneficial in themselves. If no other country in the world had tariffs, the confirmed protectionist would demand them for this country, and demand them all the more strongly because of the cheapness of foreign goods produced under free trade conditions.

The main problem to be solved is unemployment. It is easy to say that the remedy is "find work for the workless instead of doles." That is a truism to which everyone will assent. The real question is how is it to be done. Mr. Lloyd George's answer is twofold—public works and agriculture.

Past experience of public works schemes is not encouraging. It may be freely admitted that there are many projects which are economically advantageous that can only be undertaken at the public expense. The provision of roads, parks and open spaces, and similar services will at once come to mind as matters which in the nature of the case cannot be undertaken by private enterprise. Nevertheless they require to be justified on their merits. Once they are justified merely or primarily because they provide work for the unemployed we run the risk of coming to the stage when men are engaged in digging holes and filling them up again. In other words, public works schemes can only be justified when they are a better means of employing the nation's resources than any other purpose to which those resources might be devoted. Public works schemes are not a means of creating something out of nothing. They have a cost, and that cost has to be defrayed by the taxpayers.

Mr. Lloyd George attempts to evade the question of cost by suggesting that his schemes should be financed by means of loans. He talks of the thousands of millions borrowed for the prosecution of the War, and contrasts that with borrowing hundreds of millions for public works. Those who have studied the finance of the War and its repercussions in after-war years must know that one of the most disastrous features of the War was that it was financed by borrowing. The creation of a vast national debt has distorted the distribution of wealth and helped to worsen the conditions of the workers. The major part of the war loans was subscribed by the small minority of wealthy people. The ultimate cost of interest and sinking fund is being spread over the whole mass of the people by vicious and burdensome taxation.

Further, it is easy to talk of idle money in the banks which is to be borrowed for public works. Men are not set to work by money. They are set to work by tools, raw materials and other tangible articles. These instruments of production have either to be diverted from other uses or else new ones have to be produced. The essence of borrowing is diverting capital from one use to another. In itself it does not give more employment. The person who is willing to pay the highest price gets the capital available and therefore normally the capital is devoted to its most productive purpose. If the State enters as a competitor it may actually divert the capital to a less productive purpose.

In any case capital and labour cannot be employed without land. Experience has shown how large a part of the cost of public works schemes goes in the price of land, and how in many cases they are completely frustrated on that account. Mr. Lloyd George has nothing to say about that. He has nothing to say about the land question generally. The only phase of it he mentions is agriculture. He suggests that the number of people engaged in cultivating the soil should be doubled, but the only indication of how it should

be done is that there should be a good marketing system. Not a word about the price of land. Nothing about reducing rent.

It is indeed true that we must "bring into fruitful activity our unutilized labour, our idle capital, and our undeveloped resources and opportunities." What prevents that from being done? The rate of interest has not been so low for a generation. It can hardly be suggested that wages are too high. What is too high is land value. It is because of the price asked for natural resources that they are unused. Can Mr Lloyd George not read the signs of the times? Does he not see that land values are rising? And as that is taking

place we see that unemployment is becoming stationary again. After falling somewhat from its peak point of 1933 the percentage of unemployed during the past seven months has remained practically constant.

In short the failure of Mr Lloyd George's New Deal is measured by its reluctance to attack any vested interest. His denunciation of the existing system will meet with ready sympathy from all reformers. His aspirations for a better state of society will be shared by all thinking men. It is the plan for destroying what is wrong in our social system and for building up a better one that is lacking.

F. C. R. D.

A DOCTOR'S MANDATE

Mr R. J. Cruickshanks, the New York correspondent of the *News Chronicle*, reports in that paper that 24,000 signatures have been collected for petitions in favour of the Townsend Pension Plan, which is sweeping America like a prairie fire in a drought. No other nostrum produced under the stress of the times has aroused such fanatical enthusiasm. Hundreds of zealots are marching through West and South making converts by the thousands. Under pressure from their readers, editors of Western papers are being forced to give great prominence to the plan. The mailbags of Congressmen are bursting with petitions and many members are frightened by the enormous political power that has been suddenly conjured up.

Dr F. E. Townsend hails from Long Beach, California. His panacea is simplicity itself. The Government should offer every citizen over 60 years of age a pension of £8 for life on three conditions: that he does not possess a criminal record, that he promises not to work for a wage any more, and that each monthly instalment of the pension will be spent within 30 days of its receipt. The necessary money to pay the pensions would be raised by a retail sales tax. The theory is that the cash paid to the pensioners would be spent by them within a month. It would be collected again in the tax levied on all goods sold, then paid to the pensioners once more, and so on in an endless circle guaranteed to produce universal prosperity.

We recall the following passage in the chapter in *Protection or Free Trade* where Henry George examines the contention that the tariff encourages the protected industries; and then the protected industries encourage the unprotected industries; that protection builds up the factory and the iron furnace, and the factory and the iron furnace create a demand for the farmer's produce:—

"Imagine a village of, say, a hundred voters. Imagine two of these villagers to make such a proposition as this: 'We are desirous, fellow citizens, of seeing you more prosperous and to that end propose this plan: Give us the privilege of collecting a tax of five cents a day from everyone in the village. No one will feel the tax much, for even to a man with a wife and eight children it will only come to the paltry sum of fifty cents a day. Yet this slight tax will give our village two rich citizens who can afford to spend money. We will at once begin to live in commensurate style. We will enlarge our houses and improve our grounds, set up carriages, hire servants, give parties and buy much more freely at the stores. This will make trade brisk and cause a greater demand for labour. This, in turn, will create a greater demand for agricultural productions, which will enable the neighbouring farmers to make a greater demand for store goods and the labour of mechanics. Thus shall we all become prosperous.'

"There is in no country under the sun a village in which the people would listen to such a proposition."

But in other terms and under other disguises the self-same proposition has deluded millions of voters and their parliaments, not alone in America but all over the world, into the support or adoption of policies that are of the nature of beggar-my-neighbour to enrich the whole community. Almost word for word the British sugar subsidy was so defended, and Frederic Bastiat with his *Candlemakers' Petition*, or Dr. Townsend for that matter, might have been in the House of Commons on 18th March, 1925, to prompt the speakers when the Bill was passed. Mr Ramsay MacDonald gave it his blessing because of its fair wage clause and took 75 Labour Members with him in support, while 38 voted against. The then Conservative Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Wood, said that 10 men would be employed on every 100 acres under sugar beet; the factories would employ 600 men; there would be new demands on the engineering industries; coal, limestone and the railways would feel the benefit. Mr Noel Buxton, Minister of Agriculture in the previous Labour Government, saw in the bounty a sort of educational grant which would induce habits of better manuring, deeper cultivation and pioneer farming. The Marquis of Titchfield saw 300,000 tons of coal and 120,000 tons of limestone being sent annually to the factories. Colonel Courthope and other speakers saw an actual gain to the State by men being taken off the unemployment dole, and Major Davies pictured the openings that would be given to the young chemists from the universities. And so on. They had all given us the village, which Henry George said could exist only in imagination, and their village was the United Kingdom as a whole in which these miracles were to be performed by taking £2,000,000 a year or more in taxation from some persons and transferring (less costs of collection) that purchasing power to other persons.

The sugar subsidy is, alas, only one instance of many such schemes, from protectionism in all its moods and tenses to the marketing boards and the wheat and meat and shipping subsidies. Just compel some people to pay more for what other people provide; give the second lot of people the purchasing power which the first lot of people would otherwise have, and the millennium is round the corner. It is the notion underlying all those schemes to make employment by spending public money, whether raised by taxation or by loans. Mr Franklin Roosevelt has embodied it in his policy called grandiloquently the New Deal, and adopting that fancy label Mr Lloyd George speaks in hundreds of millions of the new public debt he would create to buy our way to the abolition of unemployment. It is the confidence trick on a handsome scale, which stated in a simple elemental way to the shrewd inhabitants of the imaginary village would not deceive a soul.

Mr Ramsay MacDonald, as Prime Minister of the National Government, asked for a doctor's mandate to

overcome the malady of industrial distress. We have been served with the questionable medicine of the general levy of tariffs on consumers and of the subsidies and quotas to raise prices. Every specific in the protectionist drug-shop has been tried but the patient refuses to recover. Now, apparently, despite the lessons of the 1931 collapse, there is to be recourse again to infusing the circulation of the patient with his own blood, if there is anything in the rumour that Mr Lloyd George proposing this treatment is likely to join the panel of medical advisers.

In America they go one better in the way of a doctor's

mandate, and it is amusing, if not alarming, that there are so many believers. Dr Townsend is described as a mild-mannered, humorless, white-haired family physician. Humorless perhaps, if the Captain of Koepenick could be said to be so. Consciously or unconsciously he is the greatest jester of the day. He has no competitor in the circus. He is the clown who has the laugh on his fellow clowns and other performers. If the onlookers can see that he has the laugh on them also, Dr. Townsend will live to be remembered as a saviour of mankind. The point of his joke is that what is worth doing is worth doing well.

A. W. M.

FORTUNES FROM LAND VALUES

By Francis Williams

City Editor of the "Daily Herald" in its issue of 25th January.

Many millions of pounds of idle money, which cannot find employment in industry, are now seeking investment in property of all kinds.

As a result, property-owners are experiencing one of the biggest booms in memory.

So great is the rush for office, shop, and residential property as an investment that the demand cannot be satisfied and values are rising rapidly.

Messrs. Knight, Frank & Rutley, the West-End estate agents, yesterday publicly advertised that they were seeking suitable property for the investment of more than £2,500,000 of clients' funds.

REASON FOR RUSH

This follows public issues of capital to finance new property deals to a total of more than £2,083,000 as well as the announcement by another agent that he has £2,500,000 to invest.

Other estate agents and property trusts declare that it is now becoming almost impossible to find good property investments, so great is the demand.

The rush is due to the big reduction in the yields obtainable on sound Stock Exchange securities as the result of the large amount of idle funds in the banks and elsewhere, estimated at more than £300,000,000.

REACHING CLIMAX

Many big investors have decided to get out of Stock Exchange securities into property in the belief that a much higher yield can be obtained.

The boom, which is now reaching its climax, has already made fortunes for many property owners, who have sold out at record prices.

It has been developing rapidly for some time. Last year 998 new property companies were formed, the majority being private.

Public issues by property companies, mainly to finance new deals, exceeded £11,000,000.

* * *

The view expressed by Mr Williams is confirmed by the yearly reviews of the property market published by various well known firms of estate agents. The *Daily Telegraph* (7th January) quotes from Messrs Wooton & Son, Lime Street, London:—

"Ever since the end of the War property values have been steadily rising, and the changes which have taken place in the economic structure have up to the present all been beneficial to the investor in real estate. The post-War inflationary periods, with their natural reactions, brought about capital appreciation, and

this was subsequently followed by the present Government's debt conversion scheme. These favourable movements, incidentally, re-established the confidence in 'bricks and mortar' which was so badly affected by the pre-War legislation of 1909, when much capital was lost in the slump following the imposition of land taxes.

"The glut of money which now prevails has naturally brought into the property market many eager buyers anxious to secure a yield higher than is obtainable on gilt-edged and similar securities. The result has been that a very limited market has been practically stripped of sound investments, and prices have been forced to a level only comparable to those ruling at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, when we find on referring to office records that ground rents were—for a short period—selling on a 3½ to 3¾ per cent basis, with a correspondingly low yield on other property investments."

Messrs Hampton & Sons, Ltd., of St. James's Square, London, say:—

"Business in connection with the sale and purchase of residential and sporting estates has improved, but activity in regard to purely agricultural properties continues to be restricted pending the rise in value predicted in consequence of the various efforts on the part of the Government to improve conditions for farmers."—(*The Farmer and Stockbreeder*, 14th January.)

A PRESTON CASE

Indignation was expressed by several members of the Lancashire Education Committee meeting at Preston on 21st January, at the price of £1,300 an acre for eight acres of land for a secondary school at Stretford. Mr Aitken said they had been unable to get it at a lower figure although the negotiations had been prolonged. It was a rapidly growing district, and if the committee did not acquire the land it would rapidly be taken up. The Government valuer had valued the land at £1,100 an acre.

Mr J. Eastham (Kearsley) said it seemed that Shylock had been at work. How long were public authorities going to stand this constant bleeding by landed proprietors? If nobody took a stand against it there was no telling where the ramp would end.

Alderman W. M. Rogerson (Walkden) described it as "a scandalous thing" that land which a few years ago was open country should be valued by the district valuer at £1,100 an acre.

Mr R. I. Constantine (Accrington) said it was another instance of the rapacity of the landowners.

Alderman W. Hodgson (Poulton-le-Fylde) said the price originally asked for the land was nearly £3,000 an acre.

THE DOG IN THE MANGER

An Aspect of the Distressed Areas Schemes

We take the following at random from a number of newspaper cuttings on the proposals being made locally to the new Commissioners as to how they should spend the £2,000,000 which the House of Commons recently voted to mitigate unemployment in the Distressed Areas. It would be a pity to spoil the frankness of it all with any kind of comment. We are indebted to the *Hexham Courant* of 26th January. This is not a case of the kings and captains depart. The kings and captains—and colonels—arrive.

* * *

Schemes for the development of Haltwhistle, which were forecasted in the *Courant* a fortnight ago, were laid before the Government's Commissioner for the Tyneside Area, Mr Forbes Adams, when he visited Haltwhistle on Tuesday.

Mr Forbes Adams' visit was the sequel to an invitation extended to him as the result of a representative meeting held on 10th January, at which Col. D. Clifton Brown, M.P. for Hexham, was present.

Suggestions for the settlement of a large tract of land lying north of the town, the building of a light railway to solve the transport difficulties which attended the development of a virgin coalfield to the north, and the building of a central school, at which boys and girls could be taught useful trades, were among those to which the Commissioner promised to give sympathetic consideration.

Mr G. Kirsopp, owner of Blenkinsopp Colliery, said coal mining was the industry for Haltwhistle, and if he could have help from the Government, he would be able to employ 50 men in a month.

Colonel Clark said his suggestion was a land drainage scheme. If the Government would make the grants which prevailed some time ago, to landowners and farmers, work might be found for a number of men in draining. That might lead to the opening out of a brick and tile works, as these would be required for draining.

Col. Joicey put forward a scheme of land settlement on that vast tract of land lying behind the Roman Wall. He pointed out that this land was practically in the same condition as it was 200 years ago. A light railway running out from Haltwhistle to the north would open out small landsale collieries to the north of Haltwhistle. Land now rented at 2s. to 3s. per acre would in the course of time be worth £1 per acre. If the Government would assist with grants, so as to employ men in draining and building of small farmsteads, it might be the means of settling a number of families on the land.

Mr Charles Roberts, Boothby, supported Col. Joicey's scheme. He pointed out to the Commissioner that a great untouched coalfield lay to the north of Haltwhistle and by running a light railway it would lead to the development of this virgin coal.

Coun. Phillipson said he thought much could be done to employ a number of men if the Haltwhistle Rural District Council would start and put their own house in order. The sewerage system was a disgrace and had been for the last 20 years. Why not get on with a sewerage scheme? There were a number of front and back streets which required attention and this would employ a few men at least, and would certainly be an asset to the town. Much could be done in regard to slum clearance and the re-furnishing of bad houses. He suggested that a bold policy in this

direction would give immediate relief to a number of men.

Mr Kirsopp thanked Mr Forbes Adams for the sympathetic manner in which he had listened to their views.

Mr LLOYD GEORGE'S CAMPAIGN

(By F. Skirrow, in the "*Yorkshire Observer*," 24th January)

I well remember how in his great land campaign days Mr Lloyd George won the confidence and support of the people. Having read reports of his speech in support of his "New Deal," I am wondering if he is suffering from a loss of memory. Has he not told us that to deceive the poor is the meanest of all crimes?

From 1900 to 1909 he was the champion of the cause of the poor and oppressed, and he espoused the cause of freedom in all things that affect the life of the people.

I well remember his claim that the Liberal Party had given the country Free Trade, and that they were now going to complete the task of Cobden by giving them free land. He now appears to have forgotten these vital principles. He was the "man of action" in those days, as he is to-day.

To-day Mr Lloyd George attaches no importance to the question of freedom in regard to either trade or land policy. Tariffs are now to be used to abolish tariffs and promote freedom of trade!

He is no longer "looking forward to the springtime when the thaw will set in, when the people and the children of the people shall enter into the inheritance that was given them from on high!"

In his "New Deal" speech the other day he made the same kind of passionate and emotional appeal as he made on behalf of his land reform scheme. He then denounced the landlords for their prohibitive charges, and for withholding land from use; and he declared that "this is the first great trust."

It is all very well to produce Housing of the Working Class Bills. They will never be effective till you tackle the taxation of land values." And he was right.

Land values have increased by tens of millions since those days, but they are still going into the pockets of private individuals, and the masses are still oppressed by unjust taxation.

The outcome of Mr Lloyd George's campaign has been to leave the country in a worse plight than when he undertook to "burst" land monopoly. Poverty still accompanies progress. Mr Lloyd George has thrown over the policy which was to end the tyranny and oppression.

To quote his own words: "Housing, wages, food, health, the development of a virile, independent, manly, Imperial race—you must have a free land policy as an essential of these."

A. LUCKHURST SCOTT

Mr A. L. Scott has been appointed principal Assistant Secretary at Labour Party headquarters. He is a popular and experienced official who was with "Uncle Arthur" for nearly twenty years, and has a knowledge of the personnel of the political world second only, among Party officials, to that of Mr Middleton himself.

He is a keen student of single tax literature, and is said to know most of the writings of the late Henry George almost by heart.—*The Star*, 24th January.

Readers of *Land & Liberty* will remember that Mr Scott contributed to the *Book of the Labour Party* a chapter on "The Labour Party and Land Value Taxation." Extracts from this valuable record were reprinted in July 1926, August 1927 and February, 1929 issues of this paper.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

(Press Service of the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade, 94 Petty France, London, S.W.1)

THE LAND REFORM MOVEMENT IN CHINA

By Kao Hsin

Divisional Director of the Chinese Land Research and Planning Commission.

I.—UP TO THE YEAR 1932.

Sun Yat Sen, the great leader of Young China, was the founder of the Chinese land reform movement. This lay at the roots of his earliest thinking and preparation for the revolution. Even then it was clear to him that the downfall of the Ching dynasty must be accompanied by the sweeping away of the old land conditions. When after his first world tour he formulated the "three principles," the third was fashioned on the old idea of land reform together with the principle of capital control which he had gained in Europe and America.

In 1910 the revolution triumphed, that is to say the Ching dynasty was deposed and the Republic established, but the "third principle" was not carried out. From 1910 to 1923 the militarists ruled the young republic, and Sun Yat Sen himself had little power. However, during this time he prepared for the new revolution, the revolution against erring revolutionaries and for the carrying out of the third principle. The demand for land reform was made a powerful means of propaganda, for this revolution must come from the lowest classes.

In 1923 Sun Yat Sen was able once more to gain power in Canton. From it the new revolution was to spread over the whole country, and with it land reform. He set at once to work. A Land Office was established in Canton. At the same time he took into his counsel Dr Schrameier, who had been a successful land reformer in Kiauchow and was then a leader of the German Land Reform Union. A more complete plan for carrying out the reform was prepared. All seemed to be going well, but fate willed otherwise. After barely a year of activity Dr Schrameier perished in Canton, and Dr Sun Yat Sen died in the same year.

After the death of Sun Yat Sen there followed the severe struggle between the revolutionary South and the militarists of the North. Pressing problems pushed land reform into the background. The victory of the revolutionaries ultimately eventuated in the founding of the Nanking Government. Its first two years were occupied with important political questions and the first land reform law was promulgated in 1930 by the Li Fa Yien, the law-making chamber of the Kuo Min Tang. This was closely in accord with the land reform principles of Sun Yat Sen. Its four basic principles are:—

1. Valuation of the land according to its pure land value.
2. Taxation on the pure land value.
3. Determination of the land value by "self-valuation."
4. Unearned increment of value belongs to the State.

Definitions and explanation:—

1. The pure land value means the value of land in its natural condition, that is values added by labour and capital are not taken into account.
2. All increases of value due to labour and capital are tax free.
3. Every owner states the value of the land, according to his own valuation. False returns for the purpose of reducing taxation are eliminated by

the following means: (a) The State has the right at any time to buy the land at the value returned; (b) Every increase in value, whether upon a private sale or upon a State valuation to be made every fifteen years, is treated as an unearned increment.

4. Every increase of value not due to the owner's capital or labour is an unearned increment.

This law is, however, not yet in full operation. The principal reason for this is the difficulty of surveying this great country, which is necessary for carrying out the law.

* * *

NOTE.—This article is translated from *Bodenreform*, Berlin, 16th December. A German translation of the principal clauses of the Chinese Land Reform Law of 30th June, 1930, was published in *Jahrbuch der Bodenreform*, 1931, with a foreword by Dr Damaschke. The summary given above implies that the only valuation is a landlord's or self-valuation; the law, however, provides for the making of an official survey and valuation as well. Undue emphasis is given to increment. Although the law provides for a tax on increment it also provides for an annual tax on the full land value. It may be added that the tax is a provincial one and only benefits the central government to the extent that the costs of the central land office are to be defrayed out of it.—EDITOR, *Land & Liberty*.

DENMARK

Last month we mentioned the debate in the Copenhagen City Council on 24th November on the motion by Mr Lannung in favour of Parliamentary powers to increase local taxation on land values in lieu of taxes on improvements and incomes. Responding in the debate, Mayor Hedeboel said: Mr Lannung had made much the same representations as Mrs Elna Munch recently in Parliament, which had since been discussed between himself and Mr Daalgaard, the Minister for Home Affairs. It will be remembered that the local tax (like the national tax) on buildings and improvements was now three-quarters of the tax on land values. Mrs Munch urged that a strong public opinion favoured the further transference of taxation from buildings to land values and that this would be of benefit to the city's development. I agree, and the point can be stressed that in Frederiksberg the land value tax is already higher than in Copenhagen itself. Also we have to bear in mind that in 1933 the County rates on property were altered so as to fall to a larger extent upon the value of land alone. The Home Minister had declared that they would be investigating the effects of the 1933 reform, in the Counties, and he hoped that it would be possible to make an advance on the same lines with respect to local taxation in the other local authorities. This would give Copenhagen and the provincial boroughs the opportunity for greater option in the matter of land value taxation. "For my part, I consider this is a matter of great importance for the welfare of Copenhagen. A reform in that direction is called for and is desirable, and one can be gratified that the Home Minister has again had his attention drawn to the matter and is prepared to bring it forward in Parliament."

Mr Abel Brink, in a letter to the International Union, reports that in 1934 Copenhagen has enjoyed the greatest building boom in its history. From 1st November, 1933, to 1st November, 1934, there had been built in the Metropolis (Copenhagen, Frederiksberg and Gentofte)

altogether 12,230 homes in separate and apartment houses. In the period 1st July, 1933, to 1st July, 1934, the population had increased by 29,000. How much of this progress may be attributed to the measure of land value taxation already in force may be a matter of discussion; but this can be said, that the land value policy has done anything but hamper development. Also it should be remarked that all this building has gone forward without subsidy from either national or municipal treasuries. What is wanted now is a greater measure of land value taxation to secure for the public (and for remission for taxes on industry) the values in land created by the growth of population, which in the expanding suburb of Gentofte, for example, have increased from 47,000,000 crowns to 117,000,000 crowns between 1916 and 1933—that is, by 70,000,000 crowns, equivalent to about £3,500,000.

NEW YORK

A measure has been introduced in the Legislature of the State of New York for the purpose of shifting some part of the burden of taxation from dwelling-houses to land values.

A proposal has also been introduced in the Municipal Assembly of the City of New York for the purpose of gradually reducing the rate of taxation levied on improvements. It resembles the plan which was adopted in Pittsburgh some years ago, by which the rate of tax levied on the improvements is a percentage of the rate levied on land value. The intention is that the percentage should be reduced by one-tenth each year until ultimately the tax rate on the improvements is ten per cent. of the rate on land values. Our readers will know that local taxation in New York, as in America generally, is on the capital value of land and improvements. As New York City already values land separately from improvements, the machinery for carrying through the reform is now in existence.

* * *

Heartly congratulations to Mr and Mrs Charles O'Connor Hennessy on their golden wedding anniversary, which was quietly celebrated on Christmas Eve. They were married in 1884 in Troy, New York, where Mr Hennessy worked as a newspaper reporter. As a young man he campaigned with Henry George and was one of the pall-bearers at the funeral. At the Copenhagen Conference in 1926, when the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade, of which he is the President, was founded, he occupied the chair—the right man in the right place, at the right time, as Mr Berthelsen said when the happy tributes were paid for the service he rendered; and as “the right man in the right place” in all that he is doing to advance the Henry George Movement through many agencies—particularly the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation in New York—he enjoys the high esteem of his colleagues and co-workers the world over. May Mrs Hennessy and he have many years to give to this great public work.

CALIFORNIA

It is interesting to have the syllabus of the special series of lectures on the Philosophy of Henry George being given in connection with the Adult Education Course under the auspices of the First Unitarian Church, 2936 West 8th Street, Los Angeles. Here are suggestions for a similar course wherever such study can be organised. The dates, subjects, and speakers are as follow:—

March 6th.—“How it would Affect Labour Relations.” George Briggs.

March 13th.—“How it would Affect Special Privilege and Monopoly.” R. E. Chadwick.

March 20th.—“How it would Affect Taxes and Licences.” H. H. Ferrell.

March 27th.—“How it would Affect Profits and Interest.” L. J. Quinby.

April 3rd.—“How it would Affect International Relations.”

April 10th.—“Henry George's Reply to Pope Leo XIII.” David Woodhead.

Mr L. J. Quinby is the author of the brief and yet comprehensive *Review of Progress and Poverty*, a little brochure and one of the best things of its kind. It is a publication we should much like to see in circulation again, and we put forward the idea as a proposal worthy of consideration by those who will “make contact” in the above study course.

PALESTINE

Attention is drawn in a special article in the *Manchester Guardian* (4th January) to the official statistics indicating “the extraordinary increase of private enterprise and production in Palestine.” During the last two years the movement has been accelerated. The number of immigrants was 40,000 in 1933 and even larger last year. Many of the immigrants bring a substantial amount of capital with them and “others bring special industrial and professional talents.” Large sums of money are sent to Palestine every year by Jews of other countries for investment. “It has been said that it offers the attractions of British security without the menace of British income tax.” Both agricultural and industrial production have increased.

“The least healthy aspect of this capitalistic development is the orgy of speculation in land, both urban and rural, which is infecting part of the Jewish population. The prices of land in the suburbs of Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Haifa soar fantastically. The prices of land fit—or said to be fit—for fruit plantations in the Plain of Sharon soar equally fantastically. The Arabs, it is said, declare that the notes must be forged and the coin must be counterfeit. They cannot believe that persons would pay the prices in good money which are being given for the scraps of land.”

In the *Daily Herald* (18th January) Mr. Hannen Swaffer gives the impressions of a friend recently returned from a visit to Palestine:—

Now what horrified my Jewish friend in Palestine was Tel-Aviv, which, the only all-Jewish town in the world, is the pride of all the Jews who have never seen it.

“When I was in Tel-Aviv,” said my business friend, “I felt ashamed. I had been in the communal settlements, where the people worked hard, willingly, loving the soil they worked on, all bent to one purpose.

“But in Tel-Aviv everyone talked of land speculation. One man, soon after I arrived, asked me, ‘Are you interested in land?’

“‘Yes, as such,’ I replied.

“‘I mean land speculation,’ he said.

“‘No, after seeing the communal settlements,’ I answered, ‘I certainly am not.’”

Now, on the land where the Jewish Socialists from half the countries of the world live, all members of a family, you see Idealism expressed in work.

In Tel-Aviv they talk in “profits,” of “the land boom,” and they have built a higgledy-piggledy town that is hideous to look upon. A crash must come soon. But the people go on gambling in land values.

One speculator, not a Jew, by the way, has made a large fortune out of his land profits. Many have made considerable sums.

QUEENSLAND'S ACHIEVEMENT

By the Hon. H. F. HARDACRE

(From an address to the Queensland Henry George League)

I will now state briefly some of the measures based on Henry George's principles which have been adopted in Queensland to its great benefit since the publication of *Progress and Poverty*. That great book was published in 1879. It was printed as a serial by the Brisbane *Courier* through its columns in 1883. Its influence was immediately manifested.

At that time there was in existence a Government, led by Sir S. W. Griffiths, and with a Minister for Lands, the Hon. C. B. Dutton, who had large pastoral interests. In the following year that Government passed what is known as the Crown Lands Act of 1884, under which almost the whole of the country lands of Queensland were put under Crown Leases based on rentals to be paid to the Government on Henry George's principles—the rents to be re-assessed at stated periods.

Prior to that great Act it had been the common practice of previous Governments to sell at auction immense areas at such low prices as 10s. per acre, giving freehold for all time. In that way very often what was colloquially termed "the eyes," in reality the picked portions of districts, were picked out and monopolised. The Crown Lands Act of 1884 soon ended such evil conditions and instituted the Georgian better principle of retaining at moderate rentals to tenants a growing revenue to the Crown over a considerable portion of Queensland.

Queensland was fortunate a few years later in obtaining another great legislative measure based on Georgian principles in the Valuation and Rating Act of 1890, obtaining rate revenue solely from the valuation of land. This was influenced directly by a visit to Queensland of Henry George himself. He arrived in Brisbane on a lecturing tour in 1890.

RATES ONLY ON THE VALUE OF LAND

At this time there was in Parliament a young man, the Hon. W. Stephen, as member for South Brisbane, who took an interest in George's lectures. He succeeded in obtaining in a new Rating Measure shortly afterwards in Parliament, the omission of rating improvements and imposing rates only on the value of land.

This was the first measure of its kind in the world and has since been followed by a similar measure in N.S.W., parts of N.Z., and some of the cities in U.S.A.

A still further measure of Georgian principles was introduced 15 years later by the first Queensland Labour Government with the Hon. T. J. Ryan as its Premier, and in its Ministry the Hon. H. F. Hardacre, who was the chief influence in having a Revenue Act passed, imposing taxation on the unimproved value of land in 1915. The then Treasurer at first proposed to balance revenue and expenditure by continuing retrenchment imposed by the previous Government on the salaries and wages of its employees. I succeeded instead of obtaining the required revenue by omitting the retrenchment and introducing taxation in substitution therefor upon the value of land. It has been in operation ever since and followed in principle by some of the other States in Australia.

AN UNDEVELOPED LAND TAX

An even greater measure of Georgian principles was adopted by the same Labour Government instigated to that effect also by the Hon. H. F. Hardacre—and which may truthfully be said to be his own proposal. This was a special Undeveloped Land Value Tax.

This is a special measure of original form not in existence, it is believed, in any other country in the world. Though not being in full accordance with Georgian principles, it has meritorious features that make it deserving of adoption everywhere. The taxation is upon the value of the land, but only upon such land as has not upon it improvements equal to a fourth of the value of the land.

The foregoing several measures of adoption of Georgian principles places Queensland as leader in the practice of the doctrines of Henry George in advance of all other countries. And it may be for this reason that we are stated not to have felt the prevailing world-wide depression as severely as in many other places, and that we are amongst the first to feel the effects of returning prosperity.

Certain at least it is that in Queensland has been laid the foundations of a better system of taxation than in almost every other country. It is true, alas, that we have not yet removed all obnoxious and destructive taxation. And also unfortunately we are subject to the numerous evil forms of taxation imposed by the Commonwealth Parliament. But the right way of advance that has been provided for others after us to follow which, being adopted, would usher in for us the ideal progress and prosperity of a higher civilization which Henry George has visioned for us as possible.

BRITISH WEST AFRICA

"A HAPPY PEOPLE"

In two articles in the *Manchester Guardian* (7th and 8th January) Mr Charles Roden Buxton has given an interesting account of a recent visit to West Africa. He contrasts the prosperity and contentment of the people with the conditions in East and South Africa.

"This happy people, this prosperous peasant economy, this underlying contentedness in spite of repeated wars in quite recent years—this marvellous Civil Service, whose mind and heart can be devoted wholly to the people's welfare without the pull of conflicting 'White' interests—why are such things so little known in our African dependencies elsewhere? For I could not doubt that the sum of human happiness was far greater here than in Kenya—incomparably greater than in South Africa.

"The smiling faces, the women pouring in with their own produce on their heads to the busy little markets which are to be seen wherever the tiniest group of houses is gathered together; the superior quality of the houses which I visited; the gay gatherings of the people when I was 'received' by chiefs and councillors—all helped to remind me of the difference.

"True, there was much lamenting over the slump in the export of palm oil; but I could see no signs of impoverishment, nor did the statistics reveal any decline of public health or of population. The people, it seemed, could still live tolerably, at any rate, on their little patches of land.

"Can it be, I asked myself, that these people in West Africa are so superior in social development and intelligence as to justify such a striking difference in our way of treating them? I could not see it.

"I concluded that it was unnecessary to seek for far-fetched reasons; the explanation lies on the surface. It is to be found in the land question. East and South Africa contain large areas which are habitable by white people; consequently, large areas were taken from the native population, a large proportion of whom have become labourers or squatters, removed from their own tribes and their own homes, a drifting mass of landless

people. In West Africa, on the other hand, where white settlement was not possible, the economic activities of the white immigrants have always consisted mainly in trade.

"I found it much easier to sympathize with the activities of the trader than with those of the settler. Even the attacks on the great Lever combine, whose local firm is the United Africa Company and which is charged with threatening a monopoly, left me entirely cold. The traders are out for profits, naturally enough, but their primary interest is that the population shall be prosperous; whereas the primary interest of settlers is that labour shall be cheap.

"Labour conditions in West Africa are directly affected by the land system. Everyone could go back to the land if he chose; if he does not go back to the land, or stay on it, it must be because he finds some conditions which are preferable. Consequently, wages in the Gold Coast mines are two and a half times those in the Kenya goldfield."

In a letter to the *Manchester Guardian* (11th January), Col. Josiah C. Wedgwood, M.P., explained how the Nigerian land system came into existence.

"Twenty-six years ago our Colonial Office, acting on the advice of a small departmental committee of which I was a member, established the land-tenure system of Northern Nigeria on Henry George lines. Each person, cultivator or trader, holds his land of the State with security of tenure at a revisable rent based on land value alone. This has been modified slightly since by officials who were not so Simon-pure single-taxers, but remains the fundamental land law of that happy country. Major Ormsby-Gore has since embodied it as far as was possible in Tanganyika, but failed to do so in Northern Rhodesia."

SPAIN

La Reforma Social (Velazquez 98, Madrid) for January, 1935, has with other important matter the text of the resolution passed by the Town Council of Torrelavega, halfway along the north coast of Spain, and near to the scene of the late Marxist rising in Oviedo (30th November, 1934). It demands powers to increase the tax on land value to 2 per cent, as the limit of 1 per cent now in force is in effect a barrier: and that the present taxes on property should be abolished—these are undeveloped land tax, increment tax, building licence, and tax on rental—the last equivalent to our general rates. An exemption is suggested of twice the value of good farm land: and the periodical revaluations should be made by a Court of Councillors and property owners considering owners' valuations and publishing results. The land value tax is advocated as the only one which falls upon fruits of communal effort and impedes exploitation while it lowers cost of living and stimulates personal activity.

Truly the cities of Spain can still turn out their legendary "knights in grey homespun" when the country is in danger! The Town Council expresses the hope that the powers given to the cities of Catalonia in these matters will not be refused to those whose allegiance remains with Madrid, and has voted the cost of a land value map of the town as a first active step.

Our readers who have a knowledge of French are reminded that the *Condition of Labour*, by Henry George, is now available in the French version, the translation having been made by M Paul Passy and published by the Ligue pour la Reforme Fonciere, 16, Avenue de la Criolla, Suresnes. The price is 6 francs, and copies may be had from our office at 1s. 9d. post free.

ALEXANDER CHALMERS

With great regret we learn from *Progress*, of Melbourne, that Alexander Chalmers, an able and devoted Australian follower of Henry George, passed away on 25th October last. He was 78 years old. Born in Scotland, he arrived in Victoria as a child. How he came to know of the Henry George teaching is not on record, but from the early days of the movement in this country his name was known in the overseas correspondence as a keen protagonist. In 1924 he visited the homeland with Mr F. T. Hodgkiss and spent many weeks in London, where at our old office in Tothill Street John Paul, whose personal acquaintance he valued beyond measure, was happy to welcome him and his colleague. He wrote frequently after his return and followed with profound interest the organization and success of the representative International Conference in Edinburgh in 1929. His letters with so much encouragement to the United Committee and the work of *Land & Liberty* will be much missed, just as we know he will be missed by his Australian colleagues in the movement he did so much to serve.

GIVING MEN PIE TO KEEP THEM FROM STEALING PIE

A tough-looking customer was about to snatch a pie. Said the owner of the pie, "My man, I will give you a cut of that pie, if you won't do that!"

The tough customer agreed. The owner of the pie gave him a cut of pie—one-sixth of the pie. Then the tough-looking customer reached for the rest of the pie. He was about to snatch the other five cuts of pie, when the owner saw him and said:

"Don't do that! If you won't do that, I'll give you a cut of the pie."

The tough customer agreed. The owner of the pie gave him another cut—making one-third in all that he had given the tough customer in order to protect that pie.

The tough customer ate that second cut and reached for the rest of the pie.

Again the owner of the pie said:

"Don't do that! If you won't steal that pie, I will give you a cut."

The tough customer agreed and ate the third cut of pie—he had then eaten half of the pie. He started to snatch the other half of the pie and was given the fourth cut.

In the same way he got the fifth cut.

Then, in the same way, he got the last cut—he had eaten the whole pie.

This little allegory is told by L. D. Beckwith in "No Taxes," Stockton, California. Our readers can supply a few applications of it in this country, where we are busy trying to combat the effects of high land values by providing subsidies for housing, subsidies for wheat growing, subsidies for allotments, etc., etc.

In an address to the Dublin Rotary Club (which received a three column report in the *Wicklow People*, 15th December), Mr Erskine H. Childers dealt with the case for land value taxation in a comprehensive and able fashion. He suggested that the government should introduce a land value tax, and continued: "In any event let us begin by putting into effect the Dublin Corporation's own suggestion. Let us end the scandal of paying £12,000 an acre for slum built real estate in Mercer Street, and £212 an acre for land on which the owner has paid agricultural rates only, way out beyond Cabra Village, and £1,900 an acre in Bray."

NEWS OF THE MOVEMENT

THE UNITED COMMITTEE FOR THE TAXATION OF LAND VALUES, LTD., 94 Petty France, London, S.W.1. **A. W. Madsen, Secretary**; **F. C. R. Douglas, Assistant Secretary**; **W. R. Lester and C. E. Crompton, Hon. Treasurers.** (Telephone: Victoria 4308. Telegrams: "Eulav, Sowest, London.")

The transactions of the Henry George Foundation show that during the year 8,100 books and 11,760 pamphlets were sold. Besides these there were in the hands of booksellers, on 31st December, 3,840 books and 1,390 pamphlets supplied on credit and awaiting report as to sale. The publications produced during the year in behalf of the Foundation numbered 5,000 books and 31,000 pamphlets, in addition to those published by the United Committee for campaign purposes, including 37,000 pamphlets and 187,400 leaflets.

A letter issued from our Press Bureau on Mr Lloyd George's "New Deal" campaign and referring to his past declarations on the land question has been published in many newspapers. A leaflet recalling these declarations, with circulars, was sent to a couple of thousand active correspondents so that they could take appropriate action. This leaflet is now available for distribution, and copies may be had (free) on request.

The Story of My Dictatorship has been on sale at 250 railway stations throughout January, with an effective showcard exhibited at each bookstall. We are indebted to a large number of correspondents who have taken such interest in this advertising as to visit their local stations and write to say whether sales are going well. The book is apparently in good demand.

Recent meetings addressed or arranged include Mr T. Atholl Robertson at the Bowes Park Brotherhood Church, 20th January; Mr J. S. Travis at the Bevois Ward Liberal Association, Southampton, on 11th January (pamphlets and leaflets provided for distribution); A. W. Madsen at the Cardiff Rotary Club Luncheon on 20th January, followed by an evening public meeting at the rooms of the South Wales Miners' Federation; at the Congregational Fellowship in Aylesbury on 22nd January; at the Aylesbury Liberal Association on 24th January; and at the Oxford University Liberal Club on 25th February; Mr F. C. R. Douglas at the Ilford Parliamentary Society on 18th January; and the Deptford Labour Party on 9th February. The debate in Ilford had a three-column report in the *Ilford Recorder*.

ENGLISH LEAGUE: Frederick Verinder, General Secretary, 7 St. Martin's Place, Trafalgar Square, London, W.C.2. (Phone: Temple Bar 7830.)

During January, meetings not hitherto announced in this column were addressed by Andrew MacLaren at Hailsham (Sussex) for the Ratepayers' Association on "How the Rating Law Cripples Development," and by A. C. Blackburn at the Labour Institute, West Bermondsey, on "Women's Interest in the Land Question."

Meetings arranged for February are:—

Tues., 12th.—Hanwell Labour Party, Public Library, Hanwell: Andrew MacLaren, "Rating." 8.30 p.m.

Thur., 14th.—South Poplar Labour Party, 110 Stebondale Road, Cubitt Town: A. C. Blackburn. 8 p.m.

Wed., 27th.—London Co-operative Society (Political Council), North Kensington Branch, Venture Hall, 138 Portobello Road: Miss R. G. Lapin, "The Cause and Solution of the Housing Problem." 8 p.m.

A "Social" and Dance will be held at the "White Heather" Tea Rooms, 445 Strand (opposite Charing Cross Station, S.R.) on Saturday, 9th February, at 8 p.m. Tickets 2/6 each.

The newly-formed Literary and Debating Club in connection with the League has held four meetings during January in the League's Lecture Room. Forthcoming meetings are:—

FEB. 10th.—Debate, "The Inadequacy of Modern Education." J. Pinckheard v. D. H. Thomas.

" 17th.—Rev Father Vincent McNabb, "The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas."

MAR. 17th.—The Hon. Quintin Hogg (Barrister-at-Law): "Tariffs and Marketing Schemes are Essential."

" 24th.—H. H. Maddocks, Esq. (Barrister-at-Law), will oppose "That the Private Ownership of Land is Unjust."

The meetings of the Club (and those of the Economic Class on Tuesdays) are held at 7 St. Martin's Place at 8 p.m.

The subjects of a special course of addresses on Tuesdays are:—

FEB. 12.—"A Defence of Laissez Faire."

" 19.—"Why Bureaucracy grows."

" 26.—"Is Parliamentary Government effete?"

MAR. 5.—"The Absurdity of Protection."

" 12.—"Criticism of the League of Nations."

" 19.—"Is an Empire consistent with Democracy?"

SCOTTISH LEAGUE: William Reid, Secretary and Treasurer, 150 North Street, Glasgow, C.3. (Telephone: Central 4136.)

Friends of Baillie Burt will be sorry to hear of his recent bereavement. Local friends have tendered to him their sympathy in the loss of his son, George P. Burt.

Propaganda has been much as usual since the new year began. There has been quite a lot of newspaper correspondence conducted by A. J. Mace, John Peter, M.A., John Cameron, Otto Ommer, George Tulloch and the Secretary. Also by friends using such nom-de-plumes as Lighthouse, etc. The newspapers involved include the Glasgow Herald, the three Glasgow evening papers, the Edinburgh Evening News, the Clydebank and Renfrew Press, Airdrie and Coatbridge Advertiser. In the A.E.U. Journal there has appeared a good article signed by "Mentor."

Much publicity has also been given to a letter criticising Mr Lloyd George's "New Deal," which was signed on behalf of the Executive Committee by the President and Secretary. Prominent English, as well as Scottish, newspapers published the letter. The text was as follows:—

The Executive of the Scottish League for the Taxation of Land Values regrets to note Mr Lloyd George's reference to "the ruthless use of Tariffs."

There is no known case in history where tariffs, ruthless or otherwise, have succeeded in securing freer or larger trade.

We welcome the proposal of an informed attack on the problem of unemployment, but the first effect of the expenditure of large sums on public works and development will be to increase the value of land and enrich landowners.

All these proposals will prove as abortive as their predecessors unless accompanied by a measure for the taxation of all land value and a remission of taxation in industry.

The Study Circle has held three meetings in January, and among other meetings may be mentioned one addressed by Mr John Peter on 15th January at Slammanan, Stirlingshire, and by the Secretary at Bonhill, Dumbartonshire.

MANCHESTER LEAGUE: Arthur H. Weller, J.P., Secretary, 69 Piccadilly, Manchester 1. (Phone: Central 5527.)

The following meetings have been addressed: Eccles Men's Co-operative Guild, A. H. Weller; Beswick Women's Guild, A. H. Weller; Swinton Men's Guild, A. H. Weller; Brierfield Women's Guild, Mrs Sumner; Hyde Women's Guild, Mrs Catterall; Clitheroe Co-operative Education Committee, D. J. J. Owen.

To enable the Secretary to attend another meeting, Mrs Sumner, of Saddington, addressed the Brierfield Women's Guild on 16th January. This was her first essay as a speaker for the movement, for which she has long worked in other ways. The Secretary of the Brierfield Guild writes: "Mrs Sumner proved a very capable deputy—we had a splendid meeting."

An article entitled "The Age of Futility," written by Mr E. M. Ginders, was printed in the *Stockport Express*.

HENRY GEORGE CLUB (Manchester): A. Coates, M.Sc., Hon. Secretary, 72 Burnside Drive, Kingsway, Burnage, Manchester.

Addressing a meeting in Smallman's Restaurant on 16th January, the Rev William Holden said one of the paradoxes of history was the neglect of Tolstoy's teachings in the Soviet schools. The revolution of 1918 had been laid at Tolstoy's door. He was a revolutionist, but a passive one. He proclaimed that what was wrong with the world were the divisions in society, and that the meaning of life could never be discovered while the principle of the brotherhood of man was denied.

Dr Percy McDougall, who presided, said the name of Tolstoy brought a glow to the heart of Henry George men, for towards the end of his life Tolstoy wrote with great understanding and generosity about Henry George. Realizing that private property in land was the great iniquity, he endorsed with enthusiasm Henry George's method. In many of his pamphlets this came out, but especially in *A Great Iniquity*, written in 1905. He showed that the opponents of Henry George could only meet him by distorting or hushing up his message.

The next meeting of the Club will be at the same place on Thursday, 14th February, when Mr J. R. Sumner (Saddington) will give an address on "The Artful Dodger—not by Charles Dickens." Those who have met Mr Sumner at Clitheroe gatherings will welcome this opportunity of seeing him again; his subject should attract many others.

CLITHEROE HENRY GEORGE GROUP: John L. Hamilton, Hon. Secretary, "Waverley," Brungerley Avenue, Clitheroe, Lancs.

On Sunday, 30th December, the Secretary addressed the Congregational Church Men's Class. The subject was "The Beneficence of Natural Law," which was well received and resulted in a number of questions being asked, and these were followed by a good discussion.

Mrs Sumner addressed the Brierfield Women's Co-operative Guild on the 16th January. Her subject was "Private and Public Property," and a most successful meeting is reported. Mrs Sumner is the first lady speaker to take up this important work in this district, and in so doing is supplying a long-needed want.

On the 19th January, Mr D. J. J. Owen, of Manchester, gave an address to the members of the local Co-operative Society, held under the auspices of the Education Committee. His subject was "Political and Economic Liberty," and must go down as one of the most brilliant addresses given in this district. Mr Owen answered questions in his usual capable manner, and the meeting was voted a distinct success. At the request of the "Old Clitheronians," Mr H. Pemberton and the Secretary attended one of their meetings held on 21st January. For a period of two hours questions of all types were fired, and answered to what we trust was the best advantage.

Coming events: On 8th February Mr E. Parker will address the Clitheroe Henry George Class on "Russia—Its Relation to the Land Question," and on the 22nd Mr J. R. Sumner, of Sabden, has promised to come along and give us a talk. We trust all interested will attend these meetings and help to make them successful.

YORKSHIRE AND NORTHERN LEAGUE: F. Skirrow, Secretary, Compton Buildings, Bow Street, Keighley.

Meetings since our last report have been as follows:—

10th January, The Secretary: Laycock's Café, Bradford.
15th January, The President (Ashley Mitchell, Huddersfield L. of Y. Liberals). 15th January, The Secretary: Eastwood Park Veterans, Keighley. 16th January, The Secretary: Wakefield Trades Council. 21st January, The President: Halifax L. of Y. Liberals. 22nd January, The Secretary: Clayton W.C.G. 23rd January, The President: Dewsbury W.L. Association.

Good publicity was given to Mr Mitchell's meetings in Huddersfield, Halifax and Dewsbury in the reports in the *Yorkshire Observer*. The meeting in Laycock's Café in Bradford led to an instructive discussion in which Mr E. A. Lassen took part, and he was invited to be the speaker at a future meeting.

The following have had letters in the press: A. W. Dakers, J. W. Booth and William Thomson in *Keighley News*, Geo. H. Froggart in *Yorkshire Observer*, 21st January; The Secretary and Peter Burt and William Reid in *Yorkshire Observer*, 24th January; J. W. Booth in *Yorkshire Observer*, 28th January; A. W. Dakers in *Newcastle Journal*.

LIVERPOOL LEAGUE: F. R. Jones, Hon. Secretary, 23 Rocklands Avenue, Bebington, Cheshire. (Office and Meeting Room: 21 Harrington Street, North John Street, Liverpool.)

At the League meetings at 21 Harrington Street the following addresses have been given: 16th January, Mr O. B. Sweeney, "The Confusions and Misrepresentations of Established Economists"; 23rd January, Councillor W. J. Tristram, J.P., "The Present Political Situation."

On 30th January, and thereafter each Wednesday at 7.45 p.m., an outline of economics in six lectures, illustrated by coloured charts, will be given by the Secretary. There will be full opportunity for questions and discussion. All interested are urged to come and bring friends.

The following organizations have been addressed by our speakers:—

JAN. 8th.—Birkenhead Co-op. South End Men's Guild. Secretary.

" 24th.—Birkenhead Co-op. South End Women's Guild. Mr E. J. McManus.

" 15th.—Birkenhead League of Young Liberals. Secretary.

" 29th.—Birkenhead 33 Unemployed Club. Mr E. J. McManus.

The *Birkenhead News* Economic Forum of 26th January was entirely devoted to an analysis of Mr Lloyd George's New Deal. This weekly feature is still going strong.

Several of our members have been active in Press correspondence, including Miss N. McGovern, Mr E. J. McManus and Mr O. B. Sweeney. Miss McGovern at present is conducting a vigorous controversy in the *Birkenhead News* against a number of Fascists.

MIDLAND LEAGUE: Chapman Wright, Hon. Secretary, 20 Cannon Street, Birmingham 2.

At the January meeting of the Sparkhill Debating Society our Hon. Treasurer, Mr G. G. Houghton, took the opportunity in opening the debate on "Interest" to clear up the confusion which included the rent of land with interest. While a return for the use of real wealth might be perfectly just, the collection for private use of land value was plainly inequitable.

We greatly regret to report the death of Mr T. Rollason Stokes, who had been a consistent supporter of the League. In addition to being well known in political circles as a follower of Henry George, Mr Stokes was recognized as one of the best artists and designers in the Midlands.

Our sincere sympathy is extended to ex-Councillor Mr John Bush, of Smethwick, who has suffered bereavement by the death of his wife. Mrs Bush closely followed and encouraged her husband's constant efforts to advance our cause.

WELSH LEAGUE: Mrs Annie Fenton, Ruskin House, 214 Caerphilly Road, Birchgrove, Cardiff.

The speaker at the lunch of the Cardiff Rotary Club held at the Whitehall Rooms, Park Hotel, Cardiff, on 14th January, was Mr A. W. Madsen, and the subject he dealt with was "What's Wrong with Taxation." Mr Madsen made good use of the opportunity to state the case for Land Value Taxation to an influential audience, and in the time at his disposal his presentation of it could hardly have been bettered. That it made an impression on the Rotarians was evident, and the wish was expressed that more time had been available, a number of Rotarians also expressing the hope that Mr Madsen would again address them.

A meeting of the Executive of the League, followed by a general meeting, was held in the evening at the offices of the South Wales Miners' Federation, Cardiff, when Mr Madsen gave an address on "The Russian Picture." Among the audience were a number of Communists, and after his informing address Mr Madsen was bombarded with questions by them enabling him to emphasize his arguments for the Land Value policy. The President (Dr Taylor) and Chairman (Capt. Saw) and members of the League also took part in the discussion.

The *Western Mail* in its report of Mr Madsen's Rotary Club address stated that scathing comment on the present system of taxation was offered. Referring to the growth of Cardiff, the speaker said that the community had enhanced the value of the land enormously, and it seemed to him natural that the source from which public revenue should be derived was not out of taxing labour and industry but out of the fund created by the community. In many places in the Dominions local taxation was levied on land value, and he felt it was a practical proposition for this country. He did not blame the landowners for the law as it stood. He blamed the man in the street.

BRISTOL LEAGUE FOR LAND VALUE REVENUE: J. A. Hurley, Hon. Secretary, 14 Queen's Road, Knowle, Bristol 4.

At the Co-operative Rooms, Castle Street, the weekly discussion class continues to meet each Thursday at 7.30 p.m. under the guidance of the President, Mr E. J. Brierley. The monthly economics class lately inaugurated at the Ruskin Hall continues to attract new members. On 1st February Economic Rent was the subject discussed.

A successful meeting was arranged on 7th January under the auspices of the Mangotsfield Ratepayers' Association, to which prestige was given by the attendance of several Councillors. Mr Brierley gave an illuminating address on the subject of Rating. Prefacing his remarks by reference to the inability of the general Councillor to see the real evil behind rating, he surveyed in detail all the injustices and anomalies which exist and showed the relation to Economic Rent. The termination of his address was punctuated by a remark from a sitting Councillor that his Council should be pressed to secure the favourable 3½ per cent. loan now offered. Some amusement was caused by a colleague pointing out to him that any profit made on this loan would be absorbed by the landowner. Sufficient interest was roused to ensure for Mr Brierley a return visit.

Addresses to the usual Labour Sections and Co-operative Guilds continue to engage the time of the President, and various other organizations and debating societies have lately claimed his services. To these features are added his weekly contributions to various papers and the editorship of the *Bristol Guardian and Gazette*.

Mr Brierley, in company with Mr E. T. Baggs, visited the United Committee's offices in London on the 23rd January. Mr Baggs had an informing article, "Why Work Schemes are Scarce," in the *Bristol Labour Weekly*. Another Bristol Press correspondent is Miss B. S. Jefferies, who had a letter in the *Review of Reviews* commenting on an article in that journal in which Mr St. John Ervine had been mentioned. She quoted very effectively a well-known passage from *Progress and Poverty*.

PORTSMOUTH LEAGUE: S. R. Cole, Hon. Secretary, 165 Francis Avenue, Southsea.

The fourth of the Economic Class meetings for this season was held at the Central Hall on 7th January, Mr A. H. Stoakes speaking on "The Causes of Economic Trouble." Going on to emphasize the truth that the tenure of land was the great governing fact which ultimately determined the economic, political, and consequently the intellectual and moral condition of a people, he said that defects in human character which were often regarded as the cause of many institutional evils in society were at bottom the outcome of the environment in which so many were compelled to live. The fountain head of crime was poverty and the fear of poverty. There was a good report in the local paper.

"RIBBON DEVELOPMENT"

Some enterprising Press Agency, not connected with our own Press Bureau, issued the following which appeared in a number of newspapers during January:—

There are doubts in the minds of some people whether provisions for preventing the wasteful and unsightly practice of "ribbon development" will be included in the Housing Bill which is expected to be issued this week.

It is said that the Government is having difficulty not only in finding a satisfactory form of words, but also with the principle behind the prohibition of house-building upon roads which are constructed expressly for the purpose of avoiding congested urban areas. The old spirit of Toryism dies hard.

Admittedly the problem is full of "snags" for a Government which has scrapped all that remained of Lord Snowden's Taxation of Land Values scheme. Actually the Government is meeting with an extension of the abuse with which it declined to grapple. Not only does it refuse to tax landowners whose property has increased in value through public enterprise, but now it is being asked to compensate the owners of land for declining to permit them to obtain the full value of their land thus accidentally appreciated.

If the machinery for taxing land values were still in existence the problem might be eased.

There was one monopoly which had not yet been abolished, and that was the land monopoly. If only we had had legislation in the past, not for taking away land from the owners but for the purpose of insisting that the owners of land paid the just rates and taxes which belonged to the ownership of land, what a different country we should be living in to-day. Heavy rates and taxes were part of the penalty which the voters of the country had to pay for their negligence in not insisting on any Government which went into office giving the people a share of the great increase in land values which had taken place in the last 30 years. The land monopoly ought to be abolished. The last Labour Government made a small beginning in that direction, but the land taxes proposed by Mr Philip Snowden had been swept away by the so-called National Government.—Miss ALISON GARLAND, at the Rochdale Reform Association Centenary, 3rd to 8th December, reported in the *Liberal Magazine*.

You report the circumstances compelling the Lancashire Education Committee to pay £1,300 per acre for eight acres of land for educational uses. This gives a glimpse of the stranglehold on the land of Britain.

Public bodies are required to pay these speculative prices which are so much in excess of true economic land value, and this increases the encouragement we give landowners to withhold land for productive purposes, for they demand prices which individuals cannot pay.

This withholding of land is preventing employment everywhere, as land is essential for production.

At every stage of production, from Mother Earth to the retail shop, of all the diverse commodities labour produces, the permission of ground landlords has to be obtained, and tribute extorted for this permission.

The Labour Party should insist in its next Budget on making a start to break this destructive power of the ground landlords by the taxation of land values, to be followed by the rating of land values.—E. J. McMANUS, in the *Daily Herald*, 29th January.

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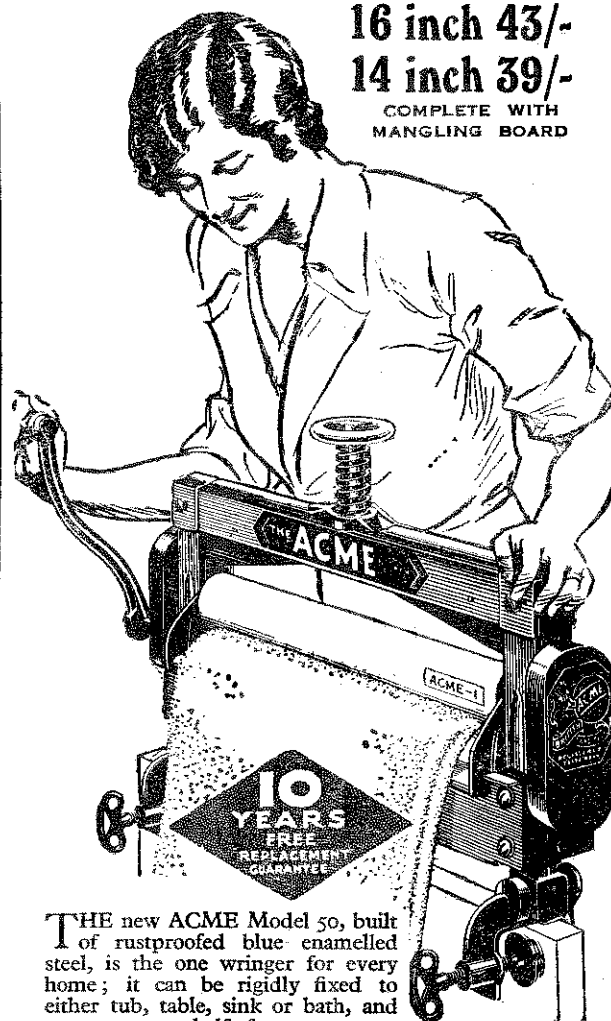
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