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(WITH SOME TELLING POINTS,)

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MERRIE ENGLAND.

A London newspaper tells a story of Lincolnshire vil who have to be content with oil lamps because the Squire allow electricity to be supplied to the three villages on estate. It is said that these people are not enthusiasti modern lighting, but as enthusiasm would imply censure of gentleman who allows them to live in that part of their n country, this is not surprising. Instead of making compl they make excuses: "There is nothing to complain about w is used to lighting lamps", "What you haven't, you cannot and similar comments denoting resignation to the inevitab made to the newspaper representative. Be that as it may, people have no power to decide how their houses shall be. The position was quite clearly stated by the Clerk to the Council when he said: "We must accept the Squire's decisi. It is interesting to learn that a private electricity pla provides electric lighting for the Squire's own residence Economic serfs.

This story of life in an English village in 1937 ill the power which Land Monopoly still gives to men called l These villagers are, nevertheless, as free, economically, rest of us - they could demonstrate their independence by the estate. But as that would mean unemployment for many and hardship for all of them they "accept the Squire's de Opportunities to earn a living elsewhere are scarce and u and many other free Britons would gladly take their cotta jobs (and the dictatorship which goes with them) if the v left the estate. These conditions are the natural fruits being treated as private property. Believing themselves these Britons are serfs in all but name.

The road to freedom.

Economic freedom for all can be won by means of the

of Land Values - the public appropriation of the economic land. If all the land were taxed on its unimproved value used or not, there would be many alternative opportunities on land now unused or labour-starved for all who were satisfied with their present locations. In these circumstances the Squire would be faced with the prospect of losing his land and having to pay the land-values tax on his unused acreages without villagers are economically worthless, and he would, in his own interest, refrain from actions which make his tenant dissatisfied. In conditions of economic dictatorship would neither be attempted nor tolerated.

REFORMERS WHO HINDER REFORM.

If good intentions could achieve more than a glow of satisfaction, poverty would long ago have ceased to torture and disgrace humanity. But when not guided by reason and common practical politics, they may mislead those inspired by them and distract attention from real remedies. Ignoring the lessons of experience, good men, moved by sympathy and impatient to invent schemes or advocate policies which are either impracticable or are futile because they do not remove the cause of poverty. Reformers of this kind are sometimes a greater hindrance than declared opponents. Here are some examples:-

"Man-made poverty".

At a meeting in London organised by the Women Public Officers' Association, Lord Listowel declared that after poverty was the greatest social evil. He said there were a million houses in this country occupied by families living in slum or overcrowded conditions, and that meant that about a million people were living in back streets or "rabbit warrens". Nearly half the population was unable to obtain such food as dairy produce and fresh fruits on which health depended, and per cent of the children were maintained on 4/- per week and could not grow up to health. "Poverty", said Lord Listowel, "is man-made and can therefore be cured by the ingenuity of our own human intelligence". The remedy proposed by his lordship was "wise and resolute action" by public authorities, including measures as higher taxes on unearned incomes and on estates passing at death, and increased super-tax.

Man-perpetuated poverty.

If "the ingenuity of our human intelligence" had been applied as proposed by Lord Listowel in his search for the solution of the problem, he would not have made these proposals. The effect of the higher taxes on unearned incomes, death-duties and super-taxes is no more than a continuous redistribution of wealth to correct its conti-

maldistribution. Efforts to abolish poverty by such measures as hopeless as trying to stop housebreaking by taking a part of the "swag" from burglars while leaving them free to burgle "When peace breaks out".

Here is another example: Sir Benjamin Dawson, a prominent Yorkshire business man, said recently that the greatest slump the world has ever known will come when peace breaks out. There will be no trade booms and slumps, he declared, if unemployment is abolished, and that could be done by reducing working hours.

Sir Benjamin puts the cart before the horse. Long hours and low wages are results of unemployment - competition of many men for few jobs. In such conditions men will tolerate much of the horrors of worklessness. If this competition were eliminated through the abolition of unemployment, wages would be high and working hours would be regulated by the mutual convenience of employers and workmen. But just as low wages and long hours are effects of unemployment, so also unemployment is an effect of the greater wrong - the present system of treating land as private property and the taxation system based on it.

The true remedy.

The continued existence of poverty in spite of innumerable attempts to redistribute wealth by Acts of Parliament, proves the futility of this policy. The true remedy is to enable those who toil or render service (or are willing to do so) to work and enjoy their full earnings. Land Monopoly must be destroyed. Under the present system the first charge on industry is paid for permission to produce and exchange wealth - the total charge being estimated at £500,000,000 a year. By means of Land Taxation and the remission of taxes and rates on industry, monstrous iniquity can be ended. This policy will rectify the present maldistribution of wealth and make the prevention of employment by land-withholding impossible. When that is done and all the barriers to trade are broken down, there will be equality of opportunity and general prosperity.

CRIMINAL GOVERNMENTS.

"We maintain that a man may be slain, enslaved or defrauded quite as unjustly by a Government as by a private individual, and that such crimes on the part of a Government are usually infinitely more prejudicial to the great body of society than any one of individual crime that could reasonably be expected to take place in a civilised country. No instance can be adduced of a country being brought to ruin and degradation by individual crime, whereas legislative crime has produced revolutions, persecutions, civil wars, anarchies, and decays innumerable". (Patrick E

POLITICAL ECONOMY IN A NUTSHELL.

"Man lives by applying labour to land, the source of sustenance.

The right to live includes that of free access to land. Independence depends upon free access to the strategic sources of life.

Physical possession of each site by all is impossible. Exclusive occupancy is essential to efficiency; therefore the possessor should compensate those excluded.

As land-value is created by society, each landholder should pay society the rental value of the land held.

Given this full value of the service rendered, societies would have ample revenue to maintain that service. Taxes would be unnecessary.

Labour and Capital, being tax-exempt, would have all wages and interest.

Nothing could be made from land except by using it; land would be held only for use, and unused land would be open for purchase requirements. The doors of opportunity would open to all.

Rent denied them, men could obtain only wages and interest; hence, as one cannot get wages on another's labour, nor interest on another's capital, exploitation would be impossible. Society would have a fair field, and Progress the right of way.

Involuntary unemployment and poverty would cease; the Age of our dreams would be ushered in". (From "No Taxes")

SOME OBJECTIONS ANSWERED (3)

Some defenders of the present land system say that considerations have nothing to do with land ownership.

The moral issue cannot be evaded so easily. Political Economy, or economics, deals both with production and distribution. Though the production of wealth is in itself neither morally right nor immoral, its distribution is of necessity either just or unjust. Private property in land is morally wrong because it deprives masses of certain natural rights: the right to apply the land to the natural resources (land), and the right to possess and enjoy the fruits of their labour.

But, say the objectors, the economic advantages of land as private property outweigh its disadvantages. Be it so, but that the advantages go to the Land-lords and the disadvantages to the people. To the former the system brings unearned wealth, to the latter it brings unrequited toil. An unbiased consideration of all the ascertainable effects of the present system leads inevitably, to the conclusion that it is both morally wrong and politically inexpedient.