

LAND & LIBERTY

MONTHLY JOURNAL FOR LAND VALUE TAXATION AND FREE TRADE

Fifty-sixth Year—6-662

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

June & July, 1949. 1s.

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Fragmentary History

Readers abroad have asked questions about the statements made by Mr. Churchill when, on March 30, he addressed the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston, claiming that the Liberal Government of 1906 arrived in power "with most of its aims already achieved" and that it was to the task of social reform and insurance that it addressed itself. He was proud, he said, to have been Lloyd George's lieutenant in this work.

That was surely a very fragmentary piece of history, omitting the most important episode in Mr. Churchill's political life; but then, it must be remembered, he was speaking in the Truman "New Deal" atmosphere which is suffused with the contris and the paternalism of the Welfare State. The Mr. Churchill of "land monopoly, the mother of all monopolies" fame modestly hid his light under a bushel. What had been happening in the intervening years until national insurance took the stage?

Campbell Bannerman Thanks

If any investigator troubles to search contemporary newspaper reports he is likely to register astonishment at Mr. Churchill's reference to the government of 1906. However, Mr. Churchill, as an academician, may incline to the opinions of Sir Alfred Munnings, as a political word-painter he seems on the occasion to have out rivalled a Matisse. It is true that the subject of Old Age Pensions, already promised by the previous government, had been mentioned at the election, but any reader of the first speech made after the 1906 election by the Liberal leader, Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman is not likely to notice any such reference.

This speech shows clearly that the election had been fought on the question whether, on the one side, Free Trade, public economy and in extension of freedom, or, on the other side, the Chamberlain panacea of "Tariff Reform," was more to the people's true interest. The result was regarded first and foremost as a triumph for Free Trade, and secondly, as an opportunity for the extension, in Sir Henry's words, of the policy of "justice and liberty, the very antithesis of the privilege and monopoly" favoured by the previous administration. And among the measures to extend liberty were laws "to give access to the soil" in rural areas and in towns "to levy a rate on site values." "May I say in particular," remarks Sir Henry, "that this election has been an unusual triumph for my friend and colleague, Mr. Winston Churchill, who has spared no effort and missed no chance

in championing our cause against what seemed overwhelming odds."

"Speeches by the Yard"

The Mr. Churchill of to-day, the Protectionist advocate of Fabian policies, the leader of a party in which the landowner element has always been dominant, may now deprecate this liberationist tribute, but in 1906 and for years afterwards he did not fail to justify it. Easily available records of speeches he delivered in London, April, 1907, in Edinburgh, July, 1909, in Manchester, December, 1909, and in Dundee, 1912, all show that he was amply justified in saying in July, 1917, at Dundee, "I have made speeches to you by the yard on the taxation of land values and you know what a strong supporter I have always been of that policy." In his speech at Manchester he declared, "All the great municipal corporations throughout the land, the most Conservative as well as the most Liberal have petitioned Parliament in favour of the taxation of land values. Royal Commissions have explored the whole subject and reported in favour."

Churchill, Henry George and Cobden

Lloyd George's National Insurance Act was not introduced before May, 1911, that is more than a year after the battle with the House of Lords, *with land monopoly as the issue*, had been fought and won. It was on that question that the Liberals successfully appealed to the country in the two 1910 General Elections. Churchill's silence on the land campaign is of a piece with modern school books, which also suppress it and tell the pupils that it was the Lords' hostility to National Insurance which forced the Government to clip their wings with the Parliament Act. National Insurance had hardly been heard of before then. It was sprung upon the country by Lloyd George, and the historian is not wrong who marks the decline and fall of the Liberal party from the date of that escape into Fabianism.

The party forsook the great cause which Mr. Churchill so eloquently stated in his speech at Derby in January, 1910, a date which apparently is not now in his diary, when he said: "At the moment when their opponents were forging new chains of monopoly for national industry, Liberals were prepared to break the old chains which had long oppressed the national land. Land Reform and Free Trade stood together. They stood together with Henry George, with Richard Cobden, and

they stood together in the Liberal policy to-day." The story of what has happened to the Liberal party is tragic enough, but what can we say of Mr. Churchill? Where does he stand now?

Alternative to Tariffs

Writing of the "Budget Election" of 1910, Asquith remarks: "It was the land taxes, and perhaps still more the proposed valuation of land, which 'set the heather on fire.'" Quoting Joseph Chamberlain's declaration that the 1909 Budget "was the last effort of Free Trade finance to find a substitute for Tariff Reform," Asquith in his first speech on that Election campaign declared this was evidence of Conservative misgivings that the Budget did in fact provide "a substitute, an effective substitute—a destructive substitute for what is called Tariff Reform." Obviously, the question of State redistribution via "Social Services" never entered his mind (Spender's *Life of "Lord Oxford and Asquith,"* Vol. 1, pp. 255, 269). Any mention of Sickness Insurance, Spender remarks, "was of doubtful electioneering value."

The subsequent decline into Fabianism, by all Governments, is a direct outcome of the Liberal failure before the 1914 war to implement land-value taxation.

Mr. Attlee at Fault

Mr. Churchill chooses to ignore the main question which gave the Liberal Party its one-time prestige and which Philip Snowden again made the dominant issue under the Labour Government of 1931.

In that Government Mr. Attlee was Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and deputy Leader. He had every opportunity of becoming acquainted with the principles of a measure designed to reduce rents, secure access to land and bring into the public treasury a proportion of all land value, whether the land is used or unused; a measure for which he declared his support on many occasions. He must know very well that the present Town and Country Planning Act achieves none of these things, and is not intended to achieve them. "The object of this Bill is not really that the purchaser should get the land any cheaper," declared the Lord Chancellor. Moreover, it is common knowledge that the anomalies, complexities and vagaries of the Bill have created so much confusion and doubt that Ministers themselves are undecided on its interpretation.

Yet, against this background of knowledge and experience, Mr. Attlee claimed in his speech at Glasgow, as reported in the *Manchester Guardian*, April 11, "We have passed and are operating the Town and Country Planning Act. We are getting for the people the values created by the people."

It is amazing that the Prime Minister lends himself to such a travesty of the provisions of the Act whose whole effect through its landlord compensation and its development charge is to penalise and hold up all development, already under the affliction of a rating and taxation system which it does nothing whatever to amend. The specious arguments used to defend or justify that legislation are among the sorriest exhibitions of Mr. Attlee and his Ministers.

Yeomen of England

"A free peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, may never be supplied."

Thus declared Oliver Goldsmith in his indignation at the results of the Enclosure Acts long before the policy of Enclosure was complete. [He was, of course, only

an amiable sentimentalist without training in economics and thus unable to see the great advantages when society is so arranged by clever economists that men depend upon the decisions of others.]

A meeting of Suffolk farmworkers, reported in the *East Anglian Daily Times* recently reminds us of the up-to-date complexity now ruling the peasant's life. Resolutions were passed demanding a wage rise of 10s. per week, that this should operate at the age of 18 not 21, that taxes on overtime should be abolished, the rents of houses brought down to 12s. per wk., that further privileges concerning rations should be granted farmworkers and some articles of clothing issued gratis.

At the same meeting an officer of the County Agricultural Committee attended to give a pep talk on production—with what response was not reported.

No doubt a peasant of Goldsmith's time would have been interested to learn how generous the magistrates have now become in some directions since they used to issue only occasionally a few blankets and sacks of coal. But what would he have said about taxes on his wages, or bringing rents down to 12s. per week! This simple peasant might have considered that some measure to reduce both rents and taxes and to leave him free would have been more to his advantage than pep talks and dependence on others.

Is Scrounging our National Game?

Such independent thoughts do not seem to cause very serious trouble among other professions. The farmers have approved financial arrangements to found a "Fighting Fund" of £1,000,000 reserve for their pressure group; the fishermen are bringing pressure to bear on the Food Ministry to increase the price paid them for herrings and white fish; the milk producers are pressing the Board of Trade to provide work for them by making State films; the butchers are urging the Ministry of Food to fix meat prices so that their profits will increase in accordance with the present price of living, and to use dollars to import stock feedstuffs; the smaller manufacturers are pressing for the allotment of increased capital equipment to get in line with the more highly organised groups, such as steel, electricity and chemicals; and even the musicians have been pressing the War Office to prevent army bands undercutting their rates. And one could give pages more of recent examples of energy expended in the same effort to lever riches by group pressure.

Can All Scrounge Together?

When Great Britain abandoned Free Trade and embarked on a policy of tariffs, quotas and marketing controls it must have seemed an excellent opportunity for those who could get in first at the game of getting money via politics; but since then the profession has become too crowded. Official statistics issued in February show that during the preceding year wages rose 4 per cent., but prices rose 5 per cent. The T.U.C. "supports" these statistics but implies that the State must do more in the way of reducing prices.

The Budget must have disillusioned them somewhat.

Improvements on the Free Market

Of course, if the Argentine Government would send cheap meat, the Canadian Government cheap wheat, and the U.S.A. Government allocate more dollars, the great scrounge might go on more easily. But those governments must also keep up the appearance of State-raised

profits and wages. The obstinacy of the Argentinos might become a healthy international incident and the wheat situation so holds promise. The Canadians have been fairly content to send us wheat for which the Americans paid, but it is obvious that the U.S.A. Government cannot continue to allocate E.C.A. dollars for this purpose against the pressure of its own wheat interests who have large stakes. Such are the manifestations of a desire to eradicate international friction.

As for the "Dollars Unearned" and their repercussions, the following extract of letter in the *Manchester Guardian*, May 24, is worthy of note.

"Kansas City is one of the great depôts for the wheat produced on our Western plains. Giant elevators line our rivers below the cliffs. President Truman's home town, Independence, Missouri, is two miles from where I write, so he cannot but be conscious of the importance of moving our wheat."

"Kansas and Missouri contribute heavily to E.R.P. The latest figure known to me is an average of \$283 a family. This must be gained by disposal of our products, of which wheat is the most important. You state that Britain must buy its wheat from Canada, which leaves us with our wheat on hand and our ability to contribute to E.R.P. thus much weakened."

"You write, 'Doubtless most American industrialists will realise, even if the wheat-growers will not, that dollars spent for Britain in Canada quickly return in Canadian buying of American goods.'"

"Personally, I am in the clothing business, one of the large industries in Kansas City. We cannot sell our goods in Canada. Before the union of Newfoundland with Canada we did an excellent business in that former Crown colony. Since the union we are barred. Before the war we did a sizable clothing business in Malta, the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, and the British West Indies, all of which are now closed to us. I have visited all but Malta since the war and the people there demanded to know why we would not sell to them as before."

"The producers of Mid-west America are being discriminated against by the operation of E.R.P.—we pay out, but our products are barred. The revolt against E.R.P. is only a murmur now, but if these discriminations, principally by Britain, are continued, the revolt can grow into terrible proportions.—Yours, &c., Robert Earl Barclay, 407, South Jackson, Kansas City 1, Missouri, May 14."

Solution of Over-Population

From *The Evening News*, May 20, we extract the following:—

"At the Manchester inquest to-day on Paul Deitsch, aged 50, and his wife, Magdalene (40), of Didsbury, Manchester, found gassed in a room on their dressmaking business premises, the Coroner, (Mr. Jessel Rycroft) read two letters signed by the dead man."

"The first, addressed to the police, said: 'Herewith we certify that, with full agreement, we commit suicide and that the balance of our mind was not disturbed.'"

"The only reason for doing so is that Stafford Cripps has ruined our business and our life, through his stubborn attitude not to make any changes in the purchase tax. We hope that, through our death, other traders will be saved."

"It was stated in evidence that the couple came to England before the war to escape from Hitler's Germany."

"The jury returned a verdict in each case of suicide whilst of unsound mind."

Every right-minded person will, of course, agree with the jury's verdict. Moreover, the public interest will be served by the saving in Old Age Pensions. The jury

might have been more consistent, however, if they had added a rider to the effect that the minds of 50 million people are tending in the same direction.

The surviving gentleman most concerned in the incident might be deeply afflicted if by chance this trivial matter is brought to his notice. He might even refer to it when addressing an instructive discourse to some Christian assembly. But everyone knows, of course, that such inconsiderate actions must not deter our rulers in their duty of guarding us against the effects of "blind economic forces," especially as so many Conservative spokesmen complimented the Chancellor on the courageous policy of his recent Budget.

It is possible, however, that an unenlightened few of the 50 million might one day take matters into their own misguided hands. We trust, if that comes to pass, they will not be influenced by the precedent set in 1641. This danger, however, will no doubt be minimised, considering that the deceased, as refugees from another exchange-controlling régime, will have left very few friends.

Another Advantage of Nationalisation

From *The Evening News* of the same date we also extract the following:—

"Arundel has had a hospital for 50 years and the present building, opened in 1931, was built for £15,000, on the most up-to-date lines. It was never in debt before it was handed over to the Health Ministry last year. Its welfare has been the object of much local pride. After maintaining their hospital for so many years, Arundel people are deeply resentful that within a year of the nationalising of the hospital, a proposal should be made to close it."

This, with the preceding extract, shows that our economic organiser merits the title "thorough" conferred on his almost namesake.

Perhaps the public will be persuaded at some not-too-distant future that the principles or even the expediency of taxation, as well as its mere amount warrants their own attention as well as that of financial experts who, to judge by results, might profit by some advice.

Georgeism in Tangier

The international zone of Tangier, liberated since 1945 from the Spanish Protectorate established during the war, has been suffering from the same troubles which occurring in belligerent countries have so easily been attributed almost entirely to war. The shortage of houses, the rise in rents, the cost of living and public services, and high taxation all follow the pattern we know so well. And the Legislative Assembly tries to deal with these problems by the same familiar methods: increased taxation, borrowing to balance the budget, attempts at rent-control, and limiting immigration.

These details we have gathered from copies of *Le Journal de Tanger*, sent by our correspondent, Mr. Louis Hirschfeld, writing over the pseudonym, Louis Yankari. But a series of prominent articles in that journal reveal how admirably our correspondent has used discussion of these problems to publicise the principles of land value taxation. A petition of tenants against the alleged extortionate charges of houseowners provided him with the original opportunity and he has succeeded in engaging prominent personalities of the zone in controversy all to the advantage of his exposition, especially as he makes such good use of local examples.

Mr. Hirschfeld has demonstrated what the efforts of an isolated individual can achieve. All other Georgeists will congratulate him.

LAND & LIBERTY

Published by the Land & Liberty Press, Ltd., for the Proprietors, the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, Ltd.
Fifty-sixth Year. Established June, 1894.

By Post 5s. per annum.

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JUNE & JULY, 1949

"BLIND ECONOMIC FORCES"

Mr. Clement Attlee, British Prime Minister, addressing a May Day demonstration at Norwich, recited his "four freedoms" as (1) Freedom of speech and conscience; (2) freedom to choose the Government; (3) freedom of the individual from the oppression of the strong; (4) freedom of the individual from the economic power wielded by the few. And he declared that: "Freedom to-day does not consist, as the old individualists thought, of letting the individual struggle for mastery while the Government hold the ring [sic]. *Freedom can only be secured in an organised society where the blind economic forces are controlled in the interests of all.* The italics are ours.

Having thus bestirred his followers, Mr. Attlee not only assured them of the future reward to be expected by those who behave themselves, work hard and remain contented; he also imparted some noteworthy instruction in the discoveries of modern economists who have so admirably improved on ideas which, as they are "outworn," scarcely need our attention.

Protected by our rulers' enlightened planning—so conspicuously successful in its application to groundnuts and potatoes—the unruly and undisciplined will be reduced to subordination, Sir Stafford Cripps's Big Business allies may consolidate their position, the stability of society will be assured. The influence of Protectionist Conservatives, intentional or unintentional, will continue to strengthen the Government's economic policy, and Uncle Joe's nose will be put out of joint. We might even be able to obtain bananas without producing blue ration books—a method, however, which the Conservative originators of Marketing Schemes would recognise as superior to the old-fashioned two-a-penny-off-the-barrow chaotic system.

Nobody doubts that Acts of Parliament can improve on Providence. Mr. Attlee's knowledge is so comprehensive that he can take from the haves and dole out to the have-nots (after taking proper commission on the deal) in exact accordance with the wickedness of the former and the merits of the latter. Moreover, the people will be able to enjoy an almost intoxicating allowance of planned "freedom."

It is painful to see that some few are lacking in gratitude for these benefits. We must do what we can to disabuse them of their fallacies.

Possibly this misreading of social principles may proceed from observation of scientific methods in other spheres. Old Thales, some 600 B.C., must share the blame for this. He thought he had made progress when he ventured to question the established opinions according to which mankind was at the mercy of blind forces except

in so far as they were tempered by the intervention of the gods in their respective departments. These departments recall Whitehall in the manner by which they overlapped and conflicted. It was unfortunate that later generations suspected the classical gods were no more than projections of human passion, lust, greed and, occasionally, higher aspirations. Thales pretended to find in nature principles which were fixed and calculable, so that man could build on certainties and, as further such laws were discovered, use them progressively to his advantage. Unfortunately, slowly and painfully, men came to accept these pretensions which by some coincidence seemed to work in practice. After the lapse of two thousand years or so men suspected some vague connection between fixed natural laws and the difference between a coracle and an Atlantic liner, a punch on the jaw and an atomic bomb.

We owe some debt to Plato for play in the development of these theories. His admission for success, as shown by the victory of planned Sparta over Athens, led him to discover that the peaceful and mean dealings of the market-place were beneath the dignity of philosophy. He demonstrated that higher knowledge could be imparted only in words incomprehensible to ordinary people and thus incapable of verification by sordid fact. He certainly did well out of it and his affluent leisure enabled him to devote his time more easily to these useful abstractions and thus divert to more worthy channels that intense intellectual vitality and bold enquiry which distinguished ancient Greece. It is comforting to remember that Plato's methods have acquired such a new lease of life in modern philosophy that parts of Bloomshury (where the Duke of Bedford draws the rent without noticing it) recall, barring the beauty and grace of Hellas, the groves of Academe. Milton, indeed, sneered at some of this "philosophic pride," but he is not in tune with progressive ideas, and he stuck to outworn conception, even by the half-lights of his own time. Everyone knows his *Paradise Lost* was a flop, and he would not have been given a minor job in a Carolean B.B.C., much less invited to deliver its Reith Lectures.

Old Thales's notions, however, were revived by such people as Friar Bacon. Even the bow-and-arrow brigades of those times, by improving on the older javelins, unconsciously followed his methods and proved them on St. Crispin's Day when they—

"By many a varlike feat
Lopped the French Lilies."

The savages of those days, besides writing *Divina Commedias* and building cathedrals, had old-fashioned traditions about common land. They displayed superstitions against the currency-control methods of clipping the coinage. Instead of abandoning the silver standard, they suspiciously weighed coins as well as counting them.

Uncontrolled research workers like Newton carried on the investigation of these supposedly natural rules, and Adam Smith started the most alarming period of our history by suggesting that even economic transactions were subject to fixed laws. Long after his death some of these suggestions took shape in the "disastrous policy" of Sir Robert Peel. Despite the chaos and wasteful competition thus produced dangerous delusions spread among common people. As wages rose alarmingly and de-controlled currency seemed exchangeable for whatever kind of goods best satisfied individual desires—they had not even developed consumers' councils to direct desire collectively—a dangerous spirit of self-reliance manifested itself. Deterioration of character had been noticed in petitions declaring "We do not seek to depend for a

languid and slothful existence upon the fostering hand of monopoly or privilege." They even objected to having to tell lies to Customs officers; there was a distinct recession in the contract-man trade; and it was even supposed there was an advantage in low taxation and government economy. They selfishly ignored all consideration for "the interests concerned."

Things might have gone further if the Reverend Mr. Malthus had not been at hand to show how war, poverty, disease and crime were the means by which a beneficent Creator limited surplus population. This brought rash thoughts under control. Some unruly elements emigrated to America where poverty was not prevalent and, by pure coincidence, land was partially free. It suited the upholders of the Malthusian doctrine that this coincidence passed unnoticed; just as it was fortunate for the defenders of the existing order that the theories of such philosophers of the time as Patrick Edward Dove failed to gain general circulation.

Patrick Edward Dove, author of *The Theory of Human Progression*, expressed the truth in these words: "When the world discovers that God has constituted nature aright, men will have arrived at the first and greatest principle of social science." From the recognition of this premise he deduced that wealth could be produced only by labour and thus became the natural property of the producer. He contended, moreover, that labour could never be

applied to anything but land or its products, and thus access to land was the first necessity for the production of wealth. He even dared to say labour produced rent, which was the natural property of the producer in the same way. He supposed the value of each plot of land depended upon the advantages it afforded, such being the natural division of the collective product of labour and the natural fund to supply society's collective desires as expressed in the necessary services rendered by governments executing their true functions. From this argument and the evidence of his own eyes, clearly the diversion of this fund to land monopolists had something to do with poverty and toil on one side and wealth and idleness on the other. He thought men would do better for themselves by enacting human laws in conformity with natural laws instead of assuming economic forces were blind and incalculable, and presuming to be able to control them.

Mr. Attlee is partisan of the latter view and he put it in these words when he addressed the joint session of the American Congress (November 15, 1945) at the beginning of his term of office: "We have not stood up to our enemies for six years to be beaten by economics." Four years now of the beating process which is called economic planning. Man, proud man, dressed in a little brief authority, in what has he succeeded except to make the angels weep?

F. D. P.

THE STATE'S BOTTOMLESS PURSE

ANOTHER stone was added to the building of the Pauper State when on, May 30, the Minister of Health's Housing Bill was read for the third time without a division. Briefly, the Bill is to "promote the improvement of existing houses and the conversion into houses or flats of existing houses and other buildings, by making available Exchequer assistance and local authority grants in respect of approved proposals, whether carried out by local authorities or other persons." The Bill includes certain amendments to the Housing Act of 1936, the one receiving the most publicity being the dropping of the words "working class" from the Act.

Under the 1936 Act, local authorities had the power to advance up to £1,500 for the purchase of houses. This is to be increased to £5,000.

Local authorities are to be given the power to provide laundry facilities and to sell furniture to their tenants.

Houses and buildings improved or converted so as to provide "satisfactory housing accommodation for thirty years," will, if approved by the Minister of Health, be subsidised annually for twenty years. "The amount of the Exchequer contribution will be three-quarters of the annual loss estimated to be incurred by the local authority in carrying out the proposals (to convert and improve)." The difference is to be made up out of the local rates. New towns development corporations are to receive like subsidies.

Private owners are to be subsidised to the limit of one-half the cost of the improvement or conversion—subject, of course, to the approval of the local authority. Improvement must come within the range of £100 to £600. Private persons taking advantage of this subsidy are to have their rents controlled for twenty years, and increase of rents over those existing will be limited to 6 per cent. of the owner's share in the cost of improving. The converted houses or flats must always be available for letting. On any breach of these conditions the owner

will be liable to repay with compound interest a proportionate amount of the subsidy received based on the proportion of the twenty years' term which remains unexpired.

The National Exchequer is to reimburse to local authorities the grants they may make to private owners. New Exchequer subsidies are to be specially provided for houses built on expensive sites; increased subsidies to be provided for houses designed to preserve the character of their surroundings, and new subsidies are to be made available for hostels and building experiments. Each bedroom in approved hostels is to be subsidised to the extent of two and sixpence a week for sixty years. Where a licence has been granted for an improvement or conversion under the Act, the building as a whole automatically becomes subject to control as though the whole building had been constructed under licence.

In the explanatory and financial Memorandum from which the foregoing is culled, it is stated: "It is not possible to estimate the financial effect . . . Until some experience is gained of the extent to which advantage is taken of the facilities for improving houses, precise estimates cannot be made."

This legislation follows the usual pattern. It is another example of the battle against what Mr. Attlee calls "blind economic forces." It seems that the poor will always be with us—or for sixty years, at least! The phrases with which we are now only too familiar occur in the Bill with monotonous regularity. "Exchequer assistance," "local authority grants," "new Exchequer subsidies," "proposals approved by the Minister," "any breach of the conditions," "increased subsidies," "special experimental measures," "controls to be extended," and so on. At any rate, no one can complain of lack of generosity on the part of the Treasury in distributing public funds; and as for the controls, are they not inevitable string to the purse in such circumstances?

The most legitimate and damning criticism that can be aimed at this Bill, as with others that have preceded it, is not that it is lavish with public funds, that it treats effects which make an attack on causes increasingly difficult, blinding people to the real remedy; it is not that these palliatives are paltry in their application, barely touching the fringe of the housing problem. It is that step by step, Act by Act, the rights of individuals to run their own lives is subtly being taken from them. Every palliative to redistribute wealth is inevitably accompanied by restrictions on liberty. The loss of freedom of action is not always felt by those who are presumed to benefit. The State says in effect: "You don't need the right to build your own house—we will build it for you. You don't need the right to choose your own laundry—we will do your washing." And so it is with glasses, teeth, wigs, education, insurance, transport and the rest. One by one our liberties are going, regulation by regulation and Act by Act we are approaching the all powerful State.

It may be argued that we may still choose our own laundries and pay for our own doctors and dentists, but

only the well-to-do will be able to afford to pay for other people's washing as well as their own. People living in hostels are to have part of their rent paid for them by those who live in flats or houses, and those who live in converted houses are to do so at the expense of those who do not. Threats and bribes go hand in hand—it is the old formula and the necessary accompaniment is the much-abused "black market," the law-made happy hunting ground of the "artful dodger," himself as "criminal" a creature of indefensible laws.

The real solution to the housing problem is as simple as it is fundamental. Houses are built by capital and labour applied to land. Set the building sites free by collecting the rent of land whether it is used or not. Set capital free by removing all restrictions and taxes and set labour free by giving it the only real incentive—the full reward of its effort. Open the ports and let other countries send us all they can in exchange for what we can sell them. Then, only then, will it be seen that the economic forces are not blind but conform to a natural pattern which works under conditions of freedom to the good of all.

V. H. B.

SCOTTISH LIBERALS FACE BOTH WAYS

At the annual conference of the Scottish Liberal Party on May 14, Mr. J. C. Stewart, on behalf of the Inverness Liberal Association, moved a comprehensive resolution under the title "Remove the Barriers," confirming the manifesto on individual freedom and equal economic rights which was proclaimed by the party on March 16, 1946. The resolution declared, "That there should exist in society no privileged classes or individuals," and "That all values in land created by the community should be taken in taxation for the benefit of the community." It accordingly called for national taxation and local rating on the value of all land, the exemption of all buildings and improvements from rates, and the institution of the fullest measure of freedom of trade, irrespective of what may be the fiscal policies of other countries.

The above provisions of the resolution were carried after considerable discussion to which, in addition to Mr. Stewart, Mr. C. M. Kennedy, Captain A. R. McDougal and others made able contributions in support. By the terms of the resolution the Scottish Liberal Party agrees to place land value taxation and Free Trade at the forefront of its programme.

The report in *The Scotsman*, May 16, on the discussions concerning amendment to one part of the resolution, and a 14-point programme for Scottish Agriculture reveals the confusion which prevailed in the minds of some delegates, and possible explanations why more is not being done by the Party's officers to clear up the confusion.

Part of the resolution, as introduced, called for the immediate repeal of the Town and Country Planning Act, which Mr. Stewart characterised as "the most reactionary and wicked Act of Parliament ever put on the Statute Book." The call for its repeal, however, was rejected by a majority, in favour of an amendment "approving of the principle of the Act," but urging amendment to correct "its present disastrous effects." In the course of the discussion Captain McDougal described the Act as nationalisation in its worst form, its object being to prevent anyone except a public authority from developing land, and, to judge by the *Scotsman's* report, this was not refuted.

Another inconsistency at the conference was the introduction of a 14-point Agricultural Programme designed

to give privileges to farmers in the form of guaranteed prices and markets, subsidising agricultural electricity and transport, loans of public money at artificially low rates of interest, and special exemption from taxation; and also providing for marketing schemes which must inevitably entail compulsion. How any person outside a mental home could sincerely reconcile these proposals with the abolition of "privileged classes or individuals" it is difficult to understand. We are glad to note that an amendment to delete the section proposing "guaranteed prices and assured markets" was moved by the Aberdeen Liberal Association, and after much discussion was eventually carried by a majority of three. A telling contribution to the discussion was made by Mr. Stewart, who suggested that if it was a good scheme to give preferential loans to farmers this could as justifiably be extended to lawyers, but if this was considered too expensive he would be ready to compromise for a special loan to himself at 1 per cent., the difference to be made up by farmers!

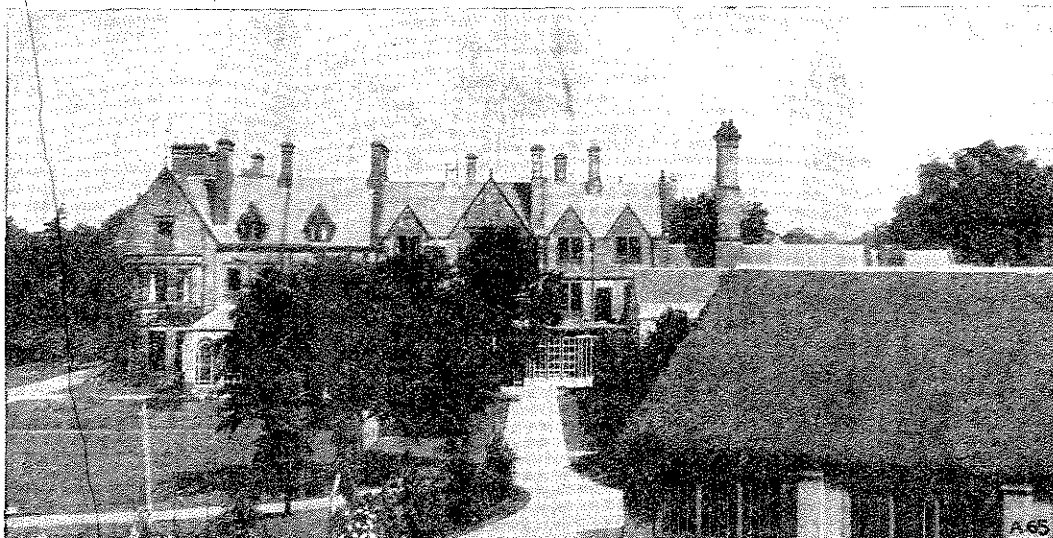
After the amendment had been carried, however, the hierarchy of the Party raised an obstruction; and it is only too clear why they did so. Sir Archibald Sinclair, President of the Party, protested that he could not go back to his agricultural constituency and say that the Party had changed its mind since he had told the farmers it would give them guaranteed prices; and Major Adam, prospective Candidate for North Angus, had already raised a similar objection. Sir Archibald proposed to shelve the question of price guarantee by referring it to a special committee and awaiting a definite lead from the English Liberals. His proposal was accepted.

It would be difficult to point to a clearer example of sacrificing principle to vote catching and it is significant that the rank and file show more consideration for principle than the leaders. Those who cherished hopes that the Liberal Party was "different" will be disappointed.

It is encouraging to record that thanks to the gallant efforts of a consistent few the resolution on economic freedom was carried. But it is evident the Scottish Liberal Party has a long way to go before it can claim to be any more enlightened and true to the principles of liberty than its opponents.

SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

At Swanwick, Derbyshire, England, August 14 to 21, 1949.

President: The Hon. BUE BJØRNER, Member of the Danish Parliament

"THE HAYES," South Front and Conference Hall.

PROGRAMME OF PROCEEDINGS

Provisional draft, subject to completion in detail or to alteration as circumstances may determine

First Day: Sunday, August 14*From 4 p.m.* Roll call and registration.

At 8 p.m. Business meeting of members of the International Union. The Conference convened. Confirmation of the programme. Appointment of Conference committees. Formation of Sectional Groups as may be desired to study selected subjects.

Second Day: Monday, August 15

Morning. Informal social gatherings. Sitzings of the Conference Committees and Sectional Groups.

At 2.30 p.m. Inaugural Session. Presidential Address by the Hon. Bue Bjørner, supported by other speakers. Greetings from absent members. Message from the Hon. K. K. Steincke, Chairman of the Danish Upper House of Parliament. After the tea interval, the session resumes discussion on the fundamental basis of a free and prosperous society. Papers submitted by Dr. Viggo Starcke, Leader of the Justice Party in the Danish Parliament, and by Frank Dupuis, Great Britain.

At 8 p.m. Plenary Session. True and false conceptions of capital and their bearing on the future of civilization—paper by Baldomero Argente (Spain). Agrarian land reform (so-called) in Eastern European States and in Italy—paper by Robert Major (formerly of Hungary and now resident in Italy).

Third Day: Tuesday, August 16

Plenary Sessions on this day will be devoted to the status and prospects of the Land Values and Free Trade Movement in a series of countries. The Conference will have a general survey of "Land Value Taxation in Practice" (such as was contained in the evidence submitted by the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values to the British Government's Inter-departmental Committee on Site Value Rating) and of the position in Great Britain as affected by recent legislation. Appropriately sharing the duties of chairmanship will be Dr. Rolland O'Regan, spokesman for New Zealand. Presented at these sessions will be papers by K. J. Kristensen, chief of the Danish Land Valuation Department, on recent developments in his country and telling also, no doubt, what progress the Danish Parliamentary Land Values Commission is making; by J. Rupert Mason (California)

on Land Reclamation and the Irrigation Districts in that State; by A. Daudé-Bancel and Marcel Cortvriend (France and Belgium) on the future of Georgeism in their countries; by A. G. Huie (*in absento*) on the victorious work of the New South Wales League. These and other reports and the contributions to the discussion by members at the Conference speaking for their own countries will thus review land-value legislation in Denmark, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, Kenya, California, Pennsylvania and Western Canada; together with the conditions for progress in these and the other countries represented at the Conference. Three sessions being available, allocation of the foregoing subject-matter among them will be announced in the finally printed programme.

Fourth Day: Wednesday, August 17

At 9.30 a.m. Plenary Session. Educational Activities. The Henry George Schools in U.S.A., Canada, Great Britain, Denmark (the Ecotechnical High School), Australia and extensions elsewhere. School methods and results. Textbooks and their use. Paper by Robert Clancy (U.S.A.). Speaker for Denmark: Mrs. Caroline Bjørner; for Great Britain: V. H. Blundell.

The afternoon free for recreation or organised excursion.

At 8 p.m. Plenary Session. Publications, Press and publicity. The Robert Schalkenbach Foundation and its work as publishers—paper by Miss V. G. Peterson (U.S.A.). The United Committee and the Land & Liberty Library. The Henry George Forlag (publishers), Denmark. The Henry George Foundation, Australia. Journals of the movement. Dissemination of literature. Uses of the newspaper Press.

Fifth Day: Thursday, August 18

At 9.30 a.m. Plenary Session. Suggestions for a World Programme—paper by Miss Margaret Bateman (U.S.A.). Educational film strips will be shown at this or other session.

In the afternoon, Sectional Groups in session; meetings of Conference Committees.

At 8 p.m. Plenary Session. At disposal for the adjourned discussion of subjects not fully dealt with at previous sessions or for such other business as may be arranged.

Sixth Day: Friday, August 19

At 9.30 a.m. Plenary Session. Reports received from Conference Committees and Sectional Groups. Recommendations considered. Adoption of Conference resolutions and the main Declaration of Principle and Policy.

The afternoon free for recreation or organised excursion.

At 8 p.m. Impromptu Session. Short papers and addresses, with general discussion on subjects of which notice has been given to the Conference Committee in charge of programme arrangements.

Seventh Day: Saturday, August 20

9.30 a.m. General meeting of the members of the International Union. To transact the business of the Union. Endorsement of the Union's constitution. Election of Officers and Executive for the ensuing period.

2.30 p.m. Public Session. Local Authorities and Land Value Rating. The British municipal demand. Lessons gained from successful operation in other countries. This session, organised in association with the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, inviting (to Conference hospitality) County, Borough and District Councillors and members of the professions concerned with housing, town planning, land development, valuation and the law and practice of local taxation. Speakers: A. W. Madsen, Dr. Rolland O'Regan, K. J. Kristensen, J. Rupert Mason, and others. Chairman: Ashley Mitchell.

At 8 p.m. Plenary Session. Survey of the work of the Conference. The advancement of its objects by necessary co-operative effort in all countries.

Eighth Day: Sunday, August 21

At 10 a.m. Addresses and discussions on the Moral Implications of the Henry George Social and Economic Philosophy.

MEMBERSHIP ROLL

As we go to Press the number of enrolled members of the Conference (whether attending or not) is 318 and as the time approaches we expect that this number will be materially increased. The membership is drawn from: Eighteen States of the U.S.A., four Provinces of Canada, four States of Australia, three Provinces of South Africa, and the following countries: England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland; Argentine, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, British Guiana, Cuba, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Hong Kong, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Kenya, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

The names added to the previously printed list of enrolled members are as follows:—

Dr. Rolland O'Regan (New Zealand); Nils Ebbesen (Denmark); Ole Flygaard (Denmark); John S. Codman (Illinois); F. Mitchener (England); Richard McGhee (Scotland); A. R. Hutchinson (Victoria); Duncan Mackay (Scotland); Andrew Hesson-Croon (Sweden); Lawson Purdy (New York); F. Halkyard (Victoria); Sydney W. Smith (England); G. A. Baker (Victoria); Mrs. W. B. Cossette (Massachusetts);

Miss Zoe Auden (England); H. A. Baxter (England); Edward Beardsley (England); D. Boothman (England); Mrs. Joan Boothman (England); H. G. Brett (Victoria); C. Austin Brooke (England); W. E. Burstow (England);

D. Cameron (Scotland); W. N. Campbell (Washington, D.C.); Robert Clancy (New York); C. S. Craig (England); Mrs. Ella Culley (England);

Dr. Paul Dane (Victoria), F. Dyer (England); J. B. Ellert (Alberta); E. J. Evans (Cape Province);

Frank W. Fairlie (Scotland); G. M. Fowlds (New Zealand); Miss C. Fraser (England);

John Garner (England); A. E. Garrett (England); Uffe Grosen (Denmark); J. T. Hastings (England); Mrs. Peggy Hill (England); C. H. Jones (England); Charles B. M. Knowles (Massachusetts); John C. Lincoln (Arizona); G. Dana Linn (Washington); J. E. MacDonald (Quebec); R. V. McNally (New York);

Maxwell May (Illinois); Ferdinand Mero (Hungary); J. H. Morrison (Louisiana);

David A. Noble (England); J. Bernard Noble (England); J. H. Palmer (England); C. C. Paton (England); John S. Perrott (England);

Mrs. W. Riley (British Columbia); Miss E. Riley (British Columbia); T. Atholl Robertson (Scotland); W. Robson (England); Mrs. Katherine Ross (Delaware);

Santiago Serra (Spain); W. H. Simcox (England); Miss E. G. Stacy (England); Miss N. A. Stacy (England); Harold Sudell (Pennsylvania); Mrs. C. A. Sutherland (Oregon); Miss L. L. Symons (England);

Miss A. Wells (England); Miss C. Wells (England); R. S. Whipple (England); Henry A. Yearwood (British Guiana);

Corrections in previously printed lists are:—

Mrs. Ann Ross (Delaware); J. A. Simmet (France); Mrs. Roswell Skeele (Arizona); L. A. Stevenson (England); Miss Margaret E. Bateman (New York).

Invitation to enrol as Members of the Conference is extended to all our readers, the conditions attaching to membership being—due enrolment as member of the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade (the conveners) in adherence to its objects and with annual subscription of 5s. minimum; and payment of the Conference Fee of £1.

The week at "The Hayes" extends over seven nights inclusive of tea on Sunday, August 14, and lunch on Sunday, August 21. The terms for board and lodging are £5 10s. (or £4 5s. in the limited "cubicle" accommodation). For those making a shorter stay, the per-day scale of charges will be 17s. 6d. Members can, if they wish, arrive at "The Hayes" on Saturday, August 13, and stay over till Monday mid-day, August 22, the extra charge in either case being 17s. 6d.

"The Hayes" is situate 12 miles north of Derby city and about 2 miles from Alfreton, the centre for cross-country bus services, and the bus between Derby and Alfreton passes the entrance to the Estate. Nearest main line railway station is Ambergate. Arrangements may be made—given timely information as to the day and hour of arrival—for members to be conveyed by special coach from Derby or any of the neighbouring stations.

Accommodation is still available, but early intimation of the intention to be present is particularly requested by the House Committee which is charged with looking after the comfort of all.

Our invitation to JOIN THE CONFERENCE is addressed to our supporters everywhere in all lands, whether or not they are able to come, so that they be associated with the Conference and its purpose which is to link together and strengthen the efforts of all engaged in our common cause. It is scarcely necessary to add that any extra donation will be most welcome not only to cover the Conference expenses but also towards the future of its work.

Objects of the International Union

"To stimulate in all countries a public opinion favourable to permanent peace and prosperity for all peoples, through the progressive removal of the basic economic causes of poverty and war, as these causes are demonstrated in the writings of Henry George. Specifically, towards the realization of these objects, the Union favours the raising of public revenues by taxes and rates upon the value of land apart from improvements in order to secure the economic rent for the community and the abolition of taxes, tariffs, or imposts of every sort that interfere with the free production and exchange of wealth." Subscriptions, and donations in aid of the work of the Union, may be made payable to Ashley Mitchell, Hon. Treasurer, 4 Great Smith Street, London, S.W.1.

A CONSERVATIVE FREE TRADER

FROM a remark in the preface to *The Case for Freedom*,* by Antony Fisher, one might assume the author was once a political candidate. His style, however, smacks less of the average politician's appeal than that of the most uncandidate-like figure in literature, and the substance of his argument also recalls Thoreau's assertion that "Government never of itself furthered any enterprise, but by the alacrity with which it got out of its way."

It is refreshing to read an uncompromising argument for government by principle, which defines that principle in unmistakeable terms and analyses present conditions of society in the light of the permanent contributions to social philosophy rather than the passing fashion of thought. Mr. Fisher declares the principle of society to be that "we should all do as we should be done by." It follows that "a people which goes to church and builds great monuments to its God and yet disobeys principle in its legislation can never be in a better state than confusion. No one individual has the right to force others to do anything, only to defend himself and others against harmful actions by anyone."

Upon this basis (which it has always been the policy of this journal to accept without reservation) he builds an excellent case for the Free Market as it was understood before 1914. He shows how tariffs, economic planning, exchange and currency manipulation, subsidies and trade monopolies are all the creations of unwarranted State action; that they conflict with the moral law, entail the destruction or limitation of wealth and lead to the corruption and weakness of society. Under the heading, "Positive Policy," he applies the principle of the Free Market to specific problems of our time.

Other Free Traders have done this before, but it can never be repeated too often. Mr. Fisher brings the freshness as of a new discovery to the task and brings to light some aspects not previously thrown into relief.

And yet, we wonder, how many candid readers—even those who sympathise intensely with the general tendency of the argument—will feel quite satisfied that every significant phenomenon has been explained and nothing really essential overlooked? Was it, after all, just pure cussedness that made so many people, even in 1914, turn their eyes increasingly either to the fallacies of Marx and his kind or the Fabianism of "social services"—both involving that coercive State action Mr. Fisher specifically repudiates? On the last analysis one finds that Mr. Fisher's advice can be reduced to saying, if we want more we must produce more. And this is the slogan of the present Government. On the principles of the distribution of wealth he has nothing to say. But for the overwhelming majority of mankind this is a question so important that the subject of total production fades into insignificance. He says that "Income Tax is now so high that it is acting as a direct check on production," but on the principle of taxation he says only, "A government will always have running expenses and it must tax its people," keeping taxation "as low as possible"—a phrase which refers the question to that principle of expediency which he sets out to overthrow.

On the subject of housing he observes, "In order to get houses it is important to have a free market in everything to do with house building. There must be competition . . . among the owners of land."

It is evident that he overlooks the conditions necessary to competition in the supply of land, and he confuses the colloquial use of the term rent as applied to hire-

charge for a house with the economic term rent, meaning payment for the use of land only. He does not seem to be aware that the use of land is indispensable not only for housing but for every requirement of man's material existence. He advises his readers to study *The Wealth of Nations*. This is excellent advice; but the sincerity which is apparent in Mr. Fisher's book emboldens us to suggest that a re-reading of Adam Smith's remarks on rent and the Physiocrats, and the subsequent development of these subjects by Ricardo and Henry George would enable Mr. Fisher to apply the principle of "do as you would be done by" to rent and taxation and thus complete the logical task which he began so auspiciously.

The only method, consistent with equal freedom, by which a free market in land can be established is to oblige the owner of each site to repay to his fellow-citizens the value with which they by their presence and activities have endowed it. This is not to coerce but to withdraw the powers of coercion which the State before 1914 granted to the owners and which a Socialist government continues to grant. This is to establish the right of property at the source of all property, vindicate the cause of government by principle, to introduce principle into taxation and remove the evils to which the fallacies of *étatisme*, like some morbid growth, owe their existence.

A CONSERVATIVE LAND-VALUE TAXER

IN his book, *Things Not Generally Said*,* Dr. H. Martin-Leake brings mature judgment and long experience as Indian civil servant agriculturist to a consideration of man's tendency to form those groups which are such a notable feature of the present state of society,

The first and original cause of this tendency he sees in the greed so deeply rooted in human character that it is wiser to treat it as a natural force than attempt to check it directly. He recognises that the landed interests form the oldest of these groups; after them came the Guilds, the joint-stock companies, financial trusts, Trade Unions, traders' and professionals' associations. Any injurious activities of these groups arise not so much from deliberate intent as from the influence of enthusiasm because (apparently) it is not in human nature to be enthusiastic for the reform of an abuse unless one desires to set up another abuse in its place. "Can the title, 'The Great Robbery,' used for a book detailing the vested interests in land, have any other result," he asks, "than to arouse resentment against the landed interests? In my mind the possessors of landed interests are entirely free from any action worthy of the name of robbery," although "I am in agreement with the view that the land tenure system of this country is anachronistic."

The author develops his theme somewhat diffusely but with insight, apt quotation and wide knowledge, leading up to the conclusion that in the development of co-partnership lies the way out of our difficulties. Perhaps the argument would have been more convincing if the proposals had been clearer and more positive. It is difficult for the reader to understand to what extent they could be enforced without the compulsion the author repudiates. His emphasis, however, upon the unique situation of land in relation to society, and land value taxation as a source of revenue is especially interesting as it comes from the Conservative approach. It is evident that here, especially, he has drawn upon personal knowledge and observation, prompted originally, no doubt by experience of the zemindar system, rather than upon

* Runnymede Press, Gt. Russell Street. 2s. 6d.

* Christopher Johnson, Gt. Russell Street. 10s. 6d.

"things generally said." His profound distrust of all enthusiasm for general propositions could not blind him to obvious anomalies in practice or deter him from further research. He is the first conservative to our knowledge who has at the same time expounded the advantages of land value taxation and exposed the specious fallacies embodied in the Town and Country Planning Act.

Although Dr. Martin-Leake says, "the arguments for and against free trade are too complex" to be given in his book, it is evident, he rejects free trade and considers the Liberal arguments in its favour were strongly influenced by the industrialists' special interest in securing cheap labour, involving "exploitation" of the working classes. His use of such terms as "schemes of social reconstruction," "inflationary pressure," "the inflationary spiral," etc., is certainly no departure from the realm of "things generally said," and leads him to accept fallacies generally held, such as the assumption that wages are drawn from capital, imports cause unemployment, and economic law changes with the passage of time.

The tendency to seek ulterior motives in every association and every movement for radical reform obscures his appreciation of the essential difference between selfishness and legitimate self-interest. He fails to see that two exchangers in bargaining with each other, under a free system, reach voluntary agreement not only in their own best interest but also in that of society in general.

The merchants and industrialists who supported Richard Cobden were inspired, no doubt, by self-interest, but anyone who reads the literature of those times cannot

help being impressed by the abundant evidence of the higher feeling which prevailed in public life, and as far as concerns the middle and skilled artisan classes at least, in private life than in our own times.

In "its power of adaptation" Dr. Martin-Leake sees in the Conservative Party the agency for implementing the required co-partnership policy, although he admits that its power of adaptation, as far as land monopoly is concerned, has not so far been very evident. It is interesting to note that another Conservative whose book we review in this issue considers the same agency most suitable for a return to Free Trade. It is true that the great Act of 1846 was carried by the Conservative Government of Sir Robert Peel; but, as he himself confessed, this was only made possible by the "untiring energy" and "pure and disinterested motives" of Richard Cobden.

The Free Trade movement was perhaps the most striking evidence in history of a movement which rejected group selfishness. It demonstrated that an enthusiasm for justice can be as potent an element in human character as selfishness. The concentration of capital which emanates from land monopoly was the first, and has always remained the most powerful factor in the formation of selfish groups; but the bewildering speed with which selfish groups of all kinds have multiplied since the return to "the State Socialism known as Protection" is a factor Dr. Martin-Leake does not seem to have taken into his calculations and, we think, would modify them considerably.

F. D. P.

ITALY'S APPROACH TO THE LAND PROBLEM

BRITISH newspapers of April 18 had much to say about the proposed "land reform" which Signor de Gaspari's Government had made an Easter present to Italy. It begins with the words: "One million, two hundred hectares of Italian land are to be made available to the landless."

April 16 was the first anniversary of the great Christian Democratic electoral victory and to mark the occasion the party addressed the Italian people in a manifesto which said among other things:—

"The promises of freedom in the Atlantic Charter have unfortunately been wiped out in Central and Eastern Europe, where one free government after the other has been violently overturned. To avoid this tragic destiny the democratic nations have joined in defence.

"The Italian Constitution has proclaimed principles of social justice which this Government, victoriously born on April 16, last, will carry out in spite of the natural poverty of the Italian soil and the big war destruction."

We have no evidence to doubt the good intentions of the Italian Government. Other Governments have long ago set the same example, and no régime can be blamed unduly for any concessions to the desires of those on whom it must depend for power. In the general interest, however, it might be useful to investigate more closely the effects of this measure.

All landlords who possess more than 300 acres of arable land, or more than 750 acres of mountainous or forest land, are to be obliged to sell or lease to the estimated million of landless peasants some part of their holdings, so that these are reduced to the stipulated acreage. The period allowed for this to be completed is not yet fixed. When it expires the State is to buy the surplus land, not, however, "for keeps," but in order to lease it to the new

occupiers on the instalment system, so that at the end of 20 years it becomes their own property.

This method reveals something of the problems which will arise. What happens if a proprietor owns, for example, some 200 acres of arable and 400 acres of other land? Is the composite holding above or below the permitted amount? If above, in what proportions is the surplus to be divided? Will that surplus necessarily constitute an economic holding? Must a proprietor give up his best or his average land? If average, can this be exactly computed? And can it always be decided what is and what is not arable? If all the million new proprietors are to be treated alike, does this not involve an extremely difficult assessment, during a period of necessarily uncertain and fluctuating values, of the value of all agricultural land, some of which might be ripe for other development? What about new buildings and machinery for the new proprietors? Who is or is not a peasant? Are there no owners of both urban and agricultural land? And, finally, are there no landless in the towns?

One is driven to the conclusion that this "reform" could only be carried out, without endless delay, by arbitrary and ruthless administrators, whose decisions must be final and cannot be equitable. This, on examination, proves to be the outcome of a measure which so many well-meaning people might assume to be so simple.

Criticism, however, is useful only so far as it points to a satisfactory alternative.

If the Italian Government, in conformity with social justice, were to declare that all Italian land, urban as well as rural, was the rightful property of all Italians, collectively, it might easily start by a valuation of land, apart

from the value of any improvements carried out by the individual holders with their own capital and at their own risk. That this can be easily and efficiently accomplished has been proved by the example of Denmark and other countries. This completed, the Government would logically collect the value and by employing it to defray the expenses of all communal services, such as roads and harbours, administration and national defence, could ensure that this communally-created value was devoted to the welfare of the Italian people as a whole. None would be able to monopolise anything he had not produced by his labour, directly or indirectly applied; and by reducing other taxation the burden placed upon work and its production could be lifted.

To save capital and employ it without any risk to the public would thus be much easier; and each holding, rural and urban, would naturally evolve to its most economical size. Instead of losing £25 million, the taxpayers would gain; and if the American people desire to assist Italians, by lending individually, and at their own risk and judgment, they would benefit themselves as well as Italy.

The Italian people are not lacking in industrial and commercial ability as well as agricultural. The expansion of such undertakings would require the employment of more labour and, we venture to suggest, a million Italians would not then need to forsake the land of their fathers.

PRESS COMMENTS

From the Press reports we take the following observations and comments. The Rome correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, April 18, wrote: "The land reform, always dear to the hearts of the old Christian Democratic Popular parties under Don Sturzo and to the new Christian Democrats is, of course, full of snags. Thousands of the most turbulent landless peasants in Emilia and in South Italy will not make good peasant proprietors, and belong rather to the difficult class of the unemployable. [The old excuse of those who forget that the "destruction of the poor is their poverty!"—Ed., L. & L.] There will be sharp practice on the part of the little proprietors who live in the towns and who will try to masquerade as landless tenants and thus try to increase their holdings. There will be a hundred and one tricks by the big proprietors to pretend that their land is already divided up among different owners . . . It is likely that the Prime Minister will lose the Liberal support in his Cabinet over this reform. For example, his Minister of Justice is a very large Italian landowner . . . Signor de Gaspari reckons that it will cost the State £25,000,000 to get the scheme going."

The Rome correspondent of *The Times*, April 18, said of the scheme that the approximate cost to the State is estimated at about £44 million for the purchase of land and £176 million for its development. [Poor Italy, by what form or forms of taxation, and from whom, is all this ransom to be obtained for handing over to the monopolists of its land?—Ed., L. & L.] Further, on April 20, this correspondent wrote: "The number of private landowners to be called on to contribute (by expropriation) to the plan might reach 8,000. This figure may seem negligible compared with the 9,500,000 private owners of land totalling about 43 million acres, but it must be remembered that nearly 54 per cent. of these owners possess land of one acre or less, while 29 per cent. possess one to four acres and 10 per cent. from four to 10 acres . . . The first rumblings of opposition

to the plan, which will go a long way towards meeting accusations that the Government is following a reactionary policy in favour of the big landowners, are already to be heard. The Liberals and right wing opinion in general challenge its legality. The Communists, realising that Signor de Gaspari and his Minister of Agriculture, Signor Segni, have stolen some of their thunder, are casting about for arguments to convince their agrarian followers that somewhere or other there is a trick in the scheme."

The Times, April 19, in a leading article: "Little or no advance can be expected, in a country burdened by a growing agricultural proletariat, as long as land tenure remains as it is. The landless peasants can no longer flock across the sea as of old; nowadays they must stay at home and go hungry. A measure of the need for reform can be had from a few bare figures. According to the census of 1930, since when conditions have scarcely changed, about 3,000 landlords have about 12,500,000 acres, which is 18 per cent. of all the farming land of Italy and represents an average of over 4,000 acres each. At the other end of the scale there swarms a multitude of dwarf-holders, over 650,000 of them, who farm a total of 357,000 acres or about half an acre each. Here is a reason why the Communists, with their campaign against the rich and landed, have gained many adherents among the poor and landless peasants of the Italian south."

ISRAEL COULD BE A MODEL STATE

WITH great pleasure we have received a long-awaited letter from Dr. J. J. Pikler, of Budapest, showing that he has been in regular receipt of *LAND & LIBERTY* and has thus been able to follow the developments in the movement to which he is so devoted and has rendered such outstanding service. His great desire is that he could be present at the forthcoming International Conference.

In spite of his advanced years (he is in his 85th), Dr. Pikler retains his activity, which is remarkably exemplified in his two recent contributions to the Vienna Jewish paper *Neue Welt Und Judenstaat*. One of these is entitled "The Way to the Model State" and the other is "Inviolable Human Rights and the Constitution of Israel." He pleads that the social and fiscal basis of the State be the observance of these rights by distinguishing absolutely between that which belongs sacredly to the community and that which belongs sacredly to the individual—namely, that the public revenue be derived by collecting the rent of land and that no taxation or burden be placed upon the fruits of labour. Israel has this opportunity to set a glorious example to the rest of the world, and in this writing the principle and policy enunciated by Henry George is most brilliantly stated. One may be gratified to learn that Dr. Pikler is given this opportunity to offer persuasion to the leaders of the Israeli Government.

At home Dr. Pikler is busily occupied revising a book which he has written in these late years. It is devoted to the four typically possible forms of the social order—total communism, total anarchism, the existing social order, and Georgeism. When he has finished the revision his pupils (some of them visit him twice a month) will have it duplicated in manuscript and it will be his inheritance to them and to the cause.

As for Dr. Pikler's *absent* pupils, he will himself be glad to have our message from two of them, namely, Robert Major in Rome and Louis Hirschfeld in Tangier.

LESSONS OF HISTORY

In his *Civilization on Trial** Professor Arnold J. Toynbee has presented a number of historical essays under such headings as "My View of History," "Does History Repeat Itself?" "Encounters between Civilisations," "The Meaning of History for the Soul," etc. The subjects are approached from an elevated standpoint and there is abundant evidence of wide knowledge and extensive research. The author claims that the book has a unity of aim and idea, but perhaps because of the method of treatment this is not very clear to the ordinary reader. It is not until page 222, for example, that the author indicates what he means by civilisation, and his definition: "the smallest unit of historical study at which one arrives when one tries to understand the history of one's country," is not likely to leave a clear impression of the essential nature of the subject.

The author's outlook is not cynical or destructive; he does not quarrel with the spirit of the universe; and he insists on the advantage of classical studies. Yet, as one rises from reading his work it is difficult to give a satisfactory answer in one's own mind to the question: what exactly is his message for the average person striving to do his part in strengthening our civilisation or, at least, everything in it which is sound? From a leading historian, Director of Studies at the Royal Institute of International Affairs and Research Professor of International History in London University, with all the access to material and leisure for the task which these positions imply, more might have been expected. There is much, no doubt, to interest the speculator in the realm of intangible abstractions, but little to guide any active reformer in making decisions in those practical matters which can lead directly to the elevation of humanity.

We are told "the regular pattern of social disintegration is a schism of the disintegrating society into a recalcitrant proletariat and a less and less effectively dominant minority." This means, surely, that as the means of subsistence become increasingly under the control of a wealthy few or a centralised bureaucracy the people become dissatisfied. We do not need to pay historians to tell us this. The reformer wants evidence to show why this concentration takes place. Thus the fortunes of any civilisation cannot be explained until we know something of the economic laws which man must obey before he can keep himself alive, much less indulge in historical speculation.

On this subject all that Professor Toynbee can say seems to be, that to be saved "In economics, we must find working compromises (varying according to practical requirements of different places and times) between free enterprise and socialism."

No evidence is advanced to prove the implication that the rights of society necessarily conflict with the rights of the individual. And it does not help us when we are told that the increased prosperity of the English working classes in the middle of the last century was due only to factory acts, trades unions and the vote. Free Trade and mechanical discovery had only negligible influence, apparently, on improvement.

In one passage Professor Toynbee implies that every historian must be influenced by the time in which he happens to live. He does not consider whether the

historian's views might not also be influenced by the material circumstances in which he happens to live. At all periods of his history man has been obliged to subsist either by applying his own labour to things of the earth, or by somehow obtaining the proceeds of the labour of others. Hence, at all periods of history the great mass of men must be concerned in getting a living before they can develop any opinions about political or social movements. These innumerable struggles of the multitude have never been given due prominence in comparison with the activities of those more sheltered from their influence. With no disrespect to historians we suggest that this disparity must always unconsciously influence their speculations and obscure the importance of considerations which might be all-important to the solution of historical and social problems. No one who has not lived and worked for considerable periods with peoples and classes different from their own can realise the extent to which circumstances affect one's outlook; no one who has not experienced real poverty can fully understand its inevitable influence upon the feelings of ordinary men. Even when the State relieves such poverty by mechanical redistribution or artificial protection, those protected must be concerned more with striving for political power as an artificial means to material welfare than with considering abstract ideas, or even religion.

If, before presuming to judge problems of civilisation, we first consider the essential conditions within which man must supply his material needs and desires—and keep these conditions constantly before us—we are likely to make more progress than by starting with abstractions which, in effect, place the cart before the horse. And the first of these conditions is that man must have access to the earth before he can apply any of his labour to his subsistence, or co-operate with others for the same purpose. And it is useful to remember that civilisation has been described as co-operation.

Applying this knowledge to the factors which cause the rise and fall of civilisation, we find that in primitive conditions, where men live directly from the land and co-operation extends only to the small group such as the family or tribe, although there is no great accumulation of wealth either collectively or individually there is none of the disparity which we call poverty, and there are no social revolutions.

As co-operation extends, wealth increases and—assuming that mutual defence of justice does not keep pace—more plunder can be obtained. As civilisation becomes more complex it becomes possible to consolidate perpetual plunder by legislation which the masses eventually fail to recognise. And the first and easiest step has always been by appropriating land. "The first who, having enclosed a piece of ground, had the idea of saying, 'This is mine,' and found people simple enough to believe it," says Rousseau, "was the real founder of civil society" and, he might have added, the originator of a proletariat."

If any amateur historian cares to investigate for himself he can find abundant evidence—often in chance references of other historians—to show that it is on this original method of plunder that other methods have been built and a dissatisfied proletariat produced.

We recommend this line of investigation to any historian who is seeking a clue to the causes of the decline of civilisations. It seems to have escaped Professor Toynbee's notice altogether.

F. D. P.

*Oxford University Press. 12s. 6d.

CHARLES A. GARDNER

It is with deep regret that we have to report the death of Charles A. Gardner, of Cardiff. He had been seriously ill for many months and time and again when he rallied there had been at least some hope of recovery, but after the long struggle the end came on June 7 at his home, 217 Allensbank Road. He was aged 55. He was one of those who recognised the duties and responsibilities of citizenship in the highest sense. Assiduous in his day-to-day business occupation, he took a keen and vigorous part in public affairs, an ardent reformer, able and persuasive in the enduring campaign for upholding the equal rights of all, and thereby attaining the establishment of the just social state—and of such is the salt of the earth. As a young man in his teens and then member of the League of Young Liberals, he attended the economic classes in Cardiff conducted by the late Edward McHugh and from then his whole devotion was given to the Henry George philosophy. His mind had the scholarly bent and he was not only widely read in the best literature but he had an infinite capacity for laborious research. The Welsh League for the Taxation of Land Values, of which he soon became a member and lately the Hon. Treasurer, was indebted to him for much effective propaganda, an outstanding example of which was the telling leaflet, entitled "Cardiff states the Case," which among local authorities has had as wide a circulation as almost any publication of the movement. Another well-remembered contribution is the paper on "The British Municipal Demand for Land Value Rating," which he presented at the International Conference in London in 1936. Conductor of Economic Classes, writer to the newspapers, speaker at many meetings, his services were such that he will be sadly missed, as well as his lovable companionship. There should also be high tribute to his memory from his co-members of the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, and the editorial department of LAND & LIBERTY, for all his faithful and most helpful association. He is survived by his widow and his son, Norman, to whom and to their relatives we extend our sincere sympathy in their bereavement.

A. W. MADSEN.

In Charles Gardner's passing it is not too much to say that the Welsh League has lost one of its most able and, at all times, the most steadfast supporter of the Henry George cause in Cardiff and South Wales. As his closest associate, and he so often assisting with the secretarial and organising duties, I shall miss him more than any. He had been in poor health for several years, but appeared during the latter portion of last year to make a good recovery and had practically renewed his full business responsibilities in connection with the firm of W. J. Gardner (Cardiff), Ltd., the entire management of which devolved upon him and his brothers after the death of the father some years ago. In November last he collapsed whilst at work in his office and there followed the long period of severe trial in illness, in the devoted attention of his wife, constantly sustained in hope by his fortitude and determination. As a young man, with his distinctive literary gifts, he was engaged in journalism. He served in the 1914-18 war and on his return joined his father's firm. Often he spoke of his indebtedness to the late Edward McHugh for bringing him to the Henry George view at the economic classes previous to 1914, and his gratitude was evinced with a service to the cause which is beyond praise. Not least amongst his cares was his interest in promoting that economic teaching through his own classes and the helpful part he took in the courses of study conducted by the late Professor W. J. Roberts and by Mr. W. Birmingham, both of the South Wales University College. One of the best tributes to his memory would be the successful extension of this work, under the auspices of the Henry George School, in the South Wales area, a young and capable teacher of Political Economy emerging who would have something of Charles Gardner's vision and enthusiasm.

At the funeral ceremony on June 10, Mr. Edgar Buck and I attended as representatives of the Welsh League and of all friends in the Henry George movement. Treasuring his memory, to the bereaved widow and son and their relations, we convey our sincere condolences.

EUSTACE A. DAVIES.

CANADA

The HON. ARTHUR W. ROEBUCK, speaking on Bill 86 to Amend the Continuation of Transitional Measures Act, Official Report, March 24, said: "It seems to me to be worth while to point out that at this time rent control is not the way to handle the problem of a shortage of houses. In our communities houses are taxed more heavily than anything else. We hear a good deal of criticism of the sales tax. It is 8 per cent. and, goodness knows, that is enough. There is fair ground for criticism, because the tax does a great deal of damage; but once the 8 per cent. is paid the taxpayer does not have to pay any additional sales tax, and from then on our governments do not interfere with his ownership of the goods on which he has paid the tax. But if a house is built, as long as the house stands, it is taxed every year an average of 4 per cent. of its value. That is the most drastic form of taxation that we have in our communities, and it has discouraged house-building and has increased the cost of housing for our people.

"Obviously, our approach to this problem of housing should be through the removal, by our federal, provincial and municipal governments, of the taxes upon houses and house-building materials. These materials should be free of tariffs and excise and all such taxes, and houses should be relieved of the annual levy that is now made on them by municipalities.

"On the other hand, we should increase taxes upon land values and make it more and more difficult for anyone to keep the cold, wet blanket of speculatively-held land around our communities. I say that because the greatest difficulty encountered by would-be house-builders to-day, in this great country of almost unlimited area, is that of obtaining ground upon which to build. If we did two things—if we made it easier to supply houses and more difficult to withhold the land needed for them, we would cure the housing problem by natural means and not have to resort to drastic measures, such as putting a government official in control of rentals.

"I received through the mails yesterday a paper from New South Wales, and I noticed these two sentences which are probably worth reading:—

"Taxes in New York are on what we know as improved value as distinguished from the New South Wales plan on unimproved value. All polls in this State as to the incidence of local taxes have condemned improved value taxes and have been in favour of unimproved value taxes."

"In New South Wales no municipal tax is levied upon houses, all the taxes fall upon the value of the land. That is the system we should have in this country, and I submit it would do far more for the people than can be done by rentals control, for it would by natural means encourage people to supply the houses needed, and at the same time it would discourage the holding of building sites for high prices.

HON. MR. HAIG: "May I ask one question of my honourable friend? Was that not advocated some years ago in New York by people who believe in Henry George's theory?"

HON. MR. ROEBUCK: "Of course, that is the theory of Henry George, one of the greatest of economic philosophers; and it has been advocated in New York. But the mere exemption of improvements from taxation is not the whole philosophy of Henry George. Of course, it follows the reasoning to be found in George's great book, *Progress and Poverty*, written many years ago. Some people have been impatient that his theories were not adopted immediately; but it sometimes takes a long while to get a bright idea into a dull head."

2s. 6d. PROTECTION OR FREE TRADE. The tariff question considered with especial regard to the interests of Labour. Carries the discussion to a point not dealt with in other books on this question. The most popular and most scientific exposition of the subject which has ever been written. Lord Snowden. By Henry George. Abridged. Red cloth 2s. 6d. Paper covers 1s. 6d.

3s. 6d. A PERPLEXED PHILOSOPHER. Ethics of the land question and examination of Herbert Spencer's recantation of his earlier declaration. By Henry George.

CUTTINGS AND COMMENTS

LAND, BY AN ECONOMIST

In a footnote to a correspondent's letter in *The Economist*, May 21, the Editor makes the following strange statement: "... all wealth does *not* come from the land. Nowadays very little does. It is true that land is an essential ingredient of all economic activity. But so are air and water and money and, above all else, human skill and effort." To editors of this class how apt is the Scriptural taunt: "No doubt but ye are the people and wisdom will die with you."

NOW WE KNOW

The ostensible purpose of the development charge under the Town and Country Planning Act is to collect the increase in land value which is revealed when a change of use of land takes place. The fallacy that a particular piece of land increases in value *because* an improvement is made upon it has led to the development charge being imposed by measure of the value of the improvement placed upon it. It now appears that any pretence of the development charge being a levy on land values and *not* a tax on buildings is being dropped. At least, this is the conclusion which is apparent from a reported statement of the chairman of the Central Land Board (Sir Malcolm Trustram Eve), in *The Star*, May 16. Here is an extract from the interview which dealt mainly with claims on the compensation fund: "Sir Malcolm said that the Town and Country Planning Act placed the development value of land *and buildings* in the hands of the State. ... If one wanted to enlarge any *buildings* so as to make them more valuable, or if one wanted to *use them for something else which was more profitable*, a sum of money had to be paid to the Central Land Board called the Development Charge for the permission to do so." (The italics are ours.)

An endorsement of this interpretation was given in an announcement over the radio, June 2, which, calling upon landowners to make claims on the compensation fund, stated that the development value of land *and buildings* was now vested in the State.

KING CANUTE TRUMAN

President Truman, warned by his economic advisers that unemployment may climb to 6,000,000 next year, is preparing "counter-depression legislation." Proposals include work-making developments, federal grants for public works, industrial loans, Government factory buildings and, believe it or not, loans to unemployed workers to enable them to move to fresh areas in search of jobs! American economists will never break the vicious circle of depression until they first break their own vicious circle of thought. Capital and labour do not voluntarily cease production. Something stands between them and the source of wealth. Legislation to deal with the effects instead of causes cannot stop the cause from operating.

THE LAW OF RENT

"Average income of families living in New York County last year was £1,753, compared with an average of £1,133 for other highly populated counties. New York County is the island of Manhattan, the heart of the city, wealthiest 22 acres in the world. But in terms of comparative living costs the New York family probably gets little more for its £33 14s. 0d. a week than families in some of the other areas do for their £21 1s. 6d.—or even some of the remoter ones below that level."—*Star*, May 16.

RECIFE FOR FORTUNES

Speculation in land values, described as "intelligent forethought," and the creation of a cement ring, appear to have played a big part in the creation in the Beaverbrook fortune. In a "Profile" of Beaverbrook, *The Observer*, May 29: "At 20 he has not got a dollar; at 30 he was a millionaire. There has always been a good deal of speculation about this phase of Lord Beaverbrook's life. His career really began when he became a Secretary to a financier ... amongst other things they promoted schemes for extending electric tramway services. These brought automatic increases in the land values of suburbs, which gave scope for intelligent forethought. ... Aitken put through even larger deals, one of these made him enemies: it was a merger of most of the big cement companies in Canada."

WHO LACKS UNDERSTANDING?

At the opening of an exhibition of products of Co-operative Wholesale Society's industries, Mr. J. M. Peddie, a Director of a Co-operative Insurance Society, said (*Daily Telegraph*, May 2): "I am amazed that there are so many among the leading Socialists who lack an understanding of the part Co-operation plays in replacing Capitalist exploitation by democratic consumer controls. We in the Co-operative movement will resist to the end any misguided attempts to ignore or destroy the work of a century of voluntary co-operation." He was referring to proposals to nationalise insurance which would, of course, include the Co-operative Insurance Society. Mr. Peddie's amazement over the Socialist attitude and behaviour is no less than our own that he has been so slow in appreciating the menace of the Totalitarian State.

CATS AND KILTS

Of eight letters to the Editor which appeared in *The Star*, June 7, three were about cats that snored, one about a pet black-bird, two about men taking women's jobs, one asking whether gentlemen prefer blondes, and the last was about dressing school-boys in kilts! No comment.

THE WRITING ON THE WALL

"At present the Indian Government is well able to protect itself against its local Communists. In ten years' time it may be in greater difficulty. The weakness of India is that it is not increasing its agricultural or industrial production though its population is increasing alarmingly. If India is to remain strong and stable something drastic will have to be done about its economic state. In the past year India has dealt with its political problems with great success, but the gathering social and economic crisis may explode all that has been achieved politically. Indian leaders know this. Mr. Patel has several times warned the Indian landlords to study what has happened in China because of its unsolved agrarian problems."—*Manchester Guardian* (in a leader), April 12.

THE CONDEMNED PLANNING ACT

The Act had gone farther, so far as property rights were concerned, than any Act ever passed in this country. The matter was entirely in the hands of the Central Land Board. There was appeal only as to whether development charges were payable or not, and none as far as assessing the charge was concerned. Power in this matter had been taken away from the courts with the rights of the individual to fight on his own behalf. —Mr. Harold Cliffe, Borough Engineer, Bromley, addressing the local Rotary Club, *Bromley Times*, April 22.

Development charges under the Town and Country Planning Act have added "a new perplexity" to those planning new church schemes, says the report of the Council of the Baptist Union to be presented to the annual assembly in London. Many vendors of possible sites "hold rather a dim view of their chances of obtaining material compensation from the fund set aside by the Government for this purpose, and so are chary of reducing their sale price," says the report.—*The Scotsman*, April 25.

Of all the follies perpetuated by the present Government the Town and Country Planning Act is the greatest. There are many people here who consider it quite unworkable and will have to be repealed. If the Tories get in next time they may do it for us.—*R. J. R., Glasgow*.

FOR THE STATISTICIAN

The civilian populations, including merchant seamen, at December 31, 1948, are estimated by the Registrar General for England and Wales and the Registrar General for Scotland respectively as: England, 40,386,800; Wales, 2,552,200; Scotland, 5,120,200.

The January and February/March issues of "Land & Liberty" are out of print and are in much request. Readers who have copies to spare will do a kind service by returning them to us.

HENRY GEORGE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

Three new classes, two on Basic Economics and one on International Trade, began on Tuesday, June 21, and will continue throughout the summer. Some students were unable to attend the last session and others, having completed the first course, wished to go straight on to the second. It is for these students that the classes are being specially run this session, instead of closing the School until the autumn as had been decided. In all, over forty students enrolled and attended the opening night. New tutors are Len Stevenson and Pat O'Keeffe.

The Spring Session ended on June 14 when members from all classes joined in a Brains Trust. The panel handling the questions consisted of E. G. Popplewell, P. O'Keeffe, D. Boothman, L. Stevenson and J. D. Layzell. The keen interest and intelligent understanding of the questioners said much for their tutors' efforts while the panel discharged their duties with zest and competence.

A generous offer of a prize of one guinea offered by the Rev. Mervyn Stewart to the students of the School for the best essay on the Malthusian Theory, resulted in the prize being awarded to Mr. D. Boothman. The competitors were few, but the standard high. Contributions by Mr. L. Stevenson and Miss Betty Walden were so commended by the judges that the final decision, according to merit was not an easy one.

Manchester:—At Holdsworth Hall, Deansgate, on June 16, an end of term meeting of students was addressed by Mr. Ashley Mitchell on the subject of International Trade. The Spring session had been a satisfactory one, excellent attendance being maintained throughout. The autumn session will begin on September 22.

Glasgow.—Preliminary arrangements for the autumn session, which begins on September 25, have now been made. Dr. S. M. Smith, a student of the earlier classes, will conduct the Basic Course and it is anticipated that a class for advanced students (Science of Political Economy) will run concurrently with it.

The "spare time" efforts of Mr. MacSwan, Mr. Cameron and their co-workers in establishing the School has met with encouraging response and the success to date in attracting and maintaining interest is particularly gratifying in view of the many difficulties which had to be faced.

LAND, HO!

By L. J. HUBBARD.

When I attended a Union meeting at the Central Hall, Westminster, a number of young people stationed outside were distributing pamphlets to the gathering hordes. I never resist a pamphlet, but whereas I am usually impelled to consign it to the gutter a few minutes after perusal, the wording on the one I received that night was reacting on my mind throughout the meeting. For it was designated, "To Non-complacent People only," and I knew it meant me.

But what, after all, is a catch-phrase? Such bait is employed by every movement in existence. Good, bad or indifferent, you have to have a catch-phrase. What was behind the particular appeal I held in my hand?

I'd heard of Henry George through the writings of G. B. Shaw, and I was conscious of a desire to know just how much political science concerned me, as a member of society. I filled in the form and was enrolled as a student member of the Discussion Class, palming off on the H.G. School the job of convincing me that political science was the business of the ordinary citizen. I was never so surprised in all my life.

As a stickler for basic principles, and aware of the existence of fundamental human rights, I had never approached coherence on the subject. The odds against the substitution of a sane society for the one we have to put up with at present seemed so overwhelming that I was prepared to believe that my "non-complacency" was my own fault. I'd accepted the fallacy that "forty-million people can't be wrong."

The first Thursday I attended, both coherency and articulation were handed to me, as it were, on a platter. The impact of unassailable Truth on my rickety mental superstructure heralded a moral salvation. Others too, have gained the benefit of the ten lessons recently finished. The influence of the School is

certain to create a lasting impression on the minds of all who attended. The seed that is sown cannot fail to bear fruit in some positive form for, as I have seen, among my fellow-students there is no "stony ground." Students themselves have requested that classes continue throughout the summer, so after a break of one week we go on to the first extension: International Trade and Social Problems. There's hope yet for the tethered bull of Henry George's illustration.

LONDON GEORGEISTS

"Liberalism and the Liberal Policy" will be the subject of the next meeting to be held at Hope House, 45 Great Peter Street, S.W.1, on July 13, at 7 p.m. The meeting will be addressed by Mr. Oliver Smedley, prospective Liberal candidate for Saffron Walden, and author of "Second Thoughts on Compulsory Co-partnership in Industry." As the subject for discussion is of special interest, readers of *LAND & LIBERTY* and their friends are invited to attend. Refreshments will be available.

Among the items covered at the June meeting when the subject was "Current Events and News of the Day," were the Town and Country Planning Act, Street Trading, Unofficial Strikes and the new gold discovery in South Africa. The political, economic and ethical aspects of these subjects were fully explored, some contrasting views giving zest to the discussion. Welcome visitors to this meeting were Dr. Roland O'Regan, of New Zealand, and Mr. H. R. Lee, of Portsmouth.

Open air meetings in Finsbury Park, North London, are now being held regularly each fortnight (the first and third Sundays of the month), from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Those already held have been well supported and regular speakers are Mr. W. J. Cadman, C. Aitken and V. H. Blundell. Recent engagements for speakers include talks to Sydenham, Putney and Wembley branches of the I.F.L. dealing with various aspects of the land question. Two of these requests for speakers resulted from the interest aroused at previous visits.

Other activities include an experiment with a literature stall in Bermondsey Market (managed by Pat O'Keeffe) and lobbying at the House of Commons.

From Merstham to Reigate Hill:—On Sunday, July 3, the members will hold their annual ramble with its pleasant opportunity for much discussion and mutual instruction *en route*.

PRESS PUBLICITY

A ring on the 'phone by the popular columnist "John Bouverie" (*News Chronicle*) indicated we were not unknown, but more information was wanted about our doings. It led to the following piquant paragraph, May 19, with the caption BY GEORGE!

Who might the London Georgeists be? When Bouverie saw their notepaper, titled thus, he asked himself if this could be a manifesto from the remnant of Georgian poets, led by Sir John Squire and Sir Edward Marsh; the admirers of Georgian architecture anxious to preserve London squares; followers of the House of Hanover, or of David Lloyd George? No. They are 50 of the younger generation approving the teachings of Henry George (1839-97), the American printer and journalist who wrote "Progress and Poverty," advocating the taxation of land values. Every week they go to the House of Commons to lobby M.P.s. To-day's victims are Sir Waldron Smithers and W. J. Brown.

But that needed a little more elucidation and the *News Chronicle*, May 25, was good enough to publish the following letter from the Secretary:—

"In regard to John Bouverie's reference to this organisation I would like to correct a slight misapprehension. Whilst in substance his remarks are correct, he seems to imply that the lobbying of M.P.s is one of the foremost of our activities. This is a very minor aspect of our work, the most important being in the educational field—the holding of round table discussion classes in fundamental economics, social problems, free trade or protection, etc."

A writer, J. A. Milne, in the *Daily Telegraph* took occasion to say of the Town and Country Planning Act that it "collars all increment value of all land in this country." In reply, V. H. Blundell made correction in a letter published in the *Daily Telegraph* of June 3, explaining: "The development charge under the Town and Country Planning Act is levied only where a change

of use of land takes place. All increases of land value which accrue where a change of use does not take place remain with the owners. Your correspondent errs when he speaks of nationalisation of land values and land nationalisation as though they were the same thing. The former means the socialisation of the rent of land and the latter State ownership and control of the land itself. The Act implements neither of these policies. It establishes State control of the land and imposes a tax on development and improvement. The Act should be repealed and replaced by a straightforward tax on land values levied whether the land be used or not, and taxes progressively removed from industry. Only then will development and improvement be encouraged, and nationalisation avoided.

Controversy on the Malthus "over-population" theory of poverty led to a series of letters in the *Muswell Hill Record*, in which Mrs. Maureen Whitehouse and V. H. Blundell were given adequate space to give "an answer to all that." In this pen-work L. A. Stevenson made an able contribution to the discussion of local taxation—the present system versus the rating of land values. There has, in fact, been a regular campaign of letters, in which Pat O'Keeffe, G. W. Powell and E. J. Miller have taken part, in the *News Chronicle*, the *Daily Herald* and local papers.

Press correspondence is the kind of work that could be greatly developed. Among the letters that have come to our notice, D. M. Cuthbertson and H. R. Lee, in the Brighton and Portsmouth papers ably handled the controversies in which they were engaged—the exposition of the equity and validity of the theory of economic rent; and the road to social justice, which is neither by Atlantic Pacts nor by State Socialism or Communism.

We have been pleased to have visits from Miss Margaret Bateman (New York), Dr. Rolland O'Regan (New Zealand), Mr. S. L. Gillan (California), Mr. R. V. McNally (New York) and Mr. Arthur Lazarus (Chicago). Miss Margaret Bateman and Dr. O'Regan are spending several months in England and will be present at the International Conference. Dr. O'Regan was a member of the delegation representing the United Committee at the hearing before the Interdepartmental Committee on Site Value Rating on May 31, when the matter for examination was the Operation of Land Value Rating in Various Countries.

The Annual Meeting of the Yorkshire and Northern Land Values League was held at the Leeds Church Institute on Saturday, May 21. In addition to the officers who were re-elected, Mr. N. A. Sugden (Keighley) was appointed Financial Secretary. Following the Annual Meeting, a Public Meeting was held under the chairmanship of Mr. Ashley Mitchell (President). Miss Margaret Bateman (of New York) showed the film "Millions of Jobs," upon which she gave a very interesting commentary. Mr. A. W. Madsen gave an address on "The Failure of Planning," analysing and exposing, in particular, the disastrous Town and Country Planning Act, which provoked a keen discussion.

The article in our previous issue, "Slave Societies in the Making," by an Eastern Europe Georgeist now resident in Italy, has aroused interest in several quarters. Translated by Mr. H. Munkholm, it was serialised in the weekly *Vejen Frem*, organ of the Danish Justice Party. The writer of the article is Mr. Robert Major, a Hungarian who, now in Italy, was a member of Dr. J. J. Pikler's Budapest circle. There came also the following letter from Lidia Alkalay, in Boston, U.S.A., wishing to contact the author: "In the April and May issue of your journal you carry an article by an Eastern Europe Georgeist now resident in Italy, a most interesting place. I am an Eastern Europe Georgeist myself (Yugoslav), but I am specially interested in locating any Georgeists in Italy. I am now connected with the Henry George School in Boston, but hope to spend the next few years, after January, 1950, in Italy. Would you please either send me R. M.'s address or send him mine that we may become acquainted?"

ILLUSTRATED POSTCARDS



HOSTEL AT THE HAYES.

Postcards (six different views) advertising the International Conference have been printed for your use in correspondence. Help thereby to enlist your friends as Members. The cards are sold in sets, price 1s. 6d.

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The United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values Ltd. (proprietors of *LAND & LIBERTY*, postal subscription 5s. or \$1 from U.S.A. and Canada), the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade, and the Leagues listed below are maintained by the voluntary support of those who believe in and would seek to advance the principle and policy which the Committee, the Union and the Leagues advocate: Land Value Taxation and Free Trade in its fulness, with removal of the tax burdens on industry and abolition of all monopolies and special privileges that interfere with the production of wealth and prevent its just distribution.

We press upon our supporters the need for funds to advance the movement in every field of endeavour. Cheques, etc., may be made payable to R. W. Frost (United Committee) or to Ashley Mitchell (International Union), 4 Great Smith Street, London, S.W.1. The office can receive and will transmit contributions on behalf of any of the allied Associations named below.

ADDRESSES

At 4, Great Smith Street, London, S.W.1. Telephone: Abbey 6665; *United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, Ltd.*, Richard William Frost (Hon. Treasurer); A. W. Madsen (Secretary); *Henry George Foundation* (Literature Department); *International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade*, Ashley Mitchell (Treasurer); *English League*, V. H. Blundell (Honorary Secretary); *Henry George School of Social Science*, V. H. Blundell (Director of Studies), with Branches at Manchester, Glasgow, Liverpool and other Centres.

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