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population. With this in mind, a walk or ride through town and country will reveal convincing evidence that such a contingency is too remote for serious thought. The real trouble is that Nature's provision for human needs (the land) is treated as the private property of a few privileged people, and that, consequently, innumerable opportunities for employment and production in the primary industries are withheld from use. The Land-lords stand between the people and Nature's provision for their well-being. For this fundamental wrong there is a practical remedy: the nationalisation of the rent of land by means of the Taxation and Rating of Land Values. And this must be accompanied by a corresponding reduction of existing taxes and rates on homes and earnings.

A RELIC OF SANITY There is a curious law governing the lead-mining industry in Derbyshire, which prevents the holding of a mine out of use indefinitely. According to immemorial custom mine-owners lose their rights if mines are not reasonably worked. When this happens, and under certain conditions, anyone who thinks himself more efficient is free to step in and try.

Dogs-in-the-manger

This custom appears to be a relic of the happier times prevailing when the land of Britain belonged to the people of Britain. The worst feature of the present land system is that it gives to the land-owners a legal right to prevent production by withholding land from use; they can act the part of dog-in-the-manger when that is convenient or profitable. It is curious that in the Derbyshire lead-mining industry such conduct is not possible. Perhaps the mines and caves of this county were overlooked when the broad acres of Britain were stolen from the people.

Make withholding unprofitable

Happily there is a practical policy by which both of the evil results of Land Monopoly - land-withholding and the private appropriation of economic rent-can be ended and the common right to land restored: public appropriation (by taxation) of the annual rental value of the land in town and country.

EMPLOYERS, PLEASE NOTE An American manufacturer is reported to have decided to discontinue deducting income tax from his employees' wages. He says: "If the President wants me to get that money for him, then he must appoint me as an agent for the Internal Revenue Department, pay me a salary, and reimburse me for my expenses incurred in collecting."

When employers in this country wake up, they will do better than the above; they will demand the abolition of taxation until the whole of the communally-created values of land are collected each year and used for public expenditure. We are trying to waken them.

- - - FOR 1/- YOU CAN HAVE THE "PORCUPINE" FOR A YEAR - - -

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THE PORCUPINE

No. 213

(WITH SOME TELLING POINTS)

Nov. and Dec. 1948.

ANOTHER WAR - UNLESS

When opening the Blackpool & Fylde Show in August, Field Marshall Lord Montgomery uttered these memorable words: "We shall never be free from the threat of war until all the peoples of the earth have enough food and other necessities to make them content."

This profound truth should provide texts for a thousand sermons and a policy and slogan for every individual and group working for peace. Pleading for reconciliation, goodwill and disarmament, while ignoring the misery which leads to unrest and strife, is worse than a mere waste of time. The abolition of involuntary poverty is the minimum price of peace because contentment in hunger and misery is impossible. In all the countries which have been involved in modern wars these evils exist, yet Nature's bounty to man has not diminished; land is still the storehouse and workshop for humanity, and improvements in the arts of production are continuously increasing material satisfactions and decreasing the need for physical effort in production. Being man-made, poverty can be remedied by human action, and the obvious first part of the remedy must be to make Nature's provision (land) available for all people, everywhere. Production depends on access to land, but the common right to use land is denied by the system - common to all civilised countries- of treating land as the private property of a few privileged people. This wrong can be ended and the people's rights restored by means of Land Values Taxation.

Raw Materials

There is also urgent need for correcting the glaring inequalities in the national ownerships of the world's raw materials and this can be done without altering national boundaries. All nations could obtain, through the avenues of trade, the materials essential to their welfare if tariffs were abolished and complete freedom to exchange goods and services were established.

Britain's part in this noble cause should be the adoption of

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Land Values Taxation and Free Trade, thus setting an example and giving an object lesson to other nations.

ANCIENT & MODERN SLAVERY Slavery is not a matter of mere historical interest; it is of immediate and practical importance. The term "slave" has been defined as one who has lost the power of resistance or who surrenders himself to any power. The history of man is largely a story of slaves and their owners. Under any form of slavery, slave-drivers, taskmasters, guards or civil servants are employed. And the slaves - whether Israelites in Egypt, negroes in America, or freeborn Britishers - support these officials out of the produce of their toil. In other words, slaves pay the wages of their keepers. Obviously no-one would own slaves if the value of what they produced, or of the services they rendered, did not exceed the cost of their keep.

In modern times slaves elect men from their own ranks to act as taskmasters. These men, sitting in national and local assemblies decide how much of their earnings shall be taken from the slaves in tolls or taxes to defray the cost of keeping them under restraint, and what they (the slaves) shall do with what remains - if any. And one of the duties of the taskmasters is to direct the slaves to whatever military or civil tasks may be said to be necessary. As the maintenance of taskmasters and other officials is paid for by the slaves, it is clear that the more officials there are, the less of their earnings will the slaves enjoy and the less free they will be in ordering their own lives.

Slave mentality

When the Children of Israel were finally reduced to the making of bricks without straw, Moses arose and led them out to freedom in "The promised land." But modern serfs have ignored the new prophet, Henry George, and the way of escape to which he pointed. There is evidence of this in newspaper reports, such as:-

"The non-industrial staff employed in the Civil Service in July, 1948, was 715,300, against 693,400 on April 1st. The additional numbers were mainly employed by the Ministries of Food and National Insurance." ("Manchester Guardian," 4/9/48)

"During the first quarter of 1948 35,365 civilian employes were added to the Federal payroll, bringing the total to 2,030,861. It would seem that one definition of "free enterprise" might be a system where you either work for the Government or pay the salary of someone who does." (American Journal)

The Henry George way of escape is still open.

LIBERTY OR DESTRUCTION "In our time, as in times before, creep on the insidious forces that, producing inequality, destroy Liberty. On the horizon the

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clouds begin to lower. Liberty calls to us again. We must follow her further; we must trust her fully. Either we must wholly accept her or she will not stay. It is not enough that men should vote; it is not enough that they should be theoretically equal before the law. They must have liberty to avail themselves of the opportunities and means of life; they must stand on equal terms with reference to the bounty of nature. Either this, or Liberty withdraws her light; Either this, or darkness comes on, and the very forces that progress has evolved turn to powers that work destruction. This is the universal law. This is the lesson of the centuries. Unless its foundations be laid in justice, the social structure cannot stand."

(Henry George in "Progress & Poverty.")

B E W I L D E R M E N T It is not surprising that the man-in-the-street is wondering whether there are too many of us in this country, or too few. Reported facts and opinions are contradictory and confusing, and the more he reads, the less he knows. One M.P. said in a recent debate in the House of Commons that it was the Government's duty to decide whether this country could support between forty and fifty million people - a warning of over-population. Speaking afterwards, the Under Secretary for Commonwealth Affairs said the Government was anxious to encourage emigration to the Dominions.

A different story

The Chancellor of the Exchequer told the Trade Union Congress in September that we have no more resources of manpower to increase our production, but it must be increased at all costs. "We have used all our man-power" he said, "and imported quite a lot from Europe." The Minister of Labour was even more explicit when he said there were 112,000 vacancies in coal, agriculture, textiles and engineering waiting to be filled. And in an article on manpower in the "Manchester Guardian" of June 29 was the statement that there was an alarming dearth of skilled labour in Europe.

There is also the question of unemployment to be considered. In June there were 342,000 unemployed persons in this country, and the question may be asked whether the total of unemployment balances the alleged shortage of man-power and shows there is no shortage, or whether it proves the existence of a surplus of population which makes emigration necessary?

A simple test

No-one need be in doubt of Britain's natural resources being ample for the support of even a larger population than its present one. Only when all the land capable of producing food, all the mineral deposits, all the sites suitable for housing and manufacturing purposes are in full use, only then will it be necessary to consider a problem of over-