

outlook for a heavy cut in rent. We must wait for further news from that far-off corner to learn just how these people like this tax reform.

But it may be noted that, oddly enough, the very things that are happening and of which the landlords complain are the things that the tax reformers said would happen. They said land speculation would be killed by the building of untaxed houses, that there would be a rush to get rid of idle and unproductive land, that buyers who could be found for it would take no more of it than they could use with profit and that in general the land would be used for productive purposes rather than for speculation.

ONE PAPER IN IRELAND SPEAKS OUT.

Trade continues in very bad state in all the principal Scottish towns. Poverty exists to an extent that is unknown in the experience of many who devote their spare time to alleviating the lot of the poor, and the calls that are being made on the funds of charitable and other agencies is surprising. In Glasgow, Govan, Port-Glasgow, Greenock, Dumbarton, and Clydebank there are thousands out of employment. I know a shipbuilding yard that usually employs two thousand men, in which there are at present scarcely two hundred employed. It is calculated that in this city alone there are fifteen thousand trade unionists unemployed, while some authorities state the number is nearer 20,000. The outlook for the winter months is very poor. Those who have studied the problem of men seeking work and unable to find it, observe ten and twelve families, consisting of from forty to sixty persons, living in a single tenement house, suitable building land in the same district, unoccupied, and hundreds of masons and bricklayers going idle. They observe thousands traveling around badly in need of new boots and clothes, yet hundreds of shoemakers and tailors cannot get employment. As I write these lines there are thousands supperless and without the wherewithal to procure one in this alleged Christian country. Think of it—thousands supperless and thousands of acres in this country utilised for grazing cattle and for deer forests. Thousands of men in this and other cities who formerly were engaged in agricultural pursuits in Ireland and Scotland, but the system of land tenure has driven them from tilling the soil. Thousands of men toiling in mines for a mere existence wage, and the persons who generously permit them to toil, and who do no work, pocket in royalties and wayleaves out of the mines in Ireland, England, Wales, and Scotland over five million pounds. The only real unemployed problem we have affects the dukes, the lords, and other "superior" persons who grant the workers permission to till "their land," erect buildings on "their land," and bring out of it the minerals, and we pay them millions of pounds for the privilege in rents, royalties, and wayleaves. There is undying fame for the politician who can acquire political

power in these countries and preach Ruskin's thought, that "the people want justice, not charity."

Let the landlords get off the peoples' back.

Let a system of taxation arise that will put an end to the rent and royalty-extracting power of the landowners. Force the idle acres into the market, seeking users, and the unemployed problem is solved. Break up the big grazing ranches, force the land suitable for building—that is withheld for a certain price—into the market, force the royalty-owner to let go his grip, and new conditions will arise for all classes. If the millions extracted in economic rent were in possession of the people, instead of a class, there would be no poverty problem. If even a proportion of the five millions extracted annually from the coal and iron workers of Ireland and Great Britain were left in the hands of the workers what a demand there would be for better and more food and healthier and larger dwellings. If the people of Glasgow were left in possession of the two million pounds of unearned increment that is extracted there would be no need for the Corporation to have gone, cap in hand, to the Government for help to give employment to the unemployed. Glasgow Corporation alone has paid nearly a million pounds to landowners before it could go on with its municipal schemes, and until public men recognise the doctrine that no one has a right to compensation, except for improvements, the robbery of the people will go on, and it will continue so long as British constituencies send to Parliament Stock Exchange adventurers, land and money grabbing landlords, company promoters, ginger-bread politicians and lawyers on the hunt for judgeships, whose House of Commons ambitions are a cloak for selfish desires, to get into Society, to serve commercial or professional ends, and whose last thought is to bottom social and labour problems and effect legislative changes that would radically alter conditions for the workers. There are, it is true, a few men in the Commons amongst British members who work hard and unselfishly for political ideals, but they work with ginger-bread methods for their realisation. Until the people make up their minds to force issues to the front in Parliament there is not much hope for progress, and workers will flock to Canada and other lands seeking employment, while all the time there is a Canada at their door in the grazing ranches, deer forests, and unoccupied land that is being withheld from the people's use, the access to which would give them the results of work. This unemployed problem must speedily be settled. As John Redmond says: "Society must settle, or it will settle Society," and "No intelligent man," stated Michael Davitt, "can give a moment's rational study to the labour problem without discovering that the root evils of our industrial system are referable for cause and existence to laws which enable a small class of men to own and control the land and mineral wealth of the United Kingdom."

Special Correspondent J. O'D. Derrick in the *Irish Weekly and Ulster Examiner*, Belfast, Ireland.