

recesses of the earth now belong to them. Not only the gifts of God, but every improvement and advance in civilization among ourselves is registered in the value of land. Think of any possible improvement we could realize as a community and I will show you its immediate result in an increased land value, which means increased rent to be paid to the Crocodiles. Now there is just one cure for this thing. We must vindicate the right of every one of God's creatures to the use of His natural gifts, and we can do that by a law which will require every one who has private, exclusive use of any specific portion of the earth's surface, to pay its rental value annually to the public till, all taxation on improvements or on labor products of any kind to be abolished. This is what we call Single Tax." This reasoning was irresistible. The measure was duly passed, and before long Nomansland—the only really free land that ever existed on earth—led all the world for prosperity and happiness.

The End.

THE DISCUSSION IN THE CHURCH.

A CHAPTER FROM AN UNPUBLISHED STORY.

(For the Review.)

By **W. A. DOUGLASS, B. A.**

The winter had been remarkable for financial stringency. Many factories were closed and thousands of workmen had been thrown out of employment. The demands on the charity organization were extraordinary, and such was the pressure that a host of worthy citizens saw themselves compelled to seek charity to save their little ones from starvation.

A meeting was organized in one of the largest churches of Redlands to discuss this subject.

The first address was delivered by Samuel Rodney, Esq., a wealthy manufacturer, and he was followed by the Rev'd. Dr. Norland. These gentlemen were both fluent speakers, but neither of them had given any special attention to economic studies.

Mr. Rodney spoke as follows:—

"I am pleased to see this room so well filled. If we were to judge by the number present to-night we might be led to infer that the people take just as much, if not more interest in the affairs of this world, than they do in the matter that relate to the next. I trust that my ministerial friends will reciprocate the patience and perseverance with which I have sustained the burden of their ministrations for so many years." Having mastered this harmless little joke, he proceeded to divide and subdivide society into various classes and subclasses—superintendents, captains of industry, inventors, professional men, hand-workers, nondescripts, and finally the ne'er-do-weels, to whom it is our duty to extend a helping hand. He then proceeded in a general way

to consider the interest of each of these classes; but he did it in such a manner that the audience was just as far from a solution of the labor problem as when he began.

Then followed the Rev'd Dr. Norland; a gentleman much renowned for his ability as a debater.

"We are all born the sons of toil", said the Doctor, "for our first father was a gardener and his wife is reported to have made a sad mistake in the plucking of the fruit. It is well, therefore, for some of us to remember the admonition of the poet:—

'The gardener Adam and his wife',
Smile at the claims of long descent'.

The most honored men of history have been toilers and Christ himself sanctified labor; for he assisted his father, working as an humble village carpenter."

The man of brain is just as much a toiler as the man who holds the plow, or pushes the plane, and the latter, if done with the proper spirit, is just as honorable as the former. Society is divided in its functions, some called high and some called low; but they are all necessary to the welfare of humanity. The hand cannot say to the eye, "I have no need of thee."

That there are some who succeed in getting a greater share than others is not to be wondered at when we notice the differences in the products of nature. We have the lowly shrub and we have the giant of the forest; we have the mole hill and the mountain; we have the lake and the ocean. Be not envious, therefore, my brother, if you are but a mole hill; for you escape the lightning's blasting stroke and the ruthless sweep of the storm. Greater gifts bring greater responsibilities, and though you be but as an humble lake, look not with eyes askance on the ocean's width and depth; for on your surface may shine the glint of the stars as brightly as on the widest possible expanse. We cannot all be great, but we can all be good. We cannot all be mighty, but we can all be faithful. And though some of us must walk in lowly places on the earth, we are all sons of the King of Heaven, and in his eyes we may stand immeasurably higher than any prince of earth or monarch of empire. It is not what a man has, but what he is, that makes his true nobility, his place in God's auto-cracy.

The rank is but the guinea stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that.

The first duty, therefore, of each one of us, either as a laborer or as anything else, is to commence with ourselves. We have here a task that demands our most heroic endeavors. Here we have the raw material on which we are to put forth our grandest efforts to fashion and develop, so that we may come forth as pillars of beauty and grandeur, in the temple of the living God.

"In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of life;
Be not like dumb driven cattle,
Be a hero in the strife."

What sculptor ever had task equal to this? What is the chiselled marble in a Diana or a Venus, however beautiful, compared with the work of art in the full-orbed, truly developed man? I ask you to look at the brightest of earth's geniuses, its leaders and philanthropists. They were not laggards. They were not the Macawbers, waiting for something to turn up. They turned something up.

"The heights by great men won and kept,
Were not attained by sudden flight;
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night.

The Wattses, the Stephensons, the Fultons, the Newtons, the Lincolns, and the Garfields were no laggards; they did not worry about an eight-hour law; they did not go round as professional agitators and jaw-smiths, trying to organize strikes. They did something infinitely better in enriching the world with the brilliant achievements of their genius, and that could have been accomplished only by the most persistent, faithful, self-sacrificing toil. Their dogged determination became the means to an end, and their heroic achievements will shine in the fruition of a full-orbed civilization, when the names of the Caesars and the Napoleons have passed into oblivion."

He spoke in a way suited to stimulate young men to make the most of themselves and their opportunities; but in no way helping the audience in the solution of the problem so pressing at that moment.

The chairman having called for volunteer speakers, there arose a man with long hair, hard visage and keen, sharp expression. How Hugh Mackereil did delight in a polemical contest: From long practice of this kind he had developed a terrier like quickness in grasping the weak points in his opponents argument.

"Mr. Chairman," he began, "It is to be deplored that there is at the present time a want of harmony between the church and the working classes, and I cannot say that I have heard anything in the discussion so far that indicates the way out of the difficulty. It is true, as the last speaker intimated, that Watt invented a steam engine and Stephenson invented a locomotive; but what about the hundreds of thousands of skilled workmen who are tramping the streets to-day and would be only too glad, if some one would invent a contrivance to set them to work. I wonder how they would enjoy the eloquent address to which we have just listened. The address was eloquent, very eloquent; but I think that some plain intimation how to escape from the present difficulty, would have been listened to by these poor fellows as infinitely more appropriate. He told us about some people working upward in the night. I have seen, during the last few weeks, a number of men, good and true, toiling downward into trampdom in the broad daylight. Mr. Rodney kindly told us we had brain workers, manual laborers and nondescripts. That method of division somewhat puzzles me; for there are some that he has left out in the cold, and if I were to judge by his address, the most important thing just now is

to try to work out the problem of classification. I will, therefore submit a case for his consideration. A gentleman procured in the neighborhood of this city a piece of land admirably situated for residential purposes. Through certain influences he succeeded in getting the corporation to build a bridge across the river, thus making that land accessible and consequently very much enhancing its value. Thus this gentleman, at the public expense, gained a large fortune. I would like to know where Mr. Rodney would classify that man, among the brain workers, the nondescripts or the ne'er-do-weels?"

Having fired that shot, he sat down. The audience not only applauded, but smiled and sundry winks and nods showed the people understood the allusion; for it had happened that Mr. Rodney had been associated with Mr. Spaulding in a transaction to which this description would exactly apply.

Dr. Jones now arose and spoke as follows:—

"I would like to submit another case to my friend Mr. Rodney. A friend of mine procured some land in the suburbs of this city. After congratulating him on his purchase, I said to him, 'You are going to put in a crop?' 'Not by any means,' he replied. 'Then you are going to erect some buildings.' 'Oh! no, no, not a building,' again he answered. 'Well, then,' I continued, 'surely you are going to produce something?' Again he answered in the negative. 'Then if you do not sow anything what are you going to reap?' 'Reap,' he replied, 'why I expect to reap a fortune'. 'Very good, my dear brother,' I said to him, 'let me assure you, that if you reap a fortune without sowing a fortune, then some one is going to sow a fortune and reap a misfortune. If you procure wealth without producing wealth, then who ever produced that wealth must go to a home of poverty. That is just what the Bucanneers used to do—get wealth without producing wealth and send home the producer, the real owner of the wealth, impoverished. I would like to know, Mr. Chairman, if we can classify this operation with the transactions that are marked with the characteristics of Christian equity?"

Brother Rodney showed signs of uneasiness and Mr. Spaulding, who occupied one of the front seats, flushed back to the ears.

After one or two other parties had addressed the meeting, a gentleman named George Lunn, arose and spoke with considerable deliberation.

"I would like to know by what system we should be guided in dealing with our fellow men, so as to be really carrying out the spirit of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. I find in the history of Moses a system, wherein each person was recognized as the heir to the gifts of God; the land was treated as the common heritage, and the tenure was such that land was secured to every one of every generation, so that land speculation or the holding of large estates for rental, and the divisions of society into squirearchy and tenantry was impossible. In addition to that, to every man was secured the right or opportunity for immediate self-employment. The father could not forever alienate the rights of the child, and start him in life to go out a suppliant to beg from his fellow man a chance to live.

Then again in history I find another system, that of William the Conquer-

or, in which the fact that the land was the gift of God is most ruthlessly ignored. Under him the land was so administered, that it became an agent whereby for centuries an idle aristocracy has been enabled practically to enslave the mass of the people.

I want to know who should be our guide, Moses, the man of God, or William the ruthless and barbarous conqueror? Should we follow the man whose system is founded on the unquestionable right of every man to the gifts of the Creator, or the man whose legislation was founded on the worst principles of barbarous despotism? Which is the best guide, the Bible, which says, 'The earth hath He given to the children of men', or the decrees of a medieval free-booter, who declared in spirit, if not in word, 'The earth is mine, I give to whom I please?'"

All these allusions to the land question were causing a good deal of feeling in the minds of certain persons in the audience; for so widespread had been speculation in land and the formation of land booming companies, both among ministers and laymen, that the speeches could not fail to hit home in a good many places. The Rev'd Dr. Lasher, the editor, could stand it no longer. Hastily he rose, evidently greatly excited.

"Mr. Chairman", he began. "I cannot understand why these parties should confine themselves so much to the land. From the way they talk one would think that there is some thing peculiar about the land and that the man who deals in land is an enemy of humanity. They don't say one word about the man who corners wheat to raise the price and then puts the profit in his pocket. These parties here seem to be very anxious that the law should in some way step in and give one man's property to another man. They talk about rich men. Well, are not the chances open to every one? There is nothing standing in the way, if the laboring classes are but willing to make the necessary sacrifice. The bill for liquor and tobacco on this continent, if saved, would go a long way to stop all this complaint of oppression and injustice. Generally the injustice comes on a man from himself. The man who fails has often himself to blame. The world is wide and it is not right to blame those who have succeeded in getting ahead, as though they had done something wrong, as if they were sponges and parasites."

As soon as the Doctor sat down a man of the laboring class jumped to his feet and spoke with a strong English dialect:—

"Maister Chairman, Ah think that that preecher wha has just a spoken howes a hapology to a lot o' men, just as good as hissel'. Ah may not be much on a scholler, but I can tell some on these doctors o' divinity, these preecher chaps, summet they donat zeem to know, fur they doant zeem to know too much anyway."

Here the chairman interposed and requested the speaker to avoid personal remarks.

"Hawl right", resumed the speaker, "Ah'll stick to the subject. Ah was born on the hestate o' the Duke o' Roveland. Mah father 'ad worked 'ard, very 'ard, himprovin' a bit o' land' and when th' lease hexpired, then the

rent was run hup till it tuk away hawl the profit o' the himprovements. The Duke confiscated th' himprovements an' we just had to submit like dogs or slaves. Ah wud like to know from the last speaker, hif it waz drink or 'bacca es kep' mah father poor an' hif it waz be'en sober maed the Duke rich. Why, mah father drinket nothin' but weak tea or watter, while the Duke's champagne bill wad a' been a gran' fortune to hus. Drink an' bacca: Man, the cost o' the cigars the Duke bawt every year wad a made hus rich. Ah' then theez preecher chaps hev th' face to tell hus, it's drink, and bacca what's th' trubble. Ah doant wunder that Solomon sed as it 'ud tek moar 'an a mortar an' pestle to drive wits inta sum fella's hedz."

The chairman having again interposed, the speaker explained that he had very little chance of "Heddcation," an' when he went too 't parish church an' saw th' Duke cum ridin' in his carriage an' tek 'iz seet in 'iz cushioned pew, after confiscating 'iz father's himprovements, while the coachey hed to stay outside an' hus workin' chaps sit on 'ard boards" he came to conclusion that "th' dearly beloved bretheren" as the passen began th' service wi' waz put theer fur hcrnamental purposes, like th' 'ed o' a heegle, stuck on to't bow of a ship; fur to ca' the Duke the "dearly belouved bruther" o' th' clodhopper waz enuf to mek a 'orse laff. Aye, bruther, be sure, jus' az a wulf waz bruther to th' lam'." He then explained in his broad dialect and with very lively gestures that, "Wen't sarvice in't parish church began wi' mokery, it was 'ard fur him to tell where the mokery stopt; fur he wazznt heddcated, an' it sumtimez teks a good deal o' heddcation to mek a man see wher 'umbuge ends, when once its got a good start."

The Rev. Dr. Harrison now sprang to his feet.

"I have been much impressed," he said, "with the remarks of the last speaker. His manner may not have been the most refined, but has he not placed before us a most important truth? Most important, I say, for how can we ever expect to teach the essential truths of religion until we embody them in our institutions? Strike out from religion the idea of fatherhood and brotherhood and I would not give you a snap of the fingers for all the theology in the world, for all the prophecies and miracles in the whole of the Bible' And here we have a living illustration of the futility of trying to teach religion, without buttressing the truths we utter with the consistency of our acts and institutions. We may print books on the evidence of Christianity, till we pile them mountain high to try to prove its genuineness and authenticity. What do they amount to? The sun needs no learned treatise to prove the genuineness of its light. The only proof of Christianity is Christianity itself. Love, brotherhood, justice, truth, honesty, let these once have their fullest recognition in the adjustments of man to man, and then we have the evidence of Christianity as the harvest is the evidence of the genuineness of the seed or the fruit is the evidence of the genuineness of the tree."

After Mr. Harrison had thus spoken some time with force and eloquence John Hodge rose and said:—

"In this meeting my soul rejoices with great joy. I am beginning to gain

a foresight of the coming glory of a new era. Ere yet Columbus beheld the land, he felt the warmth of its breezes, his eye caught the indubitable signs of the realization and crowning of his life-long hopes, the final victory of his efforts. So, sir, to-night, in this meeting, I see the evidence that the conscience of Christianity is awakening to the fact that somewhere and somehow, there is a wrong to be rectified, an inequity to be removed.

"I behold the sower go forth, toiling in faith, nestling the seed where, nurtured by the soil, bedewed by the rain and warmed by the sun, it comes forth at last and laughs in the richness of the harvest. That man is carrying out the will of the Deity. He is obeying the command, "Till the land and dress it, that ye may enjoy the fruits thereof." He is using the land that there may be seed for the sower and bread for the eater. From the bounties of his hand men will rejoice and women and children will be made glad. He is the co-operative agent with God for the sustenance of his children. This is the relation that every one should hold to his fellow men, performing a service in order that he may offer it to his fellows for a service in return. He is fulfilling the injunction—"Bear ye one another's burdens." He is yielding his body a living sacrifice, rendering a reasonable service. He is fulfilling one of the essential requirements of civilized society and of Christianity."

He paused, looked round on the congregation, then fixing his eyes on the chairman, resumed, speaking slowly and with marked emphasis.

"Listen," he said, "I beseech of you, while I tell you a terrible tale. In this town within the last few weeks a man was discovered trying to murder his wife. His terrified children ran to call the police; rescue came in time. The investigation revealed the fact that for weeks that man had been tramping the streets seeking in vain the opportunity to earn enough to support his family in honest independence. He had sold or pledged everything till he could do so no more. Fuel was wanting amid zero's cold; food was wanting, with beloved ones starving. In proud independence he battled against taking the fatal plunge down to pauperism, to become a beggar for charity. Wife beloved, children beloved, starvation and no signs of relief! Is it any wonder that at last the mind became unhinged and that in his frenzy, he came, alas fatally near the supremest of crimes, the murder of wife and children?"

"I ask you, why was it, that this man was led to this temptation? Had a withering sirocco blighted the harvest? Had the locust eaten up every green thing? Had the fire or the deluge laid the land in waste? No, a thousand times, no. Had any of these things happened, I can understand why men and women and children would suffer from hunger and babes would weep for food. But none of these things had happened. The sumptuousness and luxuriance of the gifts of the Creator are ample, many times ample, for all His children. Why then do men seek in weariness until disappointed hope makes the heart sick, the head faint, the spirits droop and life a weary, weary burden, until alas! too often they take the fatal plunge to the suicide's doom?"

"Whence come the bounties we need for our subsistence? Here lie the land, the minerals, the forest, with the raw materials in the amplest profusion. There is the hand of energy and skill. Let these two agencies come together

and from their magic contact clay and timber become dwellings, iron becomes locomotives, rags become books and seed becomes harvests. Let these two factors come together and abundance blesses their union; divorce these two factors and desolation comes with the certainty of fate."

"Why was it that this man and thousands of others did not go with alacrity to the land, to the mine or the forest, that they might produce the abundance for their wants? What brought the divorce? Is not the answer right here, that millions of acres of the best land on the face of the earth are held by those who will not use them themselves or let any one else use them? Or if the so-called owners do permit their fellows to use these opportunities is it not on condition that they must surrender all their productions except the meagre pittance necessary to support a bare animal existence?"

"Between pitiful hunger and the sources of its satisfaction, between the heritage of God and God's children, we interpose our power of extortion, till we drive men to crime, women to want and children to beggary.

"And, then, and then," he repeated with solemn emphasis "we build our sanctuaries and ask them to come to Jesus.

"Oh! the travesty of religion. The Bible with its benedictions of blessedness, its effulgence of all that is loftiest in the thought of man or the heart of the Deity, on the one hand; the wormwood and gall, to human existence by our impoverishing extortions on the other. Could blunder be more terrible, could error be more sad?"

RATING UNIMPROVED LAND VALUES IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

BY MAX HIRSCH.

The Government of Sir Hector Carruthers passed an Act in 1905 (The Local Government in Shires Act) giving self-government to rural areas and compelling local authorities established under it to levy their general rates on the capital unimproved value of land, and giving them the option to levy special, local and loan rates, either on the capital unimproved value or on the capital improved value. As this Act was merged in the Local Government Act, 1906, almost without alteration, provisions need not be detailed. The latter Act, which came into force in 1908, was also passed by the Government of Sir Hector Carruthers, and applies to the whole of the State of New South Wales, with the exception of the City of Sydney, but not excepting the suburbs. It is proposed to include the City of Sydney during the present year (1908).

This Act is, in many respects, a model of its kind, and especially as regards the levying of the revenue for local purposes. In this respect it prescribes: On the imposition by any local body of a rate on the unimproved value of land, as prescribed in the Act, the suspension of the State Tax on the unimproved value of land within the area of such locality.