

ALICE IN WONDERLAND

By Amalia E. DuBois

"Dear me," said Alice, sighing as she put down the newspaper. "The paper is just full of news about the wars and unemployment. I wonder why they fight over land, when there is more land in the world than the people can possibly use?"

"Don't you know," said the Wise Owl, "the people do not own the land, it is only the few on top that own it, and they always want more, so they get the people to fight for them to take it away from the few on top in other countries."

"Why do not all the people own the land, I wonder—why do the people fight for those on top?" asked Alice.

"Because," said the Wise Owl, "they do not know that they are fighting for the landlords. They think they are fighting for their country."

Then up spoke the Sly Fox. "In my country a few men own millions of acres of land which they do not use and do not allow anyone else to use; so they put up signs 'No Trespassing Allowed,' and 'Beware of the Dog.'"

White Rabbit, who listened attentively, now sat up on his hind legs and with eyes ablaze and ears erect, said: "I'm not afraid of those signs. When I am hungry I just go and eat all the nice juicy sprouts and young leaves I want."

"I still don't understand," said Alice, with a puzzled expression, "why the landlords want all the land! Why do they not allow the landless men to use the land?"

"Because," said the Wise Owl, "owning the land makes the landlords very powerful. A few men bought up all the vacant land cheap, and when the population increases and the people need the land to live or work on, they sell or rent it for a big price, and become millionaires. If coal or oil or other valuable resources are found in the land, they become multi-millionaires, and that is why the landless men are entirely dependent upon the landlords for work."

"I always thought," said Alice, "that we must work to earn our money. Don't the landlords work?"

"No," said the Sly Fox, "they make the landless men work for them."

"Then why are so many millions out of work?" asked Alice.

"Don't you understand!" exclaimed the Wise Owl, "the landlords give work to some of the landless men some of the time, but not all of the time. That is why the landless men compete for work, which keeps wages down. Besides the landlord charges rent for living on the land and in that way he gets back some of the money he pays in wages."

"And what happens to the men who are out of work? Do they starve?" asked Alice.

"No," answered the Wise Owl, "The State gives them money which is called a dole. The State declares that 'the people are out of work through no fault of their own'. That is why it gives the dole."

"And where does the State get the money to pay the dole?" asked Alice in wonder.

"Do you not know," said the Wise Owl, "the people that work, of course—they must support the unemployed. That is why the taxes are so high."

"Oh dear," sighed Alice. "It all seems so dreadful and so queer. The people fight to get more land for the landlords, and then the landlords do not give work to all the landless men! I wonder why we have landlords, anyway."

"It's this way," said Aristocratic John Bull. "Our forefathers fought for the land, and took possession of it

by conquest, and so it is ours by inheritance. We are the Lords of the Land!"

"If that is all to owning the land," growled Boston Bull, "we will fight and get it back again."

"No," said the gentle Cow, "that is the way we are now doing it. We gain nothing by fighting, and it means endless warfare. It does not help the landless men. Besides war kills millions of our young men, causing suffering and sorrow. My boss gives me a green pasture with a clear brook running through, and I in return give him my milk for his children."

"Now, I understand," said Alice. "It is the principle of live and let live, give and take. If we all had an equal right to the use of the land there would be no landlords—no unemployment—no poverty, and no more wars. Then will begin the reign of peace on earth, good will toward all men. That is what our Loving Father intended for all his children."