

LAND & LIBERTY

MONTHLY JOURNAL FOR LAND VALUE TAXATION AND FREE TRADE

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The Labour Party Conference.

We referred last month to the numerous resolutions or amendments dealing with the taxation of land values appearing on the agenda papers of the Annual Conference of the Labour Party which was held at Southport in the first week of October.

It is understood that the Executive Committee withdrew the section of the report dealing with the Party's policy on taxation in order that it should be redrafted in the light of these amendments. We must await the issue of the revised programme to see in what way effect has been given to this pledge.

London County Council.

At its meeting on 16th October the London County Council passed a resolution, moved by Mr F. C. R. Douglas and seconded by Mr C. W. Gibson, in the following terms :—

That it be referred to the Finance Committee to consider and report (1) whether the present rating system is unfair in its incidence and is otherwise unsatisfactory, with the result that the Council has been frequently compelled to pay for land required for public purposes a price very disproportionate to the rate contributions made in respect of such land, and (2) whether the Council should seek Parliamentary powers to institute a system of rating of land values.

It will be recollected that on the 15th of May the Council passed a resolution deploring the repeal of the land-value tax provisions of the Budget of 1931 among other reasons on the ground that the valuation to be made under that Act might have provided a basis for local rating of land values.

The present resolution is a welcome indication that this great municipality intends to pursue the question with determination.

"With Greater Hope."

The Admiralty have placed orders for the flotilla leader and the eight destroyers of the 1934 programme, and four of the vessels are to be built on the Tyne. The Lord Mayor of Newcastle is delighted, because, as he said (*Daily Telegraph*, 13th October) : "The Tyne could face the winter with greater hope."

The disturbing thought is that the good people who are agitating in their Peace Societies and movements to denounce the armaments traffic cannot or will not judge the position as the Lord Mayor of Newcastle sees it. Who are the builders of these instruments of slaughter but the working men who are starving for the opportunity to be employed at any kind of job? We do not believe they also are pleased that their labour should be devoted to these dread purposes; they only know that they can make no protest, when they have no alternative but to buy their bread at this price.

It is to this pass that civilization, so-called, is driven by the fact of unemployment. Until that problem is solved, until people seriously and earnestly turn their attention to the abolition of undeserved poverty as it can be abolished, peace and disarmament conferences and the exhortations of the moralists to substitute reason for force in international relations, are the most futile kind of human endeavour. The prayer "Give Peace in our Time, O Lord," competes impotently with the cynicism and the shame of the boast in the newspapers

work for the Tyne" or the Clyde or the Mersey or anywhere else.

"A Century of Progress."

Under this title the *Manchester Guardian* (18th October) publishes an account of the growth of Melbourne. The first permanent settlement was founded by Edward Henty and John Batman. Batman picked out the site on the Yarra River on which the city now stands, and entered into an agreement with the natives whereby he purchased 600,000 acres of land for 40 pairs of blankets, 130 knives, 42 tomahawks, 18 red shirts, 40 mirrors, and a number of other articles of similar value. To-day the population is 992,000 and land in Bourke Street, which a century ago sold for £32 a block, now fetches over £2,000 a foot. The Commonwealth of Australia continues the policy instituted in Victoria of protecting the landlord by imposing heavy taxes upon imports of all kinds. The city of Melbourne, unlike Sydney, does not derive its revenue from the local rating of land values.

Obstacles to Town Planning.

Speaking at a dinner of the Town Planning Institute at Birmingham on 6th October, Mr Neville Chamberlain mentioned that although provisional steps had been taken for town planning schemes covering 12 million acres, only 150,000 acres were subject to final and completed schemes. He added : "It is inevitable, in view of the complication and the multiplicity of the interests concerned, that there should be considerable lag between resolutions of provisional control and the coming into operation of the scheme. . . . I shan't live to see it, and before it comes about irreparable damage will have been done, millions of pounds will have been wasted, and probably many thousands of lives will have been lost for want of orderly and careful planning."

The source of all the trouble is landlordism, or, as Mr Chamberlain so delicately terms it, "the complication and multiplicity of the interests concerned." How much more easy it would have been to deal with them if Mr Chamberlain had not been so precipitately anxious to destroy his predecessor's valuation and land-value tax.

The Bishop's Dream of Town Planning.

In a wireless discussion between the Bishop of Birmingham and Mr G. M. Boumphrey, a town planning expert, the Bishop spoke of the soul-destroying conditions in Birmingham and pled for the establishment of satellite cities with a green belt intervening. "Town planning was to create the new order. What has happened?" Mr Boumphrey replied : "Nothing to be very proud of," and explained that "the cost of compensating all the owners of possible building land between the mother city and the daughter city was one of the troubles."

The Bishop's answer was : "If you say that such development as I desire is impossible, for the land cannot be acquired, I answer that the anti-social holding of land in and around the great cities must end. The value of such land is largely made by the community. The community ought to be able to buy whatever land it desires at the price at which it was last scheduled for death duties."

It is well to see Bishop Barnes's recognition of the cause of congestion and exorbitant rents in our cities, but in what does the anti-social holding of land consist except that the monopolists are protected and endowed

under the law? The Bishop may not attack the landowners as the guilty parties, but rather take the matter to heart himself as a legislator. These landholdings around our cities "held for a rise" are exempt from taxation, while the burden is thrown on every building or improvement as soon as occupied. The value of the land is made not "largely by the community" but wholly so, and it is strange morality, coming from such a quarter, that the community should be called upon for any tribute in the way of land purchase. Reason and justice require that the value of land should be taxed into the public coffers and taxation removed from "the work of man's hands." If anti-social laws are abolished, anti-social practices will cease.

What Does the Landowner Sell?

In the pamphlet "Cities Held to Ransom" (1d.), published last month by the United Committee, a typical example of a land sale is given which makes it clear that when "land" is offered for sale the vendors are really selling the advantages attaching to the land, all of which are due either to nature or to the activities of the community—none being created by the "owner" who gets the purchase price. The following is another very instructive example, as advertised in *The Times* of 11th October:—

KINGSWOOD, London's Nearest Country Estate: Forty minutes from Town by Fast Frequent Trains to its own Station. By Road, two minutes after passing Burgh Heath south-bound on the main Brighton Road. Surrey's natural beauty of woodland and meadow is preserved by agreements reached with local town-planning authorities. Gravel subsoil naturally drained. Site rises to 600 feet above sea level. Kingswood Golf Course flanks estate. Walton Heath 1½ miles. Tennis, Squash, and Badminton available. Shopping and Educational facilities on the Estate.

Once more the landowners emphasize the fact that what they have to sell is a value due to the community. Every advertisement of this kind provides all the argument necessary to justify the case for the Taxation of Land Values.

Taxation under Socialism.

Under the title of "Taxation under Capitalism," the New Fabian Research Bureau has published the report of a Committee whose chairman was Mrs Barbara Wootton and whose other members were Mrs Barbara Drake and Messrs Harold Barger and E. A. Radice.

Indirect taxation, they say, should be reduced rather than increased. "Direct taxation by way of income-tax and surtax might be increased somewhat, but it is unlikely, as we have tried to show, that we can expect large sums of money from these sources, unless we are willing to let savings and enterprise decline."

The alternatives out of this impasse are stated to be either "to make capitalism as efficient as possible by ensuring it good profits and low taxation" or else to establish a Socialist State. The State would in the latter alternative "have at its disposal a certain amount of capital and the free labour of a certain number of its citizens." The State in disposing of these resources "will have to require the Socialized industries and services to work on a surplus and pay that surplus to the State either for the purpose of saving or investing or for general revenue."

On Consumers or on Community Earnings.

Thus, under a Socialist State (as the authors of this pamphlet conceive it), taxation will be levied by "selling the products of Socialized undertakings at above cost price." The assertion that this would be "a form of taxation which is strictly neither direct nor indirect" will not bear examination. In almost the next paragraph

the authors say that "taxes on articles of common consumption, such as tea, would have to be swept away. A Socialist State cannot afford to pretend to give high wages and then take part of them back by indirect taxation of this kind." Yet this is precisely the kind of taxation proposed. Experience has proved, as the authors admit in criticizing the present system of taxation, that large revenues cannot be raised by taxes on articles of luxuries. If large revenues are to be raised by taxes on commodities they must be commodities of general consumption.

Mrs Wootton and her colleagues do not appear to be aware that there is one surplus which will always arise, in every State and under every form of government—land value. If it is not taken by the State it will be appropriated by individuals. To take land value for public revenue does not add to prices or burden production. It levels out inequality of fortune by taking for the community what the community has earned. It ensures the fullest utilization of the community's resources by assessing them at their true value; and unless land value is taken for public revenue we can have no "guarantee that the community's resources will be fully used and distributed to the best possible advantage."

Farming and the Nation.

The last two of Mr Bensusan's series of articles in the *Daily Herald*, to which we referred last month, deal with nationalization of agricultural land. He quotes Dr Arthur Ruston, of Leeds University, as saying—"In 1909, 90 per cent of English farm land was let by landowners to tenants. In 1927 the figure was down to 64 per cent. In other words, one-third of the land had been taken over by the farmer. Much of this land has proved a source of trouble to its new owners." No explanation was given of why this land had been a source of trouble, but the reason is well known. It was bought at high prices, largely inflated by the artificial stimulus given to agriculture during and after the war. The farmer was handicapped by this, and was also left without the capital necessary for working his land.

Dr Ruston apparently does not seek to nationalize this land. He said: "I should like to see the State take over land of low present value that needs large capital improvement."

Professor C. S. Orwin, of Oxford, is also quoted as a supporter of land nationalization. "Owners will sell when they can. Quotas, subsidies and import duties are helping to make a market for them. The tendency of the great estates is to break up. Nationalization is essential."

A Vast and Meaningless Expense.

The present is indeed an opportune moment for the landlords to advocate State purchase of their land, when, as Professor Orwin admits, subsidies, quotas and tariffs have raised agricultural land values.

Mr Bensusan appears to favour nationalization of agricultural land on the ground that the State alone "is rich enough to bring Great Britain into agricultural order, to drain the fields, to reclaim the waste land, build the necessary houses, carry water to all points of the compass, bring the electric cables to the farmhouse and the cottage and supply capital for the adequate cultivation of the soil."

Nevertheless he makes an important reservation: "If the country is not to make the best of its inherent fertility, nationalization can hardly do more than put the people to a vast and meaningless expense. Nationalization must follow and not precede the national policy that makes it inevitable."

We take this to mean that Mr Bensusan advocates a policy of increasing agricultural production instead of restricting it. If unused land is to come into use, and if all land is to be better used, the necessary precedent is

the lowering of land values. Apart from all other objections to State purchase, to embark upon that now and to reduce rents afterwards is to subject the community to an enormous burden of inflated land values.

HIGH RENTS CRUSHING FARMERS

By Capt. Arthur R. McDougal

It seems to be accepted by the ordinary man that low prices are the main, if not the only, cause of our farming troubles. However, we have a Government with a doctor's mandate, and with a doctor in charge of agriculture, and we do expect that a doctor should diagnose his case carefully and not rush into easy assumptions that may be far wrong.

So far the Government has treated the case solely from the price angle and has ruthlessly and unscrupulously raised, or attempted to raise, prices by all and every means, fair and foul, instead of calmly examining the farming situation and probing the depression thoroughly.

Low prices seem such an obvious cause. Quite. But is it the primary cause, or is it only an extra stress which shows up a more deep seated disease? Are the low prices themselves not a symptom merely of some fundamental ailment?

WHEN PRICES RISE

Leaving the latter query open, let us consider what happens when prices of farm products rise:

Farmers and outsiders, attracted by the improved profits, rush for land and the wildest optimist sets the pace.

Rents and prices of land are driven up, and sane, prudent tenants are compelled to pay higher rents or to buy at boom prices or quit.

Landlords and the new crop of occupying owners, who have been compelled to buy at boom prices, are able to mortgage their land for two-thirds of its then value.

Everything looks all right and farmers are doing fairly well. But they and the mortgaged landowners are in a very unsound position.

When the inevitable collapse in prices occurs and they revert to normal, farmers everywhere are tied by leases to hopelessly high rents and by mortgages to dear land that is not worth as much as the mortgage.

The question to ask now is: Was it the return to normal prices that caused this ruin or was it not rather the inflation of land values in the boom? The low prices merely showed up the unsoundness of the position.

HISTORICAL PARALLELS

Take history. Before Napoleon's day wheat stood at about 46s. per quarter for many years, and farmers did well enough. In 1797 it began to rise, and in 1801 it touched 119s. per quarter. In 1804 it fell to 60s., when there was great distress, and the Corn Law was passed attempting to peg the price at 63s.

This policy went on and things grew worse and worse, until in 1815 imports were forbidden at anything under 80s. per quarter.

How was it that farming paid in 1797 with wheat at 46s., and was ruinous in 1815 with wheat at 74s.?

The answer is that wheat rose 80 per cent; Poor Rates rose 50 per cent; wages remained stationary; whilst rent rose 150 per cent.

In fact, rent all through the ages has taken far too big a share.

On a big mixed arable farm the apportionment of the farming surplus for the normal 13 years pre-war (1901-1913) was as follows:—

Rent to one man for permission to use land, £11,700, equals 46 per cent of available surplus.

Wages to 17 men for a 10-hour day and a 6-day week, £8,385, equals 32 per cent of available surplus.

Farmer's profit, salary and interest on capital, £5,411, equals 21 per cent of available surplus.

No wonder wages were low in pre-war days, when the rent swallowed almost half the surplus.

HOW RENT HAS RISEN

Take now. The same farm in 1931 and 1932 shows division as follows:—

Rent took 61 per cent.

In their tenderness for the vested interests neither Mr Bensusan nor the professors appear to see that the proper remedy is to force land into use and reduce land values by means of the rating and taxation of land values.

Wages took 85 per cent.

While the farmer had to make up the LOSS equal to minus 46 per cent.

On a big sheep farm in 1932 the following shows the division of the gross receipts, given in terms of per sheep sold:—

Shepherd's wage per sheep sold, 3s. 7d., equals 19 per cent. Other charges per sheep sold, 4s. 2d., equals 23 per cent.

Rent per sheep sold, 12s. 8d., equals 69 per cent.

Total charges, 20s. 5d.

Average price per sheep sold, 18s. 3d.

Farmer's loss, 2s. 2d., equals 11 per cent.

If the rent were reduced by 70 per cent, the farmer could live and pay better wages.

THE OCCUPYING OWNER

You say: What about the Occupying Owner? Well, he is suffering from the huge price he paid for his farm and from the heavy mortgage. You cannot expect the nation to endure present food taxes, etc., to help him out by raising prices. If the State did decide to help him, one-tenth of present wasted subsidies, etc., would take over his excess mortgage.

The plain remedy, however, is frankly to face the situation as one caused by inflated land values and *not* by low prices, and to legislate accordingly.

Legislation, to be successful, would have to control rent (conditions of tenure) and mortgages, and the mortgagees would have to liquidate and face losses, the same as most other investors have done.

Finally, I would protest against ever alluding to any price-raising policy as a *Help the Farmer Policy*. It cannot help the farmer. It can only raise rent, and damage the farmer.

Take tithes. This is always headlined as a farmer's grievance. The farmer has nothing to do with tithes. It is a rent charge, and paid by the landowner and *not* by the farmer.

The landlords are here, as usual, astutely using the rather simple farmer as a cat's paw to get tithe reduced. Every argument for reducing tithes can be applied with treble force for reduction of rent.

THE ALTERNATIVES

Anyway, the problem of farming gives us three choices: Raise prices; cut wages; reduce rents by 30 to 70 per cent and liquidate mortgages by selling up land. Personally, as a farmer I see nothing but folly, futility and hardship in the former methods, and I see sanity, justice and success in the last if accompanied by a policy of *consuming* surplus and not destroying it.

The reasoned conclusions that I have made after about 40 years' farming are:—

That under-consumption, high land values and a faulty land system and *not* low prices are the primary cause of the recurring and long lasting agricultural depressions.

That high land values mean lower wages and less purchasing power for food and primary needs, and that to increase prices without controlling and taxing land values is a crime—a blunder and futile.

That landowners have smothered their land with mortgages, crippled their revenues by extravagant and inefficient management, whilst the farmer has been strangled by rack-rent and harassed by bad conditions of tenure and antiquated and hampering leases. . . .

Whatever party does declare the truth will get plenty of support. It must go boldly forward and educate the much deluded people that we can have a prosperous agriculture without food taxes, subsidies or high prices simply by making rent fit prices and not prices fit rent.

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LAND AND CAPITAL

No word has more currency in political and economic discussion to-day than "capitalism." It may be doubted whether any other term is used more loosely and in more divergent meanings, or has led to more false conclusions. At two extremes are the ideas attached to this word by Henry George and by Karl Marx.

Henry George defines capital as labour products which are used as an instrument in the production of more labour products.

This definition first of all rules out land from the category of capital.

Secondly, it rules out stocks and shares, bonds, public debts and so on. George regards these things as mere evidences of a legal claim—of ownership. The thing owned may be land or capital or it may be an intangible right such as a patent right, a copyright, or a debt. The important thing to him is the nature of the thing owned.

This method is in sharp contrast with that of Karl Marx. The term in his vocabulary which corresponds most nearly to George's capital is "means of production," that is to say "raw material, accessory substances and instruments of labour." But it is evident that he frequently, if not always, includes land in the phrase "means of production," and so attributes to "capitalism" what on closer analysis is due to "landlordism" only. "Means of production" he also designates as "constant capital" because it "does not experience any change in magnitude of value during the process of production." On the other hand, his "variable capital" is what is "advanced in wages," or, as he says, "the part of capital that is transformed into labour power" and which "undergoes a change of value during the process of production."

He says: "The same constituents of capital which, from the outlook of the labour process, are distinguished as objective and subjective factors respectively—as means of production on the one hand and labour power on the other—are from the standpoint of the process of creating surplus value distinguished as constant capital and variable capital." According to Marx, "surplus value" arises from the variable capital: surplus value is unpaid labour.

This prepares us for the statement that "capital is not a thing, but a social relationship between persons, established through the instrumentality of things."

What kind of social relationship constitutes capitalism is made clear in the following passage:—

"Money and commodities are not from the first capital, any more than the means of production and the means of subsistence are. They have to be transformed into capital." The essentials of this transformation are that "on the one hand there must be the owners of money, of the means of production, and of the means of subsistence, who desire by the purchase of others' labour power to increase the sum of values they own. On the other hand there must be free workers, the sellers of their

own labour power, and therefore the sellers of labour." The "freedom" of these workers consists in two things—first, that they are not slaves or serfs, the property of others; secondly that they are "free from, unencumbered by, any means of production of their own."

"The capitalist system presupposes a divorce between the workers and the ownership of the property through which alone their labour can become effective."

Marx then proceeds to explain how the producers were "robbed of all the means of production." "The expropriation of the agricultural producers, the peasants, their severance from the soil, was the basis of the whole process."

After sketching in burning words the history of this expropriation in England, he concludes: "The spoliation of the property of the Church, the fraudulent alienation of the State domains, the theft of the common lands, the transformation of feudal property and clan property into modern private property (a usurpation effected by a system of ruthless terrorism)—these were the idyllic methods of primary accumulation. They cleared the ground for capitalist agriculture, made the land part and parcel of capital, while providing for the needs of urban industry the requisite supply of masterless proletarians."

This theme is repeated again and again. "The capitalist method of production and accumulation, in short, capitalist private property, demands as its fundamental condition the annihilation of self-earned private property; in other words, the expropriation of the worker."

This leads us to consider whether Marx opposed all forms of private property. He says: "In political economy there is a current confusion between two very different kinds of private property, one of which is based on the producer's own labour, whilst the other is based on the exploitation of the labour of others. Not only do the economists forget that the latter kind of property is the direct antithesis of the former; they forget likewise that the latter can only grow on the tomb of the former."

Capitalism is the "negation of individual private property based upon individual labour." Marx considers that the existing system will bring its own destruction. Instead of the "expropriation of the mass of the people by a few usurpers" we shall have "the expropriation of a few usurpers by the mass of the people." This will "re-establish individual property upon the basis of the acquisitions of the capitalist era; i.e., on co-operation and the common ownership of the land and of the means of production which labour itself produces."

The great difficulty which the modern Marxian or other Socialist finds in appreciating the importance of the land question probably lies in the idea that the expropriation of the labourer from the soil is only an historical cause of "capitalism" and not a present one. Marx himself is too acute a thinker to countenance this idea. He makes it clear that he considers the expropriation of the labourer to be a present and continuing cause of exploitation.

The difficulty arises also from the notion that accumulated wealth plays a much greater part in human affairs than it actually does. As Henry George says: "The truth is that wealth can be accumulated but to a slight degree, and that communities really live, as the vast majority of individuals live, from hand to mouth. . . . The matter of the universe, which, when worked up by labour into desirable forms, constitutes wealth, is constantly tending back to its original state. Some forms of wealth will last for a few hours, some for a few days, some for a few months, some for a few years; and there are very few forms of wealth that can be passed from one generation to another. Take wealth in some of its most useful and permanent forms—ships, houses, railways, machinery. Unless labour is constantly exerted in preserving and renewing them, they will almost immediately become

useless. Stop labour in any community, and wealth would vanish almost as the jet of a fountain vanishes when the flow of water is cut off. Let labour again exert itself, and wealth will almost as immediately reappear. This has long been noticed when war or other calamity has swept away wealth, leaving population unimpaired. . . . Accumulated wealth seems to play just about such a part in relation to the social organism as accumulated nutriment does to the physical organism. Some accumulated wealth is necessary, and to a certain extent it may be drawn upon in exigencies; but the wealth produced by past generations can no more account for the consumption of the present than the dinners he ate last year can supply a man with present strength."

In confirmation of this view it may be mentioned that the late Mr A. C. Pleydell, of New York, an eminent and conscientious statistician, estimated that "averaging the annual production of food, clothing, and the more perishable commodities with the more permanent structural improvements" in spite of all our advances in civilization "we have less than three years' supply of wealth on hand (perhaps not even two full years' supply)."

Thus we see that the expropriation of the people from the soil, the permanent storehouse from which alone the supply of wealth can be replenished, is not only historically but is now the dominant factor determining the distribution of wealth.

Finally, we may quote from Marx's essay on "Property in the Soil":—

"The nationalization of the land will bring about a complete change in the relations between labour and capital and will result in the final end of capitalist production, both industrial and agricultural. Then indeed will class differences and privileges disappear, together with the economic basis from which they have sprung. Society will become an association of free producers. Living on the labour of others will become entirely a thing of the past. There will no longer be a Government or State whose existence is separated from society itself. Agriculture, mining, manufacture, in short, all the branches of production, will become rightly organized. The national centralizing of the means of production will form the natural foundation of a society which consists in the free association of the various classes of producers."

There is thus a large measure of agreement between Marx and George as to the cause of the exploitation of the labourer. Marx does not, however, work out any detailed plan for remedying the evil, although the first plank in the Communist Manifesto calls for the abolition of property in land and the confiscation of ground rents by the State.

The great merit of Henry George, on the other hand, is that he worked out a simple and practicable plan by which the transition from an exploitative society to a free society could be brought about. Although this plan is extremely radical and in its results might be called revolutionary, it makes use of the existing machinery of taxation and government and can be carried out either slowly or rapidly according to the degree of popular support which exists for it, without involving the opposition that violent changes evoke. This sanely constructive element in George's teaching, combined with his penetrating and logical analysis of economic evils, is the reason why it has become part of the political thought of the world and has to its credit so great a legislative achievement in so many countries.

F. C. R. D.

A Free Copy of "Land & Liberty" is an invitation to become a Subscriber. 1d. Monthly: by Post 2s. a Year.

LORD SNOWDEN'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

In addition to an account of the passing of the Land Value Tax Budget of 1931 and its subsequent repeal, Lord Snowden's *Autobiography* (Ivor Nicholson & Watson, two volumes, 21s. each) contains other reminiscences which will be of special interest to our readers. One is of the help given to him by Joseph Fels in his first Parliamentary contest. Another is of how he heard Henry George speaking in Aberdeen. Of this meeting he says:—

"This was a crowded meeting in the old Music Hall. Just before then *Progress and Poverty* had been published, a book which had made a tremendous impression in the United States and Great Britain. Henry George was having something of a triumphal tour through Scotland. The Scottish Radicals had been captured by the theories he had advanced in *Progress and Poverty*. No book ever written on the social problem made so many converts. Economic facts and theories had never been presented in such an attractive way. Although Mr Henry George was not a Socialist, his book led many of his readers to Socialism. Keir Hardie told me that it was *Progress and Poverty* which gave him his first ideas of Socialism. Henry George, he felt, had claimed too much for the results of the appropriation of the economic rent of land, and had not appreciated the importance of capitalistic exploitation.

"Henry George had a very impressive platform style. In appearance he was of middle height, well built, had a full brown beard, and would have passed for a Nonconformist minister. His style of speaking was conversational, rather than oratorical. His address on this occasion was devoted mainly to dealing with a pamphlet he had discovered written about the beginning of the nineteenth century by a Professor of the Humanities in Aberdeen University. In this pamphlet the theories expounded and elaborated in *Progress and Poverty* had been put forward, and Henry George paid a compliment to the city of Aberdeen for having so long ago produced a pioneer of land reform."

LAND HUNGER IN LEWIS

The Stornoway correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, writing on 2nd October, tells the following story of land hunger in the Island of Lewis.

"Laxdale Farm, near here, was raided early this morning by fifteen men, who took possession of a fallow field, where they began to mark out housing sites for themselves.

"They are determined to seize the rest of the farms as soon as the farmer has secured his crops, and then they will divide the land by lot. If they are prosecuted, they are ready to go to prison.

"The raiders have been applying for sites on Laxdale Farm for a considerable time, but the Stornoway Trustees have refused to break it up, and the Department of Agriculture has no power to take it compulsorily. Last week the trustees decided to give the tenant of the farm a lease, and the raid is a result of that decision.

"The raiders related a pitiful story of the conditions under which they are living. Two of them have six of a family all living in one room. 'We have no love for this work at all,' one of the men said, 'but we have been compelled to do it, and we are going through with it. We are living in hovels and sheds and we cannot spend the whole of our lives there.'

"Another man said his house had been condemned by the doctor, who warned him that if he did not leave it would be the death of his family. He had applied to the Department of Health, but obtained neither assistance nor advice, and there was nothing left but to take a site and build a house."

* * *

The moral of this story is plain. Here are men who are able to build houses for themselves, and to produce food to feed themselves and their families. All they need is land. The land is there, but they cannot have it because we tolerate a system which allows some men to deprive other men of the opportunity of earning a living.

OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

An interesting controversy on the Taxation of Land Values was conducted in the columns of the *Manchester Guardian* during October. The first letter from Mr Douglas J. J. Owen, Chairman of the Executive of the Manchester Land Values League, appeared under the heading

Liberals and the Land Question

Mr Owen wrote :

"I can well believe that all Liberals of the true sort will be heartened by Sir Herbert Samuel's clear statement of Liberal aims, and it is significant that he included in the more prominent of the subjects for Liberal advocacy the taxation of land values and the protest against the repeal of the land tax clauses of the 1931 Budget. This is certainly a strong line of appeal to the electorate in the coming political fight, and Sir H. Samuel could not have struck a more trenchant note.

"As chairman of the Executive of the Manchester Land Values League I shall be glad if you will give me the opportunity of appealing to all Liberals who think with Sir H. Samuel to give what support they can to the work of this league."

Land and Capital

Dr J. Price Williams inquired whether Liberals were invited to join in a land values campaign as a matter of expediency or of morality.

"A man invests £1,000 in suburban land, another invests £1,000 in shares in a new trading company or in an old one which is going strong. In five or ten years the land is worth £2,000, and the shares have also appreciated to £2,000. In the meantime the landholder has probably been receiving a moderate fixed interest on his capital, whilst the shareholder has received dividends of much greater value. Neither has done anything to bring this about ; in both cases the increased value has been produced by the community. Mr Owen, on behalf of the community, would tax the land-owning goose, but would let the shareholding gander enjoy his good luck to the full. The tax would be practically a levy on capital imposed only on one section of the community. Do Liberals consider this equitable, moral, or, in the long run, even expedient ?"

"Unearned Increment"

Dr Price Williams evidently considered that land-value taxation was synonymous with taxation of unearned increment, for he concluded his letter by saying :—

"The principle that the 'unearned increment' really belongs to the community which has made it seems to be pretty sound, but such an inequitable application of the principle seems hardly desirable. A limitation of all interest, dividends, and other unearned increments to a moderate figure which would represent the value of the capital to the community and cover the risk of loss, all surpluses being returned to the community, would be perfectly fair, and so, of course, a strictly Liberal arrangement. Taxation of land values may be regarded as an instalment of justice at the expense of the landowners, to be followed, of course, immediately by further instalments at the expense of the rest of us, or merely as the thin end of the wedge, which when driven fairly home will have consequences which may or may not be agreeable to contemplate. What do Liberals really think about it ?"

Land Values and Commodity Values

In an able reply, Mr Owen showed that the distinction to be drawn was not between land and shares, but between land and labour products.

"The great service rendered by Henry George was that he showed the basic distinction between investments in land, the source of all wealth production, and investments in the production of wealth from land. If, as Dr Williams suggests, there is no distinction, and all values are communally created, then the blacksmith contributes nothing to the value of the shoe he hammers out on the anvil and the shareholders and workers of Austin Motors, Ltd., contribute nothing to the value of their cars. Horseshoes and cars are created by human labour and capital, and should be owned by those who produce them, and to expropriate them by taxation in

any degree is immoral. Land values, on the contrary, are communally created and should be owned by the people who make them, and this can be done by the taxation of land values.

"Dr Williams writes as though business and trade were not now taxed, and are only to be taxed into public possession after the tax on land values has shown the way. Liberals who have studied the subject will know that the taxation of land values is advocated as an alternative to the heavy taxation which is at present crippling all trade and industry. The workers and shareholders in a motor or other business are already heavily taxed and rated, and these rates and taxes have to be paid even when the concern is making no profits. The owner of land can escape taxation by keeping his land out of use until it fetches a price that covers the years when it yielded no income, and he will pay no income tax on this realized sum. It is this power to withhold land from use which is the cause not only of crippled businesses but of unemployment, low purchasing power, and poverty in all its forms, and it is this that the taxation of land values is calculated to prevent by forcing land into productive use. That is why every Liberal should press for this great reform."

Investments in Land

Dr Price Williams in his rejoinder wrote :—

"The differences between land and other forms of wealth are many, but they do not, so far as I can see, warrant such distinctions between the owners of them ; between those who 'sit on' their capital invested in land and those who 'sit on' their capital invested in other concerns the profits from which are undoubtedly communally created. Money derived from 'excessive' dividends would be just as useful to the community as money derived from taxation of land values, and the community has an equal claim on both, though it may be more convenient (or expedient) to make the latter claim first."

The difference between investment in land and investment in other things was dealt with by Mr Owen in reply to this.

"Land is not, as Dr Williams thinks, one of many forms of wealth. It is the source, 'not made with hands,' from which all forms of wealth can alone be derived. To invest in land is to invest in the business of rent-receiving and not in the business of wealth production. The investor in land obtains the absolute power to determine whether wealth shall be produced from it or not, and he dictates the terms for its use. No investment of any other kind gives the same anti-social power.

"Capital invested in processes of industry is not 'sat on,' to use Dr Williams's phrase. It is used more or less productively, and as it helps the production of wealth it can justly claim its proportionate share of the product. The owner of land as such does not aid production, yet he can command the first share of its results. If it were possible to sit on capital used in production, as Dr Williams says is done, the capital would soon decay and disappear. Land can be sat on or even vacated by the absentee owner and still appreciate in value. As Thorold Rogers said, 'The landlord sleeps but thrives.'"

Land Nationalization

Meanwhile, Dr A. P. Laurie had intervened in the discussion to contend that the taxation of land values was "a most unfortunate proposal as it paralyses private enterprise while not replacing it by public control."

His proposal was :—

"Buying out all private owners on terminable annuities calculated on net income from the land would be fair all round and would be largely if not entirely covered by the amount received in rents.

"Taxation of land values means the maximum of irritation for the minimum result, while taxation of possible future profits without accepting losses is a dishonest form of taxation. The Labour policy to buy landowners out is an honest and a practical policy."

The Fallacy of State Purchase

In answer to this, Colonel Wedgwood described land nationalization as "humbug which for thirty years has been

put forward by those who fear the taxation and rating of land values and wish to protect land monopoly from our attack." The objections to it were:—

"(1) The householders and farmers who occupy their own property do not want to lose their property and are numerous. Are they to be exempted or not?"

"(2) How can the State buy land without having a valuation first of what is being bought? If we took so many years' purchase of the rateable value, those who owned the land with a building value were treated worse than others. The injustice was obvious.

"But the main objection was (3) that the State cannot buy the land without buying the improvements on it—the farm improvements, the houses, the factories, the shops. If any of these improvements are to be carried on by private enterprise, the new owner must lease the property to someone. It will certainly be difficult to lease to anyone or to any company save to the present users. The difficulty will translate itself into a low rent. Farms may be let as at present, but all other real estate will have to be on long lease if the users are to build up improvements, goodwill, or to have confidence.

"A 99-year lease at a variable rent seems to me extraordinarily like the taxation of land values, but with an enormous initial cost. A 99-year lease at a fixed rent re-

sembles closely our present worst urban system. Dr Laurie must think again."

Summing up the Controversy

In his final letter, Mr Owen summed up the points at issue in concise terms:—

"Dr Williams refers more than once to unearned increment and evidently confuses a tax on land values with the abortive increment tax once substituted for it. The principles underlying these two taxes are quite different. Dr Williams seems in favour of taxing any kind of increment just because it is an increment. Land values, on the other hand, are created by the community, and this is the reason why they should be taken in taxation, and this whether they are increasing, decreasing, as sometimes happens, or even if they remain at one level. To take land values for the community is not in any sense confiscatory and would render unnecessary the expropriation of private wealth which Dr Williams seems to favour, and it would also rule out the policy of buying out the landlords, which Dr A. P. Laurie sponsors, and which can be shown to be both dishonest and impracticable. I believe Lord Oxford rightly described the landlord as being not a partner in the industrial community but a parasite upon it."

On 6th November, Viscount Snowden will be the guest of the Cobden Club at a Luncheon in the Hotel Victoria, London, when he will speak in protest against the policy of Protection.

On 14th November, Viscount Snowden will be entertained by the Women's National Liberal Federation in the Criterion Restaurant, Piccadilly, London, and will speak on the Taxation of Land Values.

The *Daily Herald* of 31st October gave prominence to the following communication from Mr Andrew MacLaren:—

"LANDOWNERS EXPLOIT RATEPAYERS"

"When these Tories talk about high rates they carefully suppress the fact that landowners all over the country reap a rich harvest from the exploitation of the ratepayer.

"Middlesex County Council has erected 70 miles of arterial roads. This has increased land values by £15,000,000.

"For land rated at £58 10s. Glasgow paid £61,850. London paid £251,666 for the St. Helier Estate, rated at £1,535. For land of no rateable value Stoke-on-Trent was stung for £17,350.

"Get back from the landowners what the community has conferred upon them, and there will be no problem of high rates."

In Salford, the Council are resorting to compulsory powers for the acquisition of 80 acres of land at Pendlebury as a site for the tipping of refuse. At the arbitration proceedings (*Manchester Guardian*, 28th September) the tenant for life, Mrs Daunteley, of Marnhull, Dorset, claimed £51,400 as the price while the valuer to the corporation valued it at £8,387. The representative of the claimant gave as reasons for the price demanded these considerations: that the ground was outside the Salford boundary in a district where the rates (levied when the land is improved) are lower than in Salford itself; that it was bounded by the Agecroft Colliery and two main railway lines; also the Manchester-Bolton Canal. Who, then, makes it valuable—the owner? As a piece of land quite undeveloped, this site is entirely exempt from local taxation. The owner's price and the valuer's opinion of its value should be contrasted with that fact.

STATE AID TO AGRICULTURE. In our issue of September we quoted Dr J. A. Venn as an authority for the statement that state aid to agriculture amounts to £45 million a year. In a letter to *The Economist*, Dr Venn points out that his address to the Agricultural Economics Society has been misunderstood, and that the total should be £28 millions. Even so, this subsidy to maintain land values is enormous, and it has increased since the original calculation was made in July, 1933.

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

A CENTURY OF LAND SPECULATION
IN CHICAGO

The September-October issue of *Land and Freedom* (New York) contains a seven-page review by the Hon. Charles O'Connor Hennessy of Mr Homer Hoyt's book, "One Hundred Years of Land Values in Chicago" (University of Chicago Press, \$5.00). In the space at our disposal we can only attempt to summarize this remarkable story.

In 1830 Chicago consisted of a few log-huts. Government land was available without stint at \$1.25 an acre. Its remarkable natural situation led to rapid growth. By 1836 the population was 4,000. Land was bought and sold over and over again, and the selling value of land in the present city limits had risen to \$10,500,000. The inevitable crash came, banks failed and by 1841 the State bonds of Illinois were selling at a discount of 82 per cent.

Deflated land values invited workers and capitalists. The canal to La Salle was opened in 1848. In 1854 Chicago had become the railway centre of the West at the cost of enormous land grants to the railway companies. In 1855 the population exceeded 80,000. In 1859 land values had risen to 126,000,000. Once more came the period of collapse and liquidation. By 1864 no less than 98 banks had closed their doors.

During and after the civil war population and land values grew rapidly. The great fire of 1871 caused only a temporary setback, and by 1873 land values were 500 per cent above the level of 1862. Once more the inevitable reaction came. Bank suspensions and commercial failures caused a widespread panic. In 1877 land values had fallen to 250 million as compared with 575 million in 1873, and so the way was paved for further industrial expansion and growth of population.

The climax of the next speculative period was reached at the time of the World's Fair in 1892. The succeeding deflation, though less precipitate, was protracted and lasted into the present century. After 1902 rents began to rise. Between 1910 and 1918 land values rose 50 per cent, but the acute speculative fever was yet to come.

Between 1921 and 1928 the sales value of land in the city limits increased from two thousand million to five thousand million dollars. In 1928 foreclosures commenced, rents and prices were falling. Land values began a precipitate and disastrous decline. The stock market collapse in New York resulted and revealed the extent of the evil. By the end of 1932 foreclosure suits involved more than two thousand million dollars of real estate. The repercussions of this extended not merely to the United States, as impoverished investors in so-called investment companies formed in this country to finance mortgages of Chicago real estate could bear witness.

No more convincing illustration of the truth of Henry George's great discovery of the source of recurring periods of economic depression could be asked for than this epic story of Chicago land speculation. As Mr Hennessy says: "That Henry George was right from the standpoint of logical speculative theory is accepted without question by all intelligent people who have been through so-called land booms in various sections of this country. Now his theory is amply supported by the indubitable facts revealed in the study of the incidence of land dealings in a great and progressive community, as minutely studied over a period of a century."

Mr Harold Sudell, writing in the *Philadelphia Ledger*, made good use of material in the September issue of *Land & Liberty*. He quoted the Land Values resolution recently adopted by the Dublin Corporation as a lesson to his own City Councilmen who have been seeking ways and means for relieving Philadelphia house-owners from the crushing burden of taxation they now bear. Numerous Press correspondents like Mr Sudell, both at home and abroad (as proved in the Press clippings we receive), thus pass on to a wide constituency facts or information culled from our columns.

FRANCIS W. MAGUIRE

One of the most remarkable personalities in the Henry George movement passed away in the Mercy Hospital in Pittsburgh, on the 12th October—Francis W. Maguire. He was in his 82nd year, and had been ill for about two months. Over a period of 45 years he had given voluntary service with extraordinary zeal and devotion to the propagation of the Henry George teaching, and no one over the length and breadth of America has done more to gain new readers for *Progress and Poverty* and the other writings of the great master. He began this work in Chicago in 1888, when at that time a clerk in a grocery store. In Pittsburgh he was associated with the Henry George Foundation of America and was a familiar figure at the annual congresses organized by that body. Few of our American correspondents have been more constantly in touch with our own office. In the course of the latter years he has had thousands of books and pamphlets for the exercise of his successful salesmanship and many are the new readers he has obtained for *Land & Liberty*. We can be grateful that he lived to see the victory of Mr McNair in the recent Mayoral campaign in Pittsburgh, after a campaign in which he participated with the greatest enthusiasm. The genial, kindly Francis Maguire had hosts of friends and one of these, Mr John C. Rose, wrote truly of him in an eloquent biographical sketch published in American papers of August last year: "His name will be numbered among those names that were not born to die. Indeed, some future generation will erect to his memory the same inscription which was erected to the memory of Giordano Bruno, on the spot where he was burned for seeing more clearly than his fellow men. The inscription will read: 'Raised to the man Maguire by the generation which he foresaw.'"

We convey our sincere condolences not only to the bereaved relatives but also to our co-workers and colleagues among whom Francis Maguire will be sadly missed.

SPAIN

La Reforma Social (Velázquez, 98, Madrid) for October, 1934, in spite of the censorship, is full of good things. There are admirable studies, to date, of local and general land value taxation in New Zealand: and an account of the Canberra land system. The astounding contrast in death rates between single-tax Sydney and Spanish cities—ranging to Palencia at 29.93 per 1,000—is duly stressed.

Pleasure is rightly expressed at the appointment of a leading member of the Spanish League, don José Ayats Surriba, as Under-Secretary for Salom. He is the founder of the Confederación Gremial, an important association of small industrialists and business men, and an active and powerful Georgeist worker. The Prime Minister, A. Lerroux, has often in past years shown interest in Georgeism; which makes this tentative gesture of some significance.

The Journal has a good word to say about the work of the United Committee, which is cordially acknowledged.

Mr A. Parlance, of New Zealand, with contribution to this Journal and kindly compliment to the services it renders him, sends us cuttings from *The Dominion* of an instructive controversy on rent, wages and interest carried on by him in that Journal.

At the instance of Mr Mather Smith in the Transvaal, the "Land Song" has been translated into Afrikaans by Mr van Lyl, a school teacher in Pretoria. It has been printed on a card with the English version on the other side and copies are being well distributed. Mr Mather Smith writes he is now leaving Pretoria and settling in Johannesburg, where he means to be active in promoting the Henry George cause.

As we go to press we have received specimens of five excellent "Notes for Speakers" Cards issued by Labour Party headquarters, setting forth the case for Land Value Rating. The argument, well stated, is illustrated with numerous striking examples. The cards belong to the series available to those making an annual subscription for this service.

NEWS OF THE MOVEMENT

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

The literature published by the Committee for use at the municipal elections has been widely distributed. This included the Sheffield City Council's Report on Land Value Rating, the new pamphlet *Cities Held to Ransom*, the Memorandum on Local Taxation, and the new leaflets, *Who Should Pay and Tax Land Values*. Several repeat orders had to be given to the printer to meet the demand. Specimens had been sent to 1,000 secretaries of local Labour, Liberal and Co-operative parties as well as to the Press and to several thousand co-workers and interested correspondents all over the country. The literature went out in bulk to many places for distribution at meetings or from house to house, while many correspondents provided lists of candidates, to whom in turn (with appropriate circular letter) the leaflets and pamphlets were posted. Among the places thus canvassed were Bebington, Cardiff, Birmingham, Birkenhead, Bolton, Bradford, Bristol, Burslem, Caernarvon, Cardiff, Chorley, Clitheroe, Dundee, Glasgow, Greenock, Falmouth, Ilkeston, Keighley, Lambeth, Leeds, Leytonstone, Manchester, Northampton, Oldham, Penryn, Portsmouth, Plaistow, Saffron Walden, Stirling, Swansea, Swinton, St. Helens, Wallasey, Wolverhampton, Worcester, Worthing and others. Smaller packets went to addresses too numerous to name. This propaganda, effective to a degree, belongs to the general campaign for our principle and policy, which at this time is most usefully concentrated upon the municipal field. The next immediate step, after these elections, will be to recruit more and more support from the local authorities themselves (where, if we mistake not, the forces in favour will be greatly strengthened) in pressure brought to bear upon Parliament for the necessary legislation. We take the opportunity to acknowledge the very large number of letters and cards from those who have written appreciating the receipt of this recent issue of literature and desiring not to be overlooked whenever the Committee asks for similar co-operation in the future.

London newspapers failed to report the Resolution adopted on 16th October by the London County Council with regard to an inquiry into the present system and possible decision to promote a Land Value Rating Bill in Parliament. A letter to 300 newspapers explaining the importance of this Resolution as a lead in the municipal agitation was issued by our Press Bureau. This letter and another earlier communication (on the general question and adapted from *Cities Held to Ransom*) have had wide publicity.

At the Third Quarterly meeting of the Committee on the 5th October congratulations were conveyed to Mr and Mrs Ashley Mitchell (both in attendance) on their Wedding, and, on behalf of the Members, presentation was made to Mr Mitchell of a set of "Chambers's Encyclopaedia" bound in quarter morocco, and to Mrs Mitchell of a wrist watch. It was a happy opportunity to express to Mr Mitchell the high regard of his colleagues and co-workers in the movement.

To each of the four candidates at the North Lambeth bye-election (23rd October) the Committee sent a questionnaire: "1. Are you in favour of the Taxation of Land Values? 2. Will you promote and support legislation to reform the system of local taxation so that rates shall be levied on the market value of land whether used or not, so as to relieve houses and other buildings from the burden of local taxation?" The Labour candidate, Mr George R. Strauss, and the Liberal candidate, Mr John W. Simpson, answered "Yes" to both questions. Mr S. F. Markham, the (Labour) National Government candidate, replied: "I am in favour of Land Values and voted for this measure when last in the House of Commons. I am also in favour of legislation to reform the system of local rating on the lines that you indicate." The result of the poll was: Mr G. R. Strauss, 11,281; W. Simpson, 4,968; S. F. Markham, 2,927; and Mrs A. S. G. Brown, Independent Imperialist, 305. This is a gain for Labour, and as Mr Strauss said after declaration of the poll, "The Government can accept the verdict of North Lambeth as a sign of the wrath to come whenever it has the courage to ask for the country's verdict."

Extensive reports appeared in the *Palmers Green Sentinel* and the *Wood Green Sentinel* of Mr Madsen's Address at the meeting of the Winchmore Hill Ratepayers' Association on the 27th September.

FORM OF REQUEST

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

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

In addition to the meetings announced last month, Mr D. H. Thomas addressed a meeting of the Teachers' Anti-War Society on "Land Monopoly the Cause of War" (18th October); Mr Andrew MacLaren, a meeting of all the Municipal Candidates for Fulham (21st October); Mr F. Verinder lectured to the Women's Section of the Bethnal Green (N.E.) Labour Party (24th October); Mr A. C. Blackburn to the Central Wandsworth Women's Section on 25th October; and Mr Graham Pole at Cardiff on the 31st.

Meetings already arranged for November are:—

- Fri., 2nd.—Putney Literary and Debating Society, Ravenna Hall, Ravenna Road: Andrew MacLaren, "The Story of my Dictatorship." 8.15 p.m.
- Tues., 6th.—Newhaven Literary and Debating Society: Mr A. MacLaren, "Poverty: Its Cause and Cure."
- Sun., 18th.—Edmonton Town Hall, Mr Andrew MacLaren. 7.30 p.m.
- Mon., 19th.—Memorial Club, High Street, Shadwell: Mr A. MacLaren. 8 p.m.
- Tues., 20th.—Edmonton Labour Party (Women's Section), Labour Rooms, 372 Fore Street: Mr F. Verinder. 2.30 p.m.
- Mon., 26th.—Deptford Labour Party (Women's Section), Erlam Road Hall: Mr F. Verinder, "The Housing Question." 3 p.m.
- DEC. 1st.—Social and Dance (see below).
- DEC. 4th.—North Tottenham Labour League of Youth: Warmington House, 744 High Road, Mr F. Verinder. 8.30 p.m.
- DEC. 5th.—S. Hackney Labour Party (Women's Section), Eton Mission Hall, 51 Chapman Road: Mr F. Verinder. 3.15 p.m.

Mr G. A. Goodwin, C.M.G., is a frequent contributor of letters to the *Prestatyn Weekly*, and has placed at the disposal of the League a brief and effective appeal, in postcard form, to municipal electors, copies of which have been gladly circulated. Mr Blackburn had a letter on the "Farmer's View" in the *Daily Herald* of 15th October. Copies of provincial newspapers containing the General Secretary's letter on "The Municipal Elections and the Burden of the Rates" are still reaching the office.

The Commissioners of Crown Lands, from whom the League's offices are rented, are painting the front of the building, and a proposal for the redecoration of the Lecture Room by the voluntary labour of some of the younger members of the League, under the direction of an architect-member, is under consideration. Visits from London and provincial friends will be welcomed.

The Economic Lectures on Tuesdays at 8 p.m. are being continued.

In reply to inquiries addressed to the candidates in the North Lambeth bye-election, Mr G. R. Strauss, the successful Labour candidate, and Mr J. W. Simpson, Liberal candidate, both declared themselves in favour of the Taxation of Land Values.

A "Social" and Dance will be held at the "White Heather" Tea Rooms, 445 Strand (opposite Charing Cross Station, S.R.), on Saturday, 1st December. 8-11 p.m. Tickets, 2/- (including refreshments) may be obtained from Miss E. Hill, or at the League Office. Members are invited to bring friends.

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

The Henry George Commemoration Meeting was held at the Liberal Club, Glasgow, on Friday, 5th October, and was well attended. Mr E. E. Belfour, President, English League, travelled to Glasgow to give his impressions of the present and future of the movement. He was accompanied by Mr Andrew MacLaren, who reviewed the tendencies towards regimentation and regulation in the programmes of modern politicians.

The Scottish Liberal Conference which met at Dundee on Friday and Saturday, 5th and 6th October, passed the following resolution, which was forwarded from Berwick and Haddington Liberal Association:—

"That this Conference regrets that in the Statements of Liberal Policy greater emphasis is not placed on the Taxation of Land Values. They urge that this should be put in the forefront of the Liberal Party Programme as a fundamental issue essential to the solution of the problems of Housing, Unemployment and Trade and Agricultural Depression. They further regret that Agricultural Land is exempted and declare that its inclusion is essential."

Captain A. R. McDougal (Berwickshire) and Dr Joseph Green (Glasgow) spoke to the resolution, which was moved by Mr William Reid.

The Study Circle, which was much appreciated by new members last year, resumes its Winter Session on Friday, 2nd November. Questions and discussion by new adherents are doubly welcomed.

Following some action by members of Scottish Co-operative Societies and reports in the *Scottish Co-operative Journal*, Mr Alex Campbell joined in the discussion through the correspondence column. Mr Campbell, who retires shortly and who is leaving Glasgow, will be missed in the Glasgow area, but is likely to make himself useful in Ayrshire, where he will be located.

The winter issue of *Liberty*, published by the Glasgow District Council of the League of Young Liberals, contains several articles dealing with phases of the movement for the taxation of land values. The "Liberal Way" is criticized for over-emphasis of less important matters and neglect of land values by Mr Charles J. E. Morgan.

The usual work of letters to the editors of local journals has been continued.

Our President, Bailie Peter Burt, addressed the Rotary Club at Hamilton on Thursday, 11th October. He spoke at a meeting of the Bothwell Division Liberals on the 18th October, and has joined in other activities during the month.

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

The second Henry George Commemoration Service in Manchester was held in the Chorlton Unitarian Church on Sunday, 7th October. The service was conducted by Mr Owen, solos were rendered by Mr F. Thomasson, and passages from *Progress and Poverty* were read by the Secretary. Mr L. A. Weller presided at the organ and Mrs Owen played the piano accompaniments. In the course of an address on "Landless Men, Priests and Levites" (we quote the *Manchester Guardian* report) Mr Owen said there had been no answer to the charge made by Henry George that the churches appeared to be divorced from the aspiration for liberty and progress; that they gave the Gospel to labourers and the earth to the landlords; and that this was the reason why the working masses everywhere were losing faith. The social question was in Henry George's opinion at bottom a religious question, and organized Christianity could not safely pass by on the other side whilst the victims of land monopoly lay helpless in their condition of land hunger. Christian brotherhood meant more than charity and sociability. It meant that everyone must be given equal shares in the bounties of nature; no one must be shut out of the avenues of employment; the social values attaching to land must be collected and distributed for public purposes instead of private ends. The churches would have to take up this moral and religious question.

In the municipal elections, proceeding at the time of writing these notes, the following question was submitted by the Secretary to all the Manchester candidates:—

"If you are elected, and if during your term of office you are called upon to vote for or against the Rating of Land Values, how will you vote?"

In a discussion on "Liberals and the Land" in the *Manchester Guardian*, letters have been contributed by Mr D. J. J. Owen, Colonel J. C. Wedgwood, M.P., and the Secretary.

Meetings have been addressed by the League's speakers as follows: Alexandra Park Gate, E. F. MacClafferty and A. H. Weller; Sale W.C.G., A. H. Weller; Castleton (Lancs.) W.C.G., A. H. Weller; Hulme M.C.G., A. H. Weller; Lower Irlam M.C.G., A. H. Weller; Preston W.C.G., A. H. Weller; Sale M.C.G., D. J. J. Owen; Winton M.C.G., A. H. Weller; Radcliffe M.C.G., A. H. Weller; Tyldesley W.C.G., Mrs Catterall.

HENRY GEORGE CLUB (Manchester) : E. Boyle, Hon. Secretary, Kinder View, New Mills, Derbyshire.

The first meeting of the session was held in Smallman's Restaurant, Piccadilly, Manchester, on 24th October, and presided over by Councillor William Noble. Mr Arthur H. Weller opened a discussion on "Complete De-Rating." He said (*Manchester Guardian* report): Some candidates in Manchester advocated a municipal income-tax, and it was said in support of that policy that the present system was unfair because a man making a big income in a small office paid little in rates, while a neighbouring shopkeeper paid a great deal and could barely make both ends meet. Evidently it was desired to use the machinery of rating for the equalizing of incomes, and it was forgotten that the sole purpose of local rates was the provision of revenue for public services. If the inequalities complained of were unjust, it would be wise to remove their cause instead of attempting to correct its results. It was also argued that a municipal income-tax would more accurately measure the rate-payers' ability to pay than did the present system. But ability to pay was an unbusinesslike and immoral basis for taxation, and even if ability could be ascertained, it would only indicate the capacity of each victim to be plundered.

Future meetings arranged include: 15th November, when

Mr Owen will speak on "Economic Causes of War," and an address by Mr J. L. Withington, of Macclesfield, on 12th December.

LIVERPOOL LEAGUE : F. R. Jones, Hon. Secretary, 23 Rocklands Avenue, Bebington, Cheshire.

At our weekly meetings at 21, Harrington Street, the following addresses have been given in October:—

3rd October, Secretary: "The Prime Importance of the Land Question." 10th, Mr A. Tait: "Who Shall Develop Britain—Irresponsibles, or a Trained Nation?" 17th, Mr C. Davies (Consumer Money League): "Poverty: Its Cause and Cure." 24th, Mr J. W. Foley: "On Not Raising Hogs." 31st, Mr Gomer Owen (Secretary, North Wales Liberal Federation): "Our Economic Troubles—Is There a Way Out?"

The following programme has been arranged for the near future:—

14th Nov.—Mr O. Baier (Positivist Church): "Blood and Land." 21st, "Mr E. M. Ginders (Manchester): "The Age of Futility." 28th, "Open date." 5th Dec.—Mr J. H. Boothman (Independent Communist): "Work and Wages." 12th, "Mr F. C. Moore, M.A. (Official Communist): "The Communist View of Unemployment." 19th, "Mr Wm. H. Ledsom: "A Liberal Puts the World Right."

Each speaker is competent and well accustomed to present his own point of view. The meetings commence at 7.45 p.m. The speaker has half an hour to present his case, and ten minutes to close before the meeting ends at 9.50 p.m. Question time and the discussion give an adequate opportunity to the audience to acquaint themselves with the points touched on, and our own speakers relate the subject to our reform. Members and others interested are urged to attend, and to make constant efforts to bring along new friends.

The following organizations have been addressed by our speakers:—

9th October, Warbreck Co-operative Women's Guild: Secretary. 16th, Oakfield Co-operative Women's Guild: Mr E. J. McManus. 16th, Old Swan Co-operative Women's Guild: Secretary. 23rd, Dingle Co-operative Joint Guild: Secretary. 29th, Heswall Co-operative Women's Guild, Secretary. 2nd November, Liverpool Esperanto Society (in Esperanto): Secretary.

At the meetings on 16th and 23rd October the Old Swan and Dingle Guilds unanimously decided to affiliate with our League, paying the affiliation fee of 2s. 6d., and seeking to assist its activities. At all the meetings there was a good sale of literature.

The Secretary had a letter in the *Liverpool Echo* refuting the fallacy that machinery is the cause of unemployment. In the *Birkenhead News* Economic Forum articles have appeared on the Gresford Mining disaster, land value rating *versus* local income-tax, and the prime reason why Japanese competition need not be feared by British workers. There is at present proceeding a controversy with Dr Tudor Jones, the chief Liverpool exponent of the Douglas Credit Theory, and the errors of that crude doctrine are being revealed and analysed. During the Municipal Elections good work was done by a distribution at political meetings and through ward political secretaries of the United Committee leaflets *Who Should Pay?* and *The Taxation of Land Values* and the fine booklet *Cities Held to Ransom*.

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

Meetings have been addressed as follows:—

2nd October, The Secretary: Shire Green, Sheffield, W.C.G. 9th, Ashley Mitchell: Leeds Trades Council Unemployed Committee. 19th, Ashley Mitchell: Leeds Liberal Luncheon Club. 21st, The Secretary: The first of a series of Ten Meetings to be held in a room at the Leeds Trades Hall.

The following letters by members of the League have appeared in the Press: 27th September, A. W. Dakers had a letter in the *Yorkshire Post*; 28th, the Secretary in *Yorkshire Observer*; 29th, A. W. Dakers and C. H. Jones in *Keighley News*; 9th October, the Secretary in *Yorkshire Observer*.

Copies of *Cities Held to Ransom*, the Memorandum on Local Taxation and leaflets have been sent to all candidates in Leeds and Bradford Municipal Elections.

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

At a meeting held 26th September the following officials were appointed to act for the coming year:—Chairman—Mr J. A. Haworth; Secretary—Mr J. L. Hamilton; Treasurer—Mr T. Rishton; and on the General Committee along with the above, Mr A. Hallows and Miss M. Hartley.

The first meeting of the winter session was held in the Co-operative Guild Room on 12th October, when Councillor Eastwood, of Bolton, addressed a public meeting. His subject was entitled "Land Values Taxation and Rating," and the audience thoroughly enjoyed Mr Eastwood's remarks and illuminating examples. He also dealt with questions in his usual bright and capable manner. The classes will be continued in the same room throughout the winter, and a cordial invitation is given to any friends who are interested in the welfare of the whole community.

Mr Hallows is candidate in the local municipal elections, and in connection with his campaign and the election generally we have distributed much of the literature provided by the United Committee for the campaign.

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

The Bishop of Birmingham is not satisfied with what has been achieved in improving housing conditions, and he suggests that "the anti-social holding of land in and around the great cities must end, that the value of such land is largely made by the community, and the community ought to be able to buy whatever land it desires at the price at which it was last scheduled for death duties."

A member of the League, Mr J. Newton Hyde, is contesting the Selly Oak Ward, and, both in his address and public speeches, he is making a good case for the rating of land values.

In view of the municipal elections some thousands of our latest cards, "How to Lower the Rates" and "What the Taxation of Land Values Will Do," have been posted to candidates and to specially selected lists of shopkeepers and other interested citizens. All the candidates have received also (from Petty France) the pamphlets and leaflets issued by the United Committee for the municipal campaign.

WELSH LEAGUE : Mrs A. Fenton, Hon. Secretary, Ruskin House, Caerphilly Road, Birchgrove, Cardiff.

A letter was sent to each of the 31 Candidates at the Cardiff Municipal election calling attention to the Resolution on Land Values adopted by the Cardiff City Council on the 25th July last and asking replies to the following question: "Arising out of this Resolution, our Executive would like to know whether, if you are returned to the Council, you would be prepared to take steps toward urging the Council to convene a Conference of Welsh Rating Authorities with a view to such Conference endorsing the principle of Land Value Rating." With this letter specimens of the pamphlets and leaflets issued by the United Committee were enclosed. A stamped addressed envelope was supplied for answer, so that the attitude of the Candidates could be made known to the public before the polling day.

Mrs Margaret Saunders, a member of the League Executive, who is standing for the Llandaff Ward, obtained 8,000 each of the U.C. leaflets *Who Should Pay and Tax Land Values* which she sent out with her Election Address to all the voters.

BRISTOL LEAGUE : J. A. Hurley, Hon. Secretary, 14 Queen's Road, Knowle, Bristol.

The League has now taken its winter quarters at the Co-operative Rooms, Castle Street, where each Thursday the President, Mr E. J. Brierley, will lecture from the comprehensive programme which has been prepared. Several new members have joined and many new contacts have been formed.

Many engagements have been booked from the Co-operative Guilds and Women's Labour Sections at which Mr Brierley will speak. Further publicity is given to the Land Question by the weekly contributions from his pen in the *Bristol Guardian and Gazette* and other local papers.

Those interested are asked to communicate with the Secretary.

Mr J. H. Knight, who is candidate for Somerset Ward (the largest in Bristol, with 10,000 electors), is making the rating of land values a prominent item in his campaign. Mr E. T. Boggs, the late secretary of the League, is acting as his election agent.

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

The Winter Economic Class with *Progress and Poverty* as the text-book, which meets monthly in the Wesley Central Hall, Fratton, was opened on the 8th October with an address by Mr A. W. Madsen on "Social and Industrial Evils." A number of new students have enrolled in addition to those who attended the Class last year. The *Evening News* had a useful report of Mr Madsen's remarks.

A large quantity of the municipal literature, provided by the United Committee, has been distributed not only by the Labour and Liberal Parties but also by members of the League and all the candidates have been canvassed in this way.

We are glad to say that Mr McGuigan, though still in hospital after his serious accident, is making good and steady progress to recovery. Active despite his present handicap he has helped to organize the distribution of literature and saw to it that 60 copies of the October *Land & Liberty* were posted to an

(Continued on page 148)

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equal number of special addresses in and around Portsmouth. While recruiting his health, he has been recruiting new readers, but that at all times is one of his main concerns.

HIGHLAND LEAGUE: Isaac Mackenzie, Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, The Arcade, Inverness.

The Secretary paid a visit to Sutherlandshire on 17th and 18th October and had various complaints of the high rates that were now levied on towns and villages. In Bonar Bridge the Secretary was informed the rate was 17s. 4d. in the £1, in Clyne and Brora 17s. 3d. The Derating Act is responsible for the increase. There is no increase in Ross-shire, but in Inverness-shire the rate imposed amounts to 10s. 10d. in the £1. According to the *Northern Chronicle* of 18th October the rate levied fifty years ago only averaged 9d. in the £1. To-day the increased levy in rates in Inverness is a barrier to the building of houses by private enterprise.

On 19th October the *Ross-shire Journal* published a letter on the "Injustice of Rating" by "J. M." There was also an article in *Highland News* of 27th October on "The Silent Glens": "These Highlanders did not willingly leave their homes in the glens—they were compelled. Is it to be assumed because there are difficulties, not insurmountable, standing in the way that repatriation is impossible? Until a great wrong, allowed to be perpetrated by the Governments of the day, remains to be righted by the Governments of our day, so long will the prosperity of the Highlands elude the efforts of all our legislators."

The *Co-operative News* of 13th October reports the "very thoughtful and well-informed address" on the Taxation of Land Values given by Councillor Mrs Alderson, of Hull, at the Yorkshire Co-operative School at Scarborough. She chose as her title "Poverty; Its Cause and Cure," and in the column report there are many striking examples of the effects of the land monopoly. Referring to the recent terrible mining disaster at Gresford, she said that was only a small pit, yet £30 a day or £120 a week was paid, not to the colliery owner but (in royalties) to the proprietor of the land below which the coal was being mined. If this could be capitalized it would provide £1,000 each for the dead miners' dependants. In the interesting discussion that followed, Mrs Billam cited Sheffield's experience in the purchase of land for school and playing-field purposes.

Mrs Alderson was candidate at the Hull municipal elections and took a large supply of the pamphlets and leaflets the United Committee published for the municipal campaign.

SCOTTISH LIBERALS. The adoption of a resolution urging the Taxation of Land Values, by the Scottish Liberal Federation meeting in Dundee on 5th and 6th October, is noted in another column. Unanimously adopted was also the resolution from Berwick and Haddington, moved by Capt. A. R. McDougal, to which he spoke in vigorous manner:

"That this Conference condemns the Marketing Schemes as at present constituted and urges that the Liberal Party should declare now that it will repeal at the first opportunity without compensation to vested interests, all those Rings and Monopolies now being created under the misleading title of Marketing Schemes. They point out that these are not Marketing Schemes, as they do not attempt to improve Marketing or lessen the gap between Producer and Consumer. These Schemes involve Monopolies, Restriction of Trade and Production, Unwarrantable and Tyrannical Interference with the Liberty of the Subject, the Destruction of Foodstuffs and the Creation by Law of Artificial Scarcity and new Vested Interests for behoof of the Landowner at the expense of the Consumer."

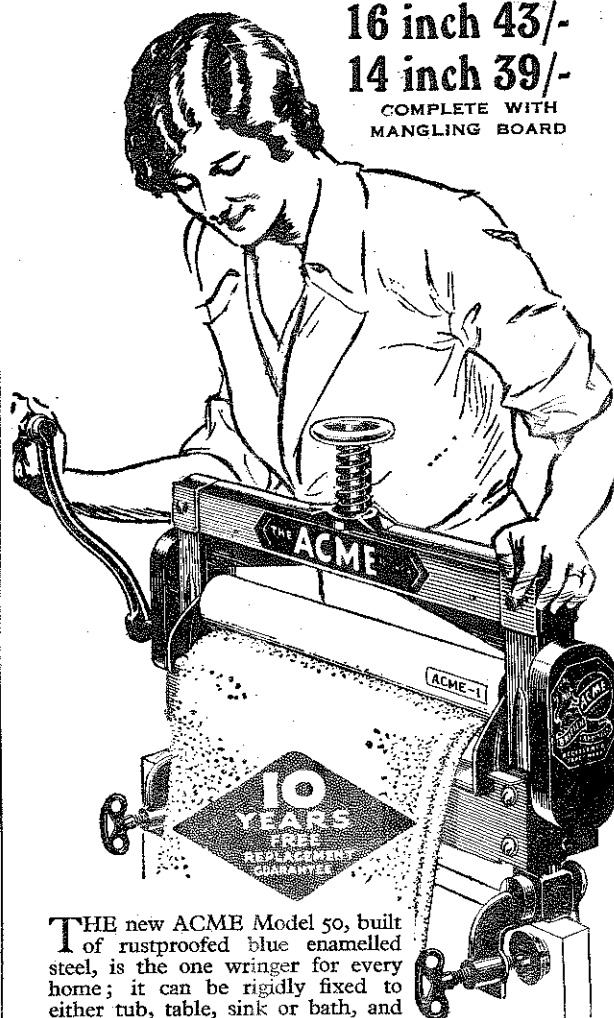
At an auction of chief rents (virtually rents fixed in perpetuity) in Manchester on 3rd October, amounting to £1,338 a year, the price of £33,365 was realized. This was in respect of forty blocks of shops and dwellings in the Alexandra Park district. The *Manchester Guardian* in a note marks this sale as an "interesting indication of the rising investment value of chief rents" which before the war were worth 18 to 20 years' purchase, but now the prices range from 23½ to 26 years' purchase.

Birth.—On the 20th October, to Mr and Mrs Charles Morley, a daughter and third child.

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FREE CHOICE OF FIXTURES—to fix the ACME on either tub, table, sink or bath.

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