

# LAND & LIBERTY

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## LAND VALUE RATING—CARDIFF STATES THE CASE

ARE YOU as a ratepayer convinced of the unfairness of the system on which local taxation is based and that this is more important than the amount of rates you are called upon to pay? You should be.

Are you a land user and does the land question affect you? You are and it does.

For growing your food, for the house and place of business you live and work in, and for the raw materials you work on, land is essential. It forms the site of highways and railways you move about on and by which what you produce is exchanged.

### The Unfair Law

All this activity of the people of Cardiff, along with the public expenditure, makes land valuable. The landowner as landowner has nothing to do with the creation of this value but he reaps the advantage of it and of the improvements made by the inhabitants—the land users. The rating system taxes these improvements.

### Reform Needed and Demanded

What is wanted is a change in the law that will relieve houses and other buildings and improvements and take contribution from those who receive and enjoy the value of land, whether the land is used or not.

Cardiff has combined with other Welsh Local Authorities in making repeated representations to the Government in favour of this change.

The London County Council gave a lead to the whole country with its 1939 Bill for the Rating of Site Values. Other great municipalities have also given a lead: Glasgow, Manchester, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Stoke-on-Trent.

### Social and Economic Good

The simple process of levying rates on the value of land apart from improvements would have these beneficial effects:

It would reduce the cost of housing accommodation by the amount of the present rates.

It would prevent the withholding of valuable land from use. It would increase employment.

It would reduce the price of land and decrease rents.

### The Lead from Cardiff

After the last war it was the Cardiff City Council which first took action to resume the municipal agitation for powers to assess land values and levy rates thereon. Only one member voted against the late Alderman A. J. Howell's motion in 1919. In 1928, representatives of 35 Councils met in the City Hall and by an overwhelming majority passed a resolution demanding these powers.

In September, 1935, 100 delegates from 50 local authorities in all parts of Wales met in Cardiff and this time there was only

one dissident to a resolution urging that local authorities be empowered to levy rates upon owners in respect of the value of land apart from improvements.

By 29 votes to 12 the Cardiff City Council in 1934 protested against the repeal of the land value provisions of the 1931 Finance Act (as did the Cardiff Chamber of Trade) because these would be "of value if and when it were decided to rate land values in order to relieve the general body of rate-payers."

It is evident that Cardiff is keenly alive to the injustice of our land and rating systems.

It is evident, too, that this persistent special concern of Cardiff is not due to political prejudice. The 29 who voted in favour of the last-named motion were: Aldermen A. E. Gough, Sir W. R. Williams, John Donovan, William Charles, C. F. Sanders, G. Fred Evans, and Councillors H. Hiles, G. Leyshon, W. G. Howell, Henry Johns, A. E. Shippobotham, C. H. McCale, J. Hellyer, J. Griffiths, T. J. Mullins, G. Steel, G. J. Ferguson, R. G. Robinson, J. Kerrigan, B. F. C. Weston, George Williams, A. Lewis, A. J. Martin, J. Heginbottom, W. H. Muston, G. Baden Smith, C. G. Moreland, D. T. Williams and F. Chapman.

### Notorious Transactions

Here are some reasons why Cardiff is to the fore in this matter: Even the most conservative were startled by the announcement in the newspapers of 18th May, 1938: "Half the city of Cardiff sold by the Marquess of Bute," showing as it did the enormous power vested in one family by the ownership of land.

A deed in the possession of the Cardiff Corporation states that the Glamorgan property was granted to the Marquess's ancestor Sir William Herbert, "for quelling rebels in the Western part of England."

According to an article in the *South Wales Daily News*, Sir William Herbert was one of the guardians of King Edward VI who died when he was only 15 so that in effect he granted to himself enormous areas of land which were at the time in possession of the Crown, using the boy King's name to enrich himself.

The new ground landlords of Cardiff are not likely to sell freeholds on the terms even of their predecessors.

Land owners cannot be blamed for getting what they can nor for the fact that we allow a rating system which favours them. The agitation is not against landlords but against the system.

Many citizens of Cardiff must have been shocked at the sale of part of Cardiff which took place in 1849. The Heath Estate then belonged to Cardiff Corporation. Money was wanted for the erection of a town hall and law courts so the Cor-

poration sold, according to Alderman Edgar Chappell, 157 acres near the Heath House to Wyndham Lewis for £3,100. Part of the Heath Estate, says Alderman Chappell, apparently passed by bequest to the family of Clark of Talygarn. Nearly 100 years later, on 16th September, 1937, to be exact, the *Western Mail* reported that "after protracted negotiations" the Cardiff City Council had agreed to give £105,000 for over 200 acres of the Heath Estate, between Allensbank Road and North Road, owned by the Godfrey Clark family. It was not stated what had been the rateable assessment on this land.

### Cardiff Castle and other Properties

That the rating system is on a wrong basis was shown by Mr Daniel Hopkin in this way. If Lord Bute, he said, added an extra tower to Cardiff Castle at a cost of, say, £100,000 the assessment of the Castle would not be increased by a penny piece, because under the present system rateable value is estimated on the rent that might be got from a hypothetical tenant. But if the shopkeeper put in a new window at a cost of £500 the improvement thus affected would immediately send up the rateable value and he would have to pay higher rates on an improvement that he had created at his own expense.

A well-known example is the Dumfries Place-Queen Street corner. When the site was covered with large dwelling houses it was assessed for rates at a yearly value of £503. The houses were pulled down and the site was left bare for three years and in that state it paid nothing at all in rates. The site was purchased in 1927 for £193,000. When shops and offices were built on the site the assessment for rates was in the neighbourhood of £4,000 a year.

If we had set out to find a standard of rating which would discourage men from putting their land to its best use we could hardly hit on a better one than we have. Some shops in Queen Street are rated as high as £3,400 and pay a ground rent of more than £1,000 a year while the assessment of Cardiff Castle eleven acres was £830, with 98 acres surrounding it from which the city got no rates.

### Housing and Business Sites

Mynachdy Farm which the Corporation purchased for £38,000 was valued for rating purposes at £222 (less than £3 per acre) at the time of the purchase. At 25 years' purchase this represents a capital value of £5,500; the Corporation had to pay seven times this amount.

In the case of the Green Farm, 204 acres, the price of purchase was £31,399 but the annual net value for rating purposes was only £304 6s. Pengam Farm of 7½ acres cost £4,384, whereas the previous annual rateable value was £7 10s.

The land upon which the civic buildings stand was purchased from the Marquess of Bute for about £1,000 per acre, but when the Corporation sought to purchase land near by (on the corner of Kingsway and Priory Street), for the erection of a public hall, they were told that the price would be something like £36,000 for about an acre of land which was then being used as a car park and rated at £66.

The Exchange building in Mountstuart Square cost £150,000. The site was previously an open space with a fountain in the centre and as such was not assessed for rates. The building was rated at £6,000 when occupied and the ground rent charged was £900 a year. To quote the *Bradford Daily Telegraph*: "The plain fact is that the man who owns a valuable plot of land pays little or nothing towards the expenses of the town in which his land is situated, but if another and more enterprising man purchases it and commences to make good use of it to the advantage of the community he is taxed almost from the moment when the first brick is laid upon it."

#### Public Works and Shipyards

Instances of the abandonment of public works schemes on account of high land values are fairly common. In the case of private enterprise the facts do not usually become public. The business man does not advertise the fact that he has made a bid for a site which has been refused but if one sees "To Let" or "For Sale" notice boards standing for a long time one may conclude that many offers have been turned down because the owner is standing out for a high price.

At one time, Sir Mark Palmer made inquiries concerning a 50 acre site for a shipbuilding yard in Cardiff. The annual rent demanded was as much as the freehold was worth. The shipbuilding yard was not constructed.

#### The Cost of Parks

The Minutes of the Parks Sub-Committee of 1st and 22nd December, 1932, tell the story of the Marl. For a stretch of land of about 70 acres the City had been paying a rent of £10 a year, using it as a dump for refuse. Much of the area was covered by water at high tide. It was proposed to purchase the land, reclaim it and convert it into a recreation ground. Negotiations ended in the acquisition of 44½ acres, the Plymouth Estates Ltd., who were the owners, receiving £2,500. But that was not all. The City had to pay all solicitor's fees and surveyors' costs in connection with the conveyance of the land and undertake within ten years to fill in an area of approximately 2 acres fronting Ferry Road for the full building depth up to the level of Ferry Road free of charge to the estate.

#### Two-sided Generosity

In other words, the City had not only to pay £2,500 for part of the area that had been rented for £10, but also to hand over to the estate the land value of the adjoining frontage brought about through the improvement that the Council had effected. The expenditure required to turn water-logged land into a recreation ground and create a building value on the other side of its fence is not stated. It reminds one

of what happened in the case of Roath Park, marshy ground being converted into the boating lake and gardens at the expense of the City. In that case the land was given by the owner. Generous as he was, the City was still more generous to him, because the improvements in the park raised the value of land all round—for the benefit of the landowner.

#### Municipal Agitation

Since Cardiff led the demand in 1919 the following 47 Welsh Local Authorities have passed resolutions calling for the Rating of Land Values: Aberystwyth, Anglesey County Council, Beaumaris, Caernarvon County Council, Cardigan County Council, Conway, Denbigh, Glamorgan County Council, Llanelli, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire County Council, Newport (Mon.), Pembroke, Pembrokeshire County Council, Port Talbot, Rhondda, Swansea; Urban District Councils of Abercarn, Abertillery, Barry, Bedwas and Machen, Blacynavon, Connah's Quay, Cwmbran, Ebbw Vale, Festiniog, Gelligaer, Glyn-corrwg, Llandilo, Lluchwr, Macsteg, Milford Haven, Mountain Ash, Neath, Neyland, Prestatyn, Risca, Tredegar; and the Rural District Councils of Cowbridge, Colwyn, Dolgelly, Edeyrnion, Llanelli, Llantrisant and Llantwit Fardre, Ogwen, Pontardawe and St. Asaph.

The *News Chronicle* of 17th May published a brief article by the City Editor, Mr O. R. Hobson, which brought common sense to bear with an almost indecent frankness upon such popular notions as the alleged benefits of standardizing prices and of eliminating competition described as "wasteful" by those who never explain the principle which distinguishes wasteful competition from other competition or how public interests are injured. Mr Hobson not only condemned monopolies in general but had the temerity to declare that even public monopolies were objectionable.

"Where monopolies or semi-monopolies are known to exist," he continued, "the first line of attack on them should be the withdrawal of any form of legal protection, tariffs, patent rights or similar privileges, under the shelter of which the monopoly has grown up. And the second line of attack should be to insist on much fuller disclosure of company profits and accounts generally, so that monopoly profits cannot be made without the fact being publicly known, when the normal correctives of free enterprise would automatically come into operation. These processes would probably result in drastic weeding out of existing monopolies."

#### THE APPARENT SUCCESS OF MONOPOLY

One's admiration for the boldness of publishing, in a popular newspaper, an attack on a popular opinion is tempered with regret that the methods recommended seem so unlikely to be adopted or to command success. The writer does not state whence the initial impulse is to come, whether from Parliament, the present organs of publicity or from the mass of general public. As the big monopolies are strongly suspected of contributing

#### The Key to Post-War Reconstruction

The Welsh League for the Taxation of Land Values recently submitted a Memorandum, in which the arguments for the rating of land values were set out, to the Welsh Advisory Council for Post-War Reconstruction. The Advisory Council will be carrying out the wishes of the majority of the public authorities as well as of the people of Wales if they recommend the Government to deal with this matter without delay in preparation for post-war reconstruction.

As things are, unearned fortunes will be made at the expense of the community at the end of this war.

**IMMEDIATE STEPS MUST BE TAKEN TO PROVIDE FOR THE RATING OF LAND VALUES WITH CORRESPONDING REMISSION OF RATES ON HOUSES AND OTHER BUILDINGS AND IMPROVEMENTS! SECURE FOR PUBLIC REVENUE A PUBLIC FUND THAT RIGHTFULLY BELONGS TO THE PUBLIC! GIVE EVERY INCENTIVE AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO PRODUCTIVE ENTERPRISE BY ENCOURAGING EVERYWHERE THE BEST USE OF LAND!**

(By C. A. Gardner, Hon. Treasurer of the Welsh League for the Taxation of Land Values.)

## THE POPULARITY OF MONOPOLY

heavily to party funds, and are certainly the principal advertisers in newspapers, the impulse is not likely to come from either of the two first named. There remains the general public (including many thousands of employees of these monopolies), who, according to Mr Hobson, need only to be shown more clearly how the monopolies can gain to be inspired with an irresistible fervour for free competition. This temper in the general public is surely against common experience. All evidence suggests that the prevailing economic opinions of the masses are all towards any measure which appears to promise immediate security. Mere publication of the success of monopoly is more likely to inspire a public demand for a share of the spoil—for which some economic publicists would not be very long in coining a soothing euphemism—than for abolishing any privileges. Such an extension of monopoly, indeed, probably appears a kind of "collective security" in the eyes of many not usually given to idealism. Political parties do not change their policies against public feeling, and the speech of the Minister of Fuel, which evoked Mr Hobson's article is itself a sufficient commentary on his assumption of a smouldering enthusiasm for free enterprise which needs only a breeze to stir it to flame. Major Lloyd George could advise the gas and electric companies to "come together," to eliminate "wasteful competition," and to standardize their prices against the public without any shock to the party with which he is identified—a party which not so long ago used to advocate Free Trade with no uncertain voice. There is every indication that Major Lloyd George's recommendations for the "security" of the fuel and light companies (and their

employees) are as well received by the public as the recent recommendations for the "security" of the farming industry, although the security in both cases must be at public expense.

When Sir Walter Citrine declared as long ago as 1929 that the trades unions should encourage the centralization of industry as a step towards the consolidation of their power, he expressed an opinion which in practice has assisted the growth of monopoly and which has not diminished. It is not only the rich who support monopoly. Something far more than publishing details of Big Business accounts, something more than repetition of previous arguments—sound though those arguments remain—is necessary to bring about that revolutionary change in public opinion which alone can shake the enormous power with which monopoly, private and public, now shapes the lives and even the opinions of the people.

#### ARE MONOPOLIES INEVITABLE?

Monopolies are generally considered an inevitable and natural development of modern industry, hence discussion of the legal privileges they enjoy is dismissed as a merely trivial point. The public are less conscious that monopolies enjoy privileges than that during the wave of unemployment which swept the country after 1929 we enjoyed (as they were told) Free Trade and free competition. It is easy enough to retort that no development of industry can be considered natural until it has been tried under natural conditions, *i.e.*, conditions of liberty; it is easy enough to point out that during the last great economic crisis Great Britain under Free Trade suffered considerably less than those countries which had always enjoyed the blessings of Protection and those forms of monopoly which it protects so effectively. But these arguments fail to answer the question: Why is it then that under so-called economic liberty up to 1931 the great mass of the people still suffered from poverty, insecurity and fear of unemployment, while others enjoyed leisure, security and independence?

#### THE FUNDAMENTAL LEGAL BASIS OF MONOPOLY

History suggests that Free Trade came to our country not so much from enlightenment on economic matters among the masses, but because they were suffering and had been suffering from monopoly and Free Trade appeared at least a change. It was *new*. Now, however, Free Trade, understood merely as such freedom of imports and competition as existed in 1914 or 1931, is no longer new. We are not likely to come back to Free Trade except by way of free trade—by way of economic liberty in its fullest sense, equal freedom for every individual to exchange his products with whomsoever he will, equal freedom to produce them in the manner which appears best and easiest, and, above all, equal freedom to use the natural resources of the earth, including those advantages of situation which arise from the presence and activities of the community as a whole.

Big Business usually enjoys those privileges which tariffs, quotas, patents, royalties, cumbersome regulations and licences can confer or operate in its favour; but it does not always enjoy all of these.

There was never yet a Big Business, however, which operated exclusively as a tenant and not as an owner of land. The Big Business is always the big landowner too, although this aspect of the matter seems always to be avoided in discussion. The most inefficient of undertakings, were it able to monopolize the land which a competitor needed, could soon force its competitor out of business—or, more likely, absorb its competitor. No kind of competition could be more unfair than this, yet all Big Businesses are virtually in a position to use this power or to threaten to do so without the slightest infringement of our laws. Any consideration of the question of monopoly which ignores land monopoly must be superficial so long as man needs land for every moment of his work and existence, and any conclusions that the natural unit of industry must inevitably be the huge combine with which we are unhappily so familiar have no evidence to support them. As the experiment of full liberty in modern industry has not been tried, we cannot gauge the exact size of the unit under natural conditions. As the effect of monopoly is always towards larger units, however, it may confidently be expected that the withdrawal of this factor will allow the smaller unit to operate to a far greater extent than at present. Such economic liberty as exists or has existed supports this expectation. The gain to human dignity and self-respect, and the dominating influence of these factors on individual character, cannot be underestimated. The great combine, with its thousands of operatives and executives subservient to each other and to a directorate which is usually subservient to some other direction—this is no school either of self-reliance and self-respect, and some recent denunciation of general morality and honesty might usefully be directed to this basic factor.

#### A NEW ECONOMIC POLICY

The war on monopoly must be waged in the sphere of ideas, and it must be a totalitarian war, attacking the enemy at his main base as well as his outposts. This is not only sound strategy, but it possesses the advantage of novelty. The conception of Free Trade is an old one, its attractions are no longer powerful enough by themselves to overcome the dominant forces of publicity and current opinions. The conception of complete economic liberty, presented with sufficient force as a fresh, inspiring and revolutionary ideal, could eventually overcome even the inertia of a public educated so long by economists both orthodox and popular to consider political economy as a dismal science carrying no message to mankind in general, and having no bearing upon the great problems of our time. Before this conception can be presented, however, a sounder knowledge of elementary political economy must be extended among the masses whose knowledge or whose ignorance must always, in the long run, be the deciding factor. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that the test of sincerity among any body of advocates of reform is the degree to which they are prepared to co-operate with any movement to stimulate the acquisition of this knowledge.

FRANK DUPUIS.

## THE ADVANTAGE OF SITUATION

EVEN IN cities there are great differences in the values and rents of land, for some sites have a greater utility for a given purpose than others. Shops, offices and business premises in London, near to a busy railway terminus, where crowds of people are constantly passing are conveniently situated for attracting business. "To succeed, a shop must be in a main thoroughfare" is a commonplace statement. The extra business thus gained is not primarily due to the cleverness or ability of the tenant of the shop. He might be an exceptionally able business man, but his best efforts would be crippled were his shop in a side street. He needs a good situation for his shop; with that and with business ability success is assured. It is this extra value, due to position, that the landlord exacts. The fertile land has evolved a new quality. It has a utility of position which gives it a monopoly value. The high profits made in shops enjoying the advantage of good position are to a great extent due to that position, and it pays the tenant to agree to a high rent rather than take a bigger shop in a less eligible part of the town. The truth of this can readily be grasped by watching the number of people entering shops such as confectioners and drapers in various parts of the same town, or even of the same street. It will at once be seen that the shop most convenient for shopping, that is the shop at the point where people are constantly passing in great numbers, is the shop best calculated to succeed. Thus, so far as economic rent is concerned, it must be realized that as a community progresses, there emerges in the case of land enjoying certain advantages of either fertility or situation, or it may be of both, an extra gain or profitability in connection with production. This extra gain is not due to either the skill of the cultivator or the shopkeeper or manufacturer; nor is it due to any genius attaching to the landowner. In some cases this extra profitability goes on increasing even to a fabulous extent. It is due to progress and the growing density of population.—A. W. Kirkaldy, M.A., B.LITT., OXFORD, Professor of Economics, University College, Nottingham, in *Wealth: its Production and Distribution* (Methuen).

#### ESSAY COMPETITION Prizes Awarded

The number of Essay s submitted for the Essay Competition conducted by the Henry George Foundation was 43. The judges appointed by the Trustees of the Foundation decided, on merit, to award prizes as follows: Two of £15 each; two of £10 each; and six of £5 each. The Prize-winners are: "Aspirant," £15; "Tiro," £15; "Blackbeard," £10; "Democritus," £10; "Social Crusader," £5; "Brookdale," £5; "Richard Haydn," £5; "Husbandman," £5; "E. V. R.," £5 and "Louis Rayner," £5. Each of the competitors has been informed by post of the result of the Competition.

A free copy of *Land & Liberty* is an invitation to become a subscriber. Annual postal subscription, 3s; United States and Canada, 75 cents.

## THE HARM DONE BY SUBSIDIES

TWO ARTICLES by Lord Astor in *The Observer* (13th and 20th June) on the future of farming deserve mention. He refers to the League of Nations Report on Nutrition (the work of a Commission of which he was chairman) and its conclusion that there should be a change over to a larger production of those foods the lack of which is responsible for deficiency diseases. This means that there should be more milk, eggs, vegetables fruit, potatoes, and meat—in other words a greater production of those foods which should be eaten fresh and are injured by storage. On the other hand cereals, particularly wheat, and sugar can be kept and transported over long distances without apparent detriment, and should in the opinion of the Commission be grown increasingly in those countries whose climate favours their cheap production.

A similar conclusion was arrived at by the United Nations Conference on Food and Agriculture held recently at Hot Springs, Virginia (Cmd. Paper, 6451, 1943).

In Lord Astor's view no attempt should be made to expand the production of wheat in this country above its pre-war level, a level which it is to be remarked had been artificially raised by subsidization under the Wheat Act, of 1932. He points out also that it is extravagant to grow sugar in this country. "Before the war our encouragement of this crop made us pay about £100 for English sugar which we could have bought for £50." In addition we were making grants to help our colonies which were in distress because of the curtailment of the market for their cane sugar.

Moreover, there are disastrous repercussions in the policy of subsidizing the production of wheat and beet sugar. "Every expansion of corn makes the health foods more expensive . . . Every extra subsidy to corn compels the community to pay a higher price for milk in order to bribe farmers to stick to cows. Wheat as the corner stone of British agriculture first makes milk expensive and then compels the taxpayer to cheapen it with large subsidies in order that poor families should get enough."

Lord Astor's second article dealt with land and its ownership and use. It lacked definiteness, but appeared to lean to the view that public ownership of the land and private management of the business of farming was the object to be aimed at.

Those who favour a policy of land purchase should consider the increase which has already taken place in the price of agricultural land. The Financial Editor of *The Observer*, Mr. Manning Dacey, writing in the same issue which contained Lord Astor's first article said:

"Writing early in the war, the late Sir Daniel Hall valued the whole of the agricultural land in the country at around £1,000 millions. A reasonable estimate to-day would be nearer £1,750 millions."

After remarking that little land was coming on to the market because of reluctance to sell, he continued:

"High prices are nevertheless being paid for any farms offered with vacant possession. A leading firm of valuers state that they are unable to put a price on such property, because prices may soar to

almost any level if it is sold by auction. Before the war, the finest agricultural land in good heart would command a price of £40 or at the most £50 an acre. To-day such land is being sold at anything from £100 to as much as £130 an acre.

"Farmers in wartime are, of course, guaranteed more than satisfactory prices for their produce, and to a large extent the rise in land prices reflects simply the increased profitability of farming . . .

"Even where rents are controlled and the owner cannot obtain vacant possession, prices have risen substantially. Before the war, land as an investment was valued on a yield basis of five to five-and-a-half per cent.; which means that its price would be eighteen to twenty times the net annual rental received. Today, purchasers are willing to accept a return of as little as three-and-a-half per cent., or even three per cent. on their money: in other words, the land is valued at twenty-eight to thirty-three years' purchase.

"This movement is quite disproportionate to the falling rate of return on other forms of investment, such as Government securities.

"It is undeniable that some buying of land has been prompted by a desire to safeguard the value of capital against a possible inflation. Many former owners of foreign stocks taken over by the Treasury have put their money into land for the duration, accepting low rates of return until the outlook for industry is more assured . . .

"Government statements have suggested that substantial subsidies to agriculture will be granted. Unless steps were taken to prevent it, the tendency would be for such subsidies to be gradually swallowed up in higher rents, leaving farmers still with the very minimum needed to prevent them from turning to other occupations for a livelihood.

"It is arguable that agricultural rents in general have been depressed by years of low prices and that some rise would be justified to enable landowners to carry out necessary repairs and improvements. But it is obvious that the situation will need watching if any large-scale programme of assistance to agriculture is in fact put into effect."

Thus we have one more exemplification of the age-old story that every attempt to bolster up agriculture by protection, subsidies or price-raising devices results in higher rents, and the actual farmer, as distinguished from the landowner, gradually sinks back to the relative position from which he started. Another lesson is that, even if one did think of land purchase, the worst time to carry out such an operation is when the price of land has been inflated to an abnormally high level by extra high prices and subsidies.

It is apposite in this connection to quote what Lord Bledisloe said in the House of Lords Debate, 10th June, on the Town and Country Planning Bill: "Unfortunately land speculation is going on apace at the present time and militating against the acquisition of land by those who can best use it in the national interest. I shall give only one illustration, which occurred in the West of England last week when a certain

farm was put up for sale by auction. It was one of several farms at the same auction. There was there a little speculative syndicate which did most of the bidding while thoroughly well-deserving farmers were at the auction prepared to bid for this agricultural holding. I understand that that speculative syndicate has been going from one agricultural sale to another not in order to secure an agricultural holding to farm it, but in order to get what is described as a 'horizontal profit' out of it and, if possible, to sell it at an enhanced price to the person who will put it to the best use."

## HOW TO BECOME A PASHA

A SIGHT of Egypt is given in Mr Wendell Wilkie's descriptive article in the *Daily Telegraph* of 6th May:

"No one can travel down the Nile, I believe, even when it is the back-drop to a war, without realizing what education could do to help restore to the Egyptian people the national virility that history itself claims for them. . . .

"I met pashas at every reception I went to. Many of them are married to foreign wives; they are socially attractive, genial men. Public squares are filled with statues of them.

"Pasha' is a title which has survived in Egypt from Ottoman times. It was formerly a rank conferred on military leaders or provincial governors who served the Empire well. Now it has become a courtesy title, bestowed by the King. Egyptian people figuratively and literally roll out the red carpet for a pasha whenever he appears, for he has the money with which to hire such services.

"But when I asked one of my hosts, a young Egyptian newspaper man, 'Does a man become a pasha by writing a great book?' he answered, 'I suppose he could, except that almost no one in Egypt writes books.'

"Do you get to be a pasha by painting pictures?' I asked.

"There is no reason why you couldn't, except that no one here paints pictures."

"Does a great inventor ever get to be a pasha?' And I was told once more, 'We've had no great inventors that I know of since the time of the Pharaohs.'

"I was not in Egypt long enough to learn all the reasons for this cultural sterility. The fact that culture and education in Egypt's great cosmopolitan city of Cairo are dominated by non-Egyptians has something to do with it; as does the predominant ownership of Egypt's fertile land by a small group of pashas who, for the most part, have attained their titles not even by political activities but through the use of their wealth."

A committee of the Liberal Council has provided a special report on the Status of the Independent Trader which has been published in pamphlet form and will, it is expected, be submitted to the Annual Liberal Assembly being held in the Kingsway Hall, London, 15th to 17th July. The report devotes three of its pages to a cogent and convincing statement in favour of Land Value Rating, showing in particular the benefits shop-keepers would derive from the reform. We hope to make a further reference, with quoted passages, next month.



## PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

### ESTATE DUTIES ON AGRICULTURAL LAND

IN THE Committee Stage of the Finance Bill, on 3rd June, Mr A. COLEGATE (The Wrekin—Conservative) moved a new clause for the abolition of estate duties on agricultural land. The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, Sir Kingsley Wood, said it was one of the matters "which will have to be considered in connection with the Government's policy on agriculture," and he thought that this would be "some comfort" to Mr Colegate, whose speech would be given "the greatest consideration." If this is not encouragement to the landlord party, it comes very near to it.

Mr F. C. R. DOUGLAS (Battersea—Labour) said: There is not a single argument which can be brought forward in favour of this proposal which cannot be brought forward for reducing the Death Duties on many other kinds of property. If it is true that they injure the interests of agriculture, it is equally true that they injure the interests of other industries. The hon Member has attempted to escape from the dilemma by saying that in the case of industry ownership is very often vested in shareholders, who can sell their shares without affecting the actual control and conduct of the undertaking; but that applies in the case of agricultural estates. Every one of us knows that scores upon scores of agricultural estates have been turned by their owners into limited liability companies, to deal with this very problem. It is open to them to continue that process as far as they please. In that way the continuity of the company's ownership can be maintained, and the problem of raising the money can be dealt with by disposing of the shares, in precisely the same fashion as owners of shares in an industrial undertaking deal with the problem of paying Death Duties. In fact, there is no other object in this country which is dealt with so tenderly, so far as Death Duties are concerned, as is agricultural land, which is taxed upon a lower rate than other property, and on which the owner has an option, which is not given to any other payer of Death Duties, to pay the amount of the taxation by instalments spread over a number of years.

It is said that this taxation is a burden upon agriculture—a burden, that is, upon the industry on farming—but there is no proposal from the hon Member to exempt from the burden of Death Duties the stock-in-trade of the tenant farmer, by which he carries on the actual operation of farming. It is only a proposal for exempting the owner of land from Death Duties upon the land. Let us not forget that the land is made up of two elements. There is the land itself, and there are the buildings and the other improvements which have been made to it. If there was a proposal to distinguish between those two things in order to encourage the provision of improvements, quite a good case could be made out. The Scott Report, to which reference has been made, contains a series of proposals that there should be a fresh system of valuation which would make that distinction between the land itself and the buildings

and improvements which are placed upon it. If such a distinction were made, there would be an opportunity, not only in this case, but in other cases, to make a distinction between the actual contribution to production and the ownership of a natural resource which has not been created by anybody.

Let us assume for the sake of argument that Death Duties on agricultural land do to some extent fall upon persons who are actually conducting the business of farming. It is not a serious burden placed upon that industry. The amount in question is comparatively small. For the past 20 or 25 years the amount of Death Duties collected in respect of agricultural land has fallen to about half what it was. The amount now collected, something over £1,000,000—and I speak from memory—is only a very small part of the agricultural output of this country, which is well over £250,000,000. Therefore, this amount is of the order of much less than 1 per cent of the agricultural output of the country. It is useless to suggest that the condition of agriculture is seriously influenced by the effects of this taxation. Reference has been made to the break-up of great estates, and something may be said for that in some cases, unless we are all prepared to stand by a system in which the ownership of the land of this country is concentrated in the hands of a comparatively few individuals. I question from the very foundation the soundness of an argument of that kind unless we believe in a state of society in which there is a great gulf fixed between those who have large possessions and the mass of the people of the country.

I sympathize with those who wish to preserve many beauties which have come down to us from the past, but the dispersal of these artistic treasures is not due to the incidence of Death Duties upon agricultural land. It had started long before the Death Duties on agricultural land came into existence and before they had attained any significance whatever. The Huntington Library in California, to which the hon. Member referred, has one of the most marvellous collections of ancient documents. The Battle Abbey deeds were sold by the owner of the land more than 100 years ago, before any question of Death Duties came into consideration at all. If owners of land desire to preserve these things for the benefit not of themselves, but of the nation at large which has contributed out of the rents which it paid to the owners of agricultural land, there are means open for them to do so. They can hand over their property to the National Trust in order that it shall be preserved for the benefit of every one of us. There is no reason why those who feel patriotic in this matter should allow artistic treasures of that kind to be dispersed. I hope that the proposal which has been made will be looked at from all its aspects—from its economic aspect and from the other aspects which have been mentioned—and in the light of the fact that every proposal of this kind means that more taxation has to be placed upon somebody else in order to improve the conditions of those whom it is hoped to benefit.

### HOUSING IN SCOTLAND

In Committee on Supply, House of Commons, 8th June, the Civil Estimates for Scottish Housing and Health were considered. The SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCOTLAND, Mr T. Johnston, made his statement. Following is an extract from the ensuing debate.

Mr W. LEONARD (Glasgow, St. Rollox—Labour): There can be no denial that over-crowding is one of the paramount problems, and the councillors of the City of Glasgow cannot satisfy the mass of appeals which are made to them. There is in Glasgow a type of house which I call the uninhabitable, or at any rate the house that should not be habitable. It exists there in larger numbers than in most other towns in Scotland or in England. There are certain condemned areas in the city which call for immediate attention. There is the pre-requisite of land. I should like to be assured that action has been taken to safeguard local authorities against land speculation. Something should be done to see that land speculation does not in the slightest degree hinder the activities of local authorities.

Commander T. D. GALBRAITH (Glasgow, Pollok—Conservative): In Glasgow to-day there are 281,000 houses, of which 35,000 are single apartments and 110,000 of the room and kitchen type. Practically none of those houses have baths or sanitary accommodation except what is common to the inhabitants of four or more houses. If we are to remedy that state of affairs and bring our housing up to the standard laid down in the Act of 1935, we shall require at least 100,000 houses. When a survey was made in 1935, the Corporation estimated that they would require 65,000 houses. The estimate is now 100,000, an increase of 35,000 houses, perhaps due to dilapidation in the period of seven years. If dilapidation continues at that rate, at the end of 32 years we shall be far worse off, because we shall require an additional 160,000 houses to bring matters up to the standard laid down in 1935.

Mr G. BUCHANAN (Glasgow, Gorbals—Labour): The local authorities are already staggered by the figures which are revealed, and some are positively alarmed at the thought of what the new method will disclose about T.B. The Secretary of State can say what he likes, but it is not complimentary to our City or to Scotland that to-day doctors cannot get places for T.B. patients in our hospitals. The need for providing T.B. treatment is great, but one of the greatest needs is a period of convalescence afterwards. To-day, these people, after being treated for T.B., are merely flung back into the shocking dwellings from which they emerged.

Mr CAMPBELL STEPHEN (Glasgow, Camlachie—Labour): People are being conscripted; they are being taken into the Services and into workshops, yet the Government are making no real attempt to deal with the interests connected with land and property in order to see that our people get the housing accommodation.

Lt.-Col. Sir T. MOORE (Ayr Burghs—Conservative): You cannot expect people

to put their might, their soul and their body into producing the weapons which are to bring us victory when they have not reasonable conditions of life around them. In the last few years we have erected scores of airfields and thousands of huts to accommodate millions of Americans, but when it comes to providing decent and reasonable accommodation for the workers who make all these things possible, we are contented to let them live and die in squalor. What are these soldiers who are fighting to-day coming back to? They are not fighting for a slum. Surely they are not coming back to Britain to find a slum as their reward. We all know that T.B. is increasing. How could it be otherwise when, despite all efforts to keep them healthy and rosy cheeked and well, they have to live in waterlogged rooms, perhaps sharing a lavatory with 20 others in the same block? Those are the things that exist.

Mr A. McKINLAY (Dumbartonshire—Labour): There is no use drawing up plans. Most local authorities could stock the Department of Health with plans next week if they were wanted. The Department of Health itself could flood local authorities with plans. It is not plans we want. The first essential for the building of houses is the land upon which to put them.

Mr D. KIRKWOOD (Dumbarton Burghs—Labour): Think of Scotland, as we know it. If any stranger came in here to-day he would have heard every speech condemning Scottish housing conditions or calling for the present state of affairs to be remedied. Every speech has drawn attention to the danger that, unless that state of affairs is remedied immediately, the health of the people of Scotland is bound to deteriorate to a greater extent than it has done up to date. In my own constituency, where conditions are beyond belief, men working in Clydebank have threatened to stop work in a token strike, in order to draw attention to the awful conditions with which they are faced.

Mr J. H. MCKIE (Galloway—Conservative): Members in all parts of the Committee have rightly shown that they are aware that the housing conditions in Scotland as a whole are lamentable and deplorable, and we all desire to know, without putting undue stress on the Scottish Office, what their intentions are in the future.

Mr W. M. WATSON (Dunfermline—Labour): I have to confess that the situation is becoming so desperate in Scotland that I would be prepared to accept almost anything, so long as it was a shelter. Our people are becoming over-crowded and disease is developing as the result overcrowding, and conditions are so uncomfortable that I would welcome any sort of expedient that the Scottish Office might be prepared to bring forward to give us relief from our present housing situation. In Cowdenbeath the housing situation has been desperate for years. Half the population are now living in overcrowded conditions. There are many houses which are really not fit for human habitation but which are being occupied and must be occupied, because the people have nowhere else to go. In Dunfermline

there are hundreds of people who have been waiting for years for houses. In the meantime all the available accommodation is packed.

Lt.-Col. C. N. THORNTON-KEMSLEY (Aberdeen and Kincardine, Western—Conservative): The need for us to build, and to build quickly, after the war, a great many houses is so great that it requires us to adopt bold and, by pre-war standards, revolutionary methods if the demand is to be met.

Mr A. SLOAN (Ayrshire, South—Labour): I have heard statements during the Debate that Scottish children are better fed and better clothed to-day than ever they were. If that is so, it is a tremendous indictment on what they had to suffer in the past, because I can find no evidence that the children of Scotland are well-fed to-day. We are a nation of some 5,000,000 people. There is plenty of room in Scotland for us. There is no need to build skyscrapers and to huddle all the people in the City of Glasgow. There is no reason why our population should not be dispersed. There is no reason why Scotland should not be a happy and healthy country. It is not a nice thing to have to say about one's own country, but when we talk about our mountains, lochs, straths and glens, it is merely a façade for its misery, poverty and disease. What about the land? That was the bugbear with us for years. Are we to have to begin all over again the old game of applying for compulsory orders before we can get on to the land to build houses? It is both expensive and a delaying action of the most deplorable kind.

Mr H. McNEIL (Greenock—Labour): I will not attempt to compete with the picture put before us by the Members for Dumbarton Burghs (Mr. Kirkwood), Gorbals (Mr. Buchanan) and Dumbartonshire (Mr. McKinlay). I would only add that in my division there is the same acute problem.

Mrs A. HARDIE (Glasgow, Springburn—Labour): We all get shoals of letters, and when we go into the constituencies we get people clamouring to us as to whether we cannot get them houses.

Mr MALCOLM MACMILLAN (Western Isles—Labour): This is purely a poverty question. You cannot separate housing and health; they are one and the same, and part of the general problem of the poorer classes of this community.

Mr W. GALLACHER (Fife, West—Communist): As soon as you mention land hon. Members on the other side say, "I am finished." As soon as you mention anything that will solve the problem, it is an interference with the Conservative party outlook and is therefore going to introduce politics. Let anyone suggest to me any concessions needed to put up houses and I will make concessions; will the Tories on the other side say the same? "No," they say, "No interference with private property."

Mr A. MACLAREN (Burslem—Independent): We recognized in Scotland a long time ago that the three causes of bad housing were self-evident. The first point was that monopoly and speculation in land make an extension of building

impossible. The second was that a rating system that might have been devised in an asylum makes housing an impossibility. Everybody who builds a house is rated in proportion to the rental value of it. The third point was the low wages, owing to the competition of the unemployed men to get the jobs of those in employment. We had these three causes running together—land monopoly and speculation; a rating system penalising improvement, and at the same time by not levying rates on the value of land withholding the land from development; and a low wages system, all conspiring to make an economic house an impossibility. I would ask those who are really serious about this problem to go back and find out what was being done on this matter in the past, when men did not come to the House and ask for a subsidy but said that the only way to solve the housing problem was to dissolve the rating system. Here we are faced with a fact that was self-evident long ago.

### THE WEST INDIES

Introducing a debate in the House of Commons in Committee on Supply on 8th April, Mr P. W. DONNER, M.P. for Basingstoke (Conservative), said they were dealing with Dependencies where the over-population was simply appalling, where the conditions of life in some places are disgraceful. Among remedies he offered were "cautious and far-sighted planning of Imperial preference, industry to be freed from rates and taxes for a period of say five years (which is 'de-rating' without providing an alternative source of revenue other than indirect taxation and would only result in higher land prices), subsidies to ensure low freights, loans to industry at a low rate or none, subsidized shipping between the West Indies and the United Kingdom, and the intelligent use of tariffs to diversify and develop industry"—in other words the old and thoroughly condemned mercantilist, colonial and protectionist policies of spoils at the expense of the general community both in the colonies and at home.

Mr B. RILEY (Dewsbury) said: "Where I think the policy as foreshadowed in the (Stockdale) Report falls short is in its failure to lay the proper emphasis upon a radical alteration in the West Indian islands with regard to the relationship of the people in the West Indies to the land out of which they have to get their living. The admitted line of development as has been insisted upon by every authority who has examined the position in the West Indies, is to lift the standards of agriculture and of peasant cultivation, raising increased food supplies and thus providing employment for the masses of the population. There will have to be in the West Indian islands a drastic redistribution of land ownership and a better use of the land. I was informed the other day, in answer to a Question, that in Jamaica 12,000 labourers were on relief work, although there is an enormous amount of land which, if they were given the opportunity of utilizing it, would enable them to live within their own territories without having to seek a living abroad. In Jamaica there are about 2,500,000 or 2,750,000 acres of land. Of a population of about 1,200,000, 800 people in Jamaica own and control more

than half the land. There are 153 people who own, on the average, over 3,000 acres. On the other hand, 80,000 peasants have less than one quarter of an acre each on which they make their livings."

Mr EDMUND HARVEY (Combined English Universities): "When the great Act of Emancipation was passed, to which the Colonial Secretary last month made allusion, some £20,000,000 was paid to the slave owners in compensation for the loss of their property, but no payment was made to the slaves. Nothing was done for the ex-slaves, who were left dependent for aliving upon the good will of their former owners. A great number of the reformers who pressed for the emancipation were bitterly disappointed with the Act because it compensated the slave owners but did nothing for the slaves, and because it enacted a period of seven years' apprenticeship, which was virtually a prolongation for that period of slavery. The economic position of the ex-slaves was never put right. The result is that in our West Indian Colonies the vast mass of the population is landless. In the particular case of St. Kitts, where the whole of the labouring population is without any kind of landed property. There is a very limited number of land owners, and the labourers have their holdings at the good will of the owners of the big estates and are entirely dependent upon them for their work and their right to have their homes."

Mr DAVID ADAMS (Consett): "The question of land tenure is one of fundamental importance, to which the Stockdale Report certainly does not give the weight that should attach to it. There is no question of any further serious redistribution of land to be made available to the majority of the people in order to grow a substantial part of their foodstuffs. Otherwise, as at present, after a period of three or four months when the work on the plantations practically comes to an end there will be a restoration and continuance of the poverty that prevails."

In July 1938 we quoted from the 1897 Royal Commission which observed that: "The settlement of the labourers on the land has not as a rule been viewed with favour in the past by persons interested in the sugar estates. What suited them best was a large supply of labourers entirely dependent upon being able to find work on estates and consequently subject to their control and willing to work for low rates of wages."

The Sugar Commission, after quoting this observation of their predecessors thirty-three years previously say: "It is manifest that where the economy of a community depends practically entirely, as that of Barbadoes, St Kitts and Antigua still does, upon a single industry carried on by the employment of wage labourers on estates, the public policy of the class most influential in guiding the government must almost inevitably incline to this economic view. If they encouraged action which, in their belief, must tend to diminish their labour supply they would be cutting away the branch upon which they sit." The facts could hardly be more brutally presented.

## LAND PRICES SOARING

THE *Daily Express*, 17th May, observes that "agricultural land values rise rapidly as the demand by big moneyed people for first-class farms outstrips the supply. More and more business men, chairmen and directors of city companies, are seeking to invest in farm land and consider any price worth paying in return for the security and the soundness of the investment."

Evidence of the keen demand is plain at every auction. Recently the Bucks Agricultural Committee offered a 225-acre holding it had cultivated as a war-time measure. Bidding started at £5,000 and rose quickly to £10,500 when the farm was sold. In Worcestershire an average of £169 per acre was given for 36½ acres at Lincholt; in Devonshire where a few years ago farming was regarded as cheap, holdings of about 120 acres are worth between £7,000 and £8,000.

The *Glasgow Herald* has reported that the 102-acre farm of Craigash, near Milngavie, in Stirlingshire, was offered for sale at the upset price of £5,000. The sale attracted a large company, the bidding was brisk and the farm fetched £10,600.

More examples of the high prices of house property are reported in the *Scotsman* of 29th April and 6th May, the prices often exceeding "the wildest dreams of the sellers" when the "upset price" is compared with that actually obtained. The following are some Edinburgh instances:

A bungalow at 17 Frogston Road West, assessed rent £54, feu duty £8 3s. 2d., upset price £1,700, sold for £2,320. Equal to more than 50 years' purchase of the rental less feu duty.

A first-floor flat at 52 Arden Street, assessed rent £40, feu duty £4 2s., upset price £950, sold for £1,110. Equal to 31 years' purchase.

A semi-detached villa at 23 Ravelston Dykes, assessed rent £57, feu duty £6 10s., upset price £1,650, sold for £1,830. Equal to 36 years' purchase.

A ground-floor flat at 3 Campbell Avenue, assessed rent £50, feu duty £4 10s. 9d., upset price £1,450, sold for £1,730. Equal to 37 years' purchase.

A first-floor flat at 5 Learmouth Terrace, assessed rent £60, feu duty £7 4s., upset price £1,850, sold for £1,960. Equal to 39 years' purchase.

The *Scotsman* of 24th June reports the sale of the bungalow at 29 Cumlodden Avenue, Ravelston Dykes; assessed rent £60, feu duty £8, upset price £2,500, sold for £2,720. Equal to 52 years' purchase.

Only a few years ago, we are informed, dwellings like that at Campbell Avenue were to be bought for £900 to £1,000. Not only is the scarcity of housing responsible for the rising prices, but "money is seeking security in fixed property."

"Our country for sale" is a thought prompted by a glance at the advertisements in *The Times* from day to day of the estates that are in the market, many of them comprising farms and holdings, and the homes of ordinary mortals. Thus, in Scotland in Ross-shire the estate of Rosehaugh is offered, 8,000 acres including 41 farms, many feus and site rents and valuable salmon fishing; 50,000 acres of "glorious scenery" in Inverness-shire, an

"agricultural investment and sportsman's paradise," with numerous well-equipped tenanted farms and crofts, and properties and feus in two delightful villages; 2,600 acres in Argyllshire with three farms, several houses and cottages "together with valuable sporting over the whole estate and several miles of fishing" in river and loch, and a private pier and anchorage rights; in the county of Angus two estates, one of 823 and the other of 600 acres. And, taken together, in four issues of *The Times* between 13th and 25th May, the sales of eight estates in the counties of Cardigan, Huntingdon, Lincoln, Stafford, Surrey, Sussex, Worcester and York would cause no less than 7,475 acres to pass from one private hand to another.

## THE TRANSVAAL

OUR COLLEAGUE Mr Mather Smith strikes an encouraging note in his report on activities in the Transvaal:

"*The Free People*, our campaign organ, started publication in both official languages (English and Afrikaans) in July, 1937. For the first three years it was published monthly at 1d., but since the war started, owing to paper shortage and to the fact that many of our subscribers had joined the Army, we have had to turn it into a quarterly and raise the price to 3d. We now have subscribers in all parts of the Union and the paper is distributed, free of cost, by us to the Camps in the Union and up North; we have also subscribers in England, the United States, Argentine Republic, the Gold Coast, Canada, Barbadoes, Australia, New Zealand and Rhodesia, and, before the war, in Holland, the Argentine Republic, Roumania and Denmark, in which country the teachings of Henry George, and their application, had gone further than anywhere else on earth. Articles and extracts from articles from *The Free People* have been reproduced in papers in England, the U.S.A., Canada, Australia and New Zealand. That the teachings of Henry George, as they might best be applied in South Africa, are spreading throughout the country, may be seen in the many letters on the land question which now appear in many of the English and Afrikaans papers published in the Union. Information Officers in the Army, having seen copies of our paper, have invited Mr F. A. W. Lucas to address meetings at various camps within reach of Johannesburg, and he has now spoken at twelve in the Transvaal. He also addressed meetings of soldiers at five camps in the O.F.S. Most of these meetings were well attended and led to interesting discussions. Subscribers are increasing steadily in number, but, as most of the issue in Afrikaans and a considerable part of the English edition are given away free, mostly to the Army, the paper would not pay its way were it not for the public-spirited generosity of the growing number who give more, several a lot more, than the bare subscription. Most of our subscribers in the Army are officers and non-commissioned officers. It is, however, the rank and file who will suffer most from the bad economic conditions which, unless they are averted in the way we, and we only, show how they may be averted, will follow this war as they followed all other wars. Unless these men and women arouse them-

selves and try and do a bit of thinking and follow it up by right action, they will have only themselves to blame if they find themselves out of work and in poverty when the war is over."

*The Free People* published quarterly, subscription 1s 6d per annum, may be sent to Mather Smith, Box 4680, Johannesburg.

## CANADA

MR HERBERT T. OWENS, Ottawa, sends the following interesting extract from the 1838 Durham Report, Vol A, Appendix B, pages 5 and 6. It cites the report of Charles Buller, Commissioner:—

"The Crown Reserves were the result of a plan of the Executive Council, suggested, it is said, by the President of the Council, a refugee loyalist from the United States, who seeing that the disputes which had terminated in the independence of the thirteen provinces, arose ostensibly out of questions of revenue, imagined that all such disputes might be avoided in the Canadas, by creating an independent source of revenue sufficient to provide for the expenses of the government without

any necessity for having recourse to the imposition of taxes. For this purpose he proposed that a reserve should be made for the Crown equal to that for the clergy; and it was imagined that as the settlement of the country advanced, this reserve would yield a large annual revenue, and obviate all questions of taxation, by rendering the government independent of the people. . . .

"The crown and clergy reserves were not merely allowed to lie waste, but they were carefully disposed in such a manner as to separate most completely the actual settlers, and thus to obstruct in the greatest possible degree the progress of settlement."

In his covering letter Mr Owens writes: "It was in browsing through the famous Durham Report of 1838 that I came across this suggestion of raising public revenue which had in it the germ of the right idea. I have not yet been able to identify to my own satisfaction who the proponent might be. It would seem to be the Chief Justice of either Upper or Lower Canada named William Smith whom the description fits accurately, but I haven't located yet any document of his in which the proposal is contained.

The sorrow is that his suggestion was not taken more seriously, for if it had there would have been fewer sordid pages in Canadian history."

Mr Owens is doyen of the staff employed by the United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission and as he says "has been able to introduce some of the British personnel to *Land & Liberty* who had come to Canada to discover that there is such a periodical!" Despite gruelling work and long hours he has managed to take study groups through a course of *Social Problems* and the *Science of Political Economy*. Mr Owens wants a copy of the book *Pioneers of Land Reform* (Spence, Ogilvie and Paine); so do we, and several copies. Can any readers of *Land & Liberty* oblige?

## LORD WEDGWOOD

The many friends of Lord Wedgwood earnestly hope for his steady recovery from his recent grave illness so that he may soon be back in his place in the counsels of the Nation. He is now out of hospital and the latest bulletins speak of continuous improvement.

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

The new edition of *Progress and Poverty* will be ready in the course of this month and we are ready to take orders now. The book is in stiff paper covers, price 2s 6d net or 2s 9d by post. As stated last month, the trade discounts on the books supplied by the Henry George Foundation have been revised. Requisite information will be given on application or before orders are entered.

Deeply regretted is the loss by death of George Green of Belfast, who has devoted himself with great ardour to the advancement of the Henry George principle and policy. He was a member of the Committee and a generous supporter, with steadfast attachment also to the International Union for the Land Value Taxation and Free Trade, which with Mr Douglas he represented at the Henry George Centenary and International Conference in New York, September, 1939.

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

A joint meeting of the Manchester and Liverpool Leagues has been arranged to take place on 26th June in the Friends' Meeting House, Buttermarket Street, Warrington.

On Councillor S. Needoff's initiative an informal meeting of members of the Manchester City Council took place on June 2nd. Those present—both ladies and gentlemen—were members of various political parties and were met to discuss the advisability of introducing a Council debate on the rating of land values. It was felt that in view of the prospect of an early termination of hostilities such action should be taken at the earliest date possible. Mr. D. J. J. Owen addressed the meeting and the proposal was enthusiastically supported.

In the quarterly *Quaker Commentary* for June appears a lengthy report of Mr A. W. Madsen's address on "Social Security and the Land Question" in the Stockport Friends' Meeting House on April 30th. As the *Quaker Commentary* goes into 1,750 Quaker homes in Lancashire and Cheshire this can be regarded as first-class propaganda.

Readers of these notes who reside in or near

to Manchester are requested to reserve Saturday August 14th for the League's annual Garden Party which Mr and Mrs Hobson have kindly promised to give at Park Hall, Little Hayfield, near Stockport. Particulars gladly forwarded on application.

Our member, Mr J. B. Hain, in Newcastle-on-Tyne, has addressed two meetings locally on "What is Equal Opportunity to Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness." He found he had to answer many questions. He has asked to see that *Land & Liberty* is placed on the reading tables of the local Public Libraries.

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

Notices have been sent to members of the meeting to be held in The Friends' Meeting House, Buttermarket Street, Warrington, on Saturday, 26th June. It is hoped a good number will attend in order to discuss future united action.

Mr J. W. Foley will speak at the Friends' Institute, Islington, Liverpool, on the 12th July, 7.30 p.m. Subject: "The Economic Basis of Pacifism." League members are invited to attend and to join in questions and discussion.

The Crosby Henry George Fellowship meets now the first Wednesday in each month, 7.30 p.m., at 48, Kingsway, Waterloo. C. C. Paton, Hon. Secretary, 11, Tudor Road, Liverpool 23. Subject for July: "Effects of the Remedy." Members hoping to attend are asked to re-read the four chapters of Book IX of *Progress and Poverty* so that there will be a full discussion.

In preparation is a list of students willing to attend a study circle within their own district. If members have any further names and addresses, please let me have these for listing. Experience has shown that the study-circle method is an effective way of spreading the truth of Henry George and gaining strength for the movement.

CASTLE DOUGLAS HENRY GEORGE FELLOWSHIP: Hon. Secretary (*pro tem*) Mr E. J. McManus, c/o Leaths Cottage, Castle Douglas, Kirkcubrightshire.

The second meeting of the Fellowship was held at 19, King Street on Sunday, the 23rd May at 3 p.m. Mr Wm Bolton presiding. Mr E. J. McManus opened the discussion on "Wages and Prices," defining the terms

Rent, Wages, Value and Price and showing what operated to increase or to reduce prices. At the 27th June meeting, Mr James Cook will open a discussion on "Does the Beveridge scheme offer the people bread or a stone?" after which will be discussed other subjects raised by members without previous notice.

Among letters to the newspapers we note from our press cuttings "J.W.B." (3) in the Yorkshire Observer on "money" and the land question; C. H. Jones in Time and Tide on the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Sydney North Shore Bridge; A. J. Mace in the Clydebank Press on unnecessary housing costs with examples of high priced land; "Justice" in the Flint County Herald on the old Land Tax; G. D. McKellen in the Evening Sentinel on reconstruction and increased land values; C. A. Gardner in the Western Mail and the Cardiff Suburban News.

## ADDRESSES

The English League for the Taxation of Land Values; Fredk. Verinder, Secretary, 4 Great Smith Street, London, S.W.1; Telephone: Abbey 6665. At same address:

The International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade; Ashley Mitchell, Hon. Treasurer. The Henry George Foundation of Great Britain, publishing department. The Henry George School of Social Science.

Welsh League for the Taxation of Land Values; Eustace A. Davies, Hon. Secretary, 27 Park Place, Cardiff. Telephone: 1563. Hon. Organizing Secretary: I. T. Rees, 2 Southey Street, Cardiff. Hon. Treasurer: C. A. Gardner, 217 Allensbank Road, Cardiff.

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

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