

VICTOR HORSLEY

On the morning after the Annual Meeting of the English League, at which he had been re-elected one of its Vice-Presidents, the papers announced the sad news of the death of Colonel Sir Victor Horsley, F.R.S., F.R.C.S., M.D.

He died, as he had lived, in the service of suffering humanity. From the beginning of the War, he had been helping to minimise the pain and misery caused by it, at first with the Red Cross in France, and later in Egypt. A few months ago, knowing of the horrible conditions prevailing in Mesopotamia, he volunteered his services. No one could have known better than he the risk to be faced by a man in his 59th year, during a summer in one of the vilest climates known on earth. How terrible was the risk which he cheerfully faced for the good of others is proved by his death from heat-stroke at Amara on July 16th.

This is not the place, nor have I the ability, to bear witness to the scientific eminence of one of the greatest of modern surgeons. We all knew something of his services to medical science, and so were all the more proud that, in his very busy life, this great servant of the people found time to show an active interest in the work of the League. He was a frequent speaker, and sometimes chairman, at our Essex Hall meetings; and, in the summer of 1914, just before the War broke out, we were hoping that at an early date he would open a discussion on the relation of the Taxation of Land Values to questions of Public Health.

To those of us who knew him best, he became a dear personal friend. I well remember his ready and helpful interest, when, coming to the Office for a supply of our literature to present to a Working Men's Club, he heard that one of my colleagues had a sick child. At the end of a meeting I introduced to him one of my daughters, who was then a "Queen's Nurse" in a poor rural district of Wiltshire. He was instantly on the alert, and plied her with searching questions as to the social conditions of the villages, and especially as to the health of the children. There was no phase of the "Condition of the People" question about which he was not keenly interested, and he knew of no final solution except through the destruction of Land Monopoly.

Even in Mesopotamia he received his monthly copy of "Land Values," and read it so carefully that even small paragraphs did not escape him. It was thus that he learnt of the death of the wife of my colleague, J. W. Graham Peace, to whom he wrote a most sympathetic letter, from which I quote as follows:—

"I am very sorry that with all your work this severely depressing feature in your life should have come upon you now. It is so characteristic of the great evil, war, that it should afford the opportunity to all attackers of public liberty and progress to start their campaigns with fresh vigour, since they know the voice of reason and reform is crushed down. The House of Lords, the Protectionists, Conscriptors, all raising their heads in proportion as public freedom is abolished, form a miserable spectacle for those of us who are far from home and cannot help in the social fight. One is, at any rate, more conscious than ever of the splendid work people like yourself are doing for the nation, and most particularly for its immediate future.

"I hope, therefore, that you may find in the appreciation of all of us for your labours on behalf of our people some respite from the pressure of this great misfortune."

To Lady Horsley and their children I respectfully tender on behalf of the officers and members of the League our deepest sympathy in their great bereavement. They will know that a very wide circle of men and women share their

grief at the loss of one who served his generation with whole-hearted self-sacrifice, and earned the love and gratitude of multitudes. He lived for others, and he laid down his life for his brethren.—R.I.P.

The following Resolution was adopted at a meeting of the Executive of the English League on July 24th:—

"That this Executive has learnt with deep sorrow of the death of Sir Victor Horsley, an honoured Vice-President of the League, and a personal friend of many of its members: records its sense of the great loss sustained, not only by the medical profession, of which he was so distinguished a member, but also by many movements for freedom and progress: tenders its heartfelt sympathy to Lady Horsley and her children, and hopes that they will find consolation in their bereavement in the knowledge that he will always be honoured no less for a life spent in the service of the suffering than for his death at a post of danger voluntarily undertaken for the good of his fellow-countrymen."

FREDK. VERINDER.

CAPTAIN PETER ROSS

The cause of Scottish Land Reform has suffered a severe blow in the death of Captain Peter Ross, 16th Royal Scots, who was killed in action, in France, July 1st, 1916.

Captain Ross had a distinguished educational career, being an M.A. (Hons.) and B.Sc. of Edinburgh University, specialising in mathematics. On this subject he was an authority and his mathematical text books are well known, being widely used by students both in this country and abroad. As a keen and enthusiastic land reformer Mr. Ross was a familiar figure on many platforms.

He lost no opportunity of urging the immediate need for a radical change in the present system. Although a native of Caithness, his family originally belonged to Sutherlandshire, and the wrongs suffered by our Highland crofters had burned into his soul. Before the war he was at work on a book dealing with the whole question of the Highland clearances from an historical and economic point of view, which was to have been published by a well-known London house.

Mr. Ross had a keen appreciation of the works of Henry George, and about three years ago he presided, with much acceptance and profit to all concerned, over a Young Scot Seminar, the text-book being *PROGRESS AND POVERTY*.

Captain Ross' last words to the writer of this note were spoken during a last hand-shake when he was home on leave a few weeks ago: "Keep the Land Reform flag flying, old chap. I am as keen as ever. All I see and hear over there makes me more than ever convinced that our social campaign is the only true one and the only remedy." And now he has gone. He has died as he lived, a fighter. In civil life his stand for reform cost him much personally. In his death he has made the supreme sacrifice on behalf of the Humanity which he loved. May those of us who are left be enabled by our memories of him to carry on his unfinished work.

The associates of Mr. Ross in the movement convey to Mrs. Ross and her family their deep sympathy with her in the great loss she has sustained through the death of her husband.

W. G.