

our great cities. Hundreds of thousands, if not millions, pass into other lands. I am not surprised. When the just rewards of labour are given to those who labour not, and where those who do toil are requited with wretched wages and still more wretched houses, you will not keep the labourer on the land.

The complete reform of the land laws, or, as we should put it, the Taxation of Land Values and the abolition of taxes upon industry and improvements is the answer to the challenge of the Protectionist.

The Prime Minister in receiving the Land Taxers' deputation in May last, said: "Substantial steps have been taken in the direction of the reforms advocated. The first of these steps was the valuation of land. The second was the Budget tax on undeveloped land, and the third was the appointment of the committee which was to report on the relationship between local and Imperial finance."

In Glasgow, on September 11th, 1911, the Right Hon. A. Ure, K.C., M.P., said: "The land reformers thought they had found a better system in the value of land. They discarded the ability to pay, and they discarded the man's capital and income until they had discovered the source from which it was derived. If they found that the source of a man's income was from his toil alone they would lay that on one side as wholly unsuitable as a basis to fix his contribution to the rates, but, if they found that the source of the capital was the value of land alone, they said there was a suitable basis to pay for distribution of payment for local services which actually created the value of that land."

We cannot afford to laugh at these proposals. The attack is too well sustained and too virulent. You have the campaign going on to-day actively in Leeds.

"In Glasgow, Manchester, Halifax, Keighley, Huddersfield, Leeds, Newcastle, Birmingham, Portsmouth, Newbie, Cardiff and Swansea, political economy classes are being successfully conducted, and combined they form a school of some 300 students, many of whom are preparing themselves as speakers and writers on the Taxation of Land Values to an ever-widening circle. . . . We are pleased to announce that since our last report the movement in Yorkshire has been completely reorganised and put upon a much stronger foundation. During the three months which have elapsed since the new offices were opened large quantities of literature have been posted to public men. All the political clubs in the Leeds district have been circularised and the services of our speakers offered for delivering of lectures and opening of discussions on the Taxation of Land Values, etc. Trades unions, Leagues of Young Liberals, Labour and Socialist associations have accepted the offer, and some very valuable meetings have been held."

Now, what, in the face of this activity, is the duty of the surveyor? It has in the past been one of the most useful professional traditions that party politics should be eschewed at professional meetings. Unfortunately to-day we find the question which is of the utmost importance to the surveyor turned into a party question. Up to recent times those responsible for legislation of a technical character have invariably consulted the professional associations, and the surveyor, without entering the field of politics, felt that he might safely leave it to his societies and institutions to express his views. To-day a change has come over the country. We have no longer an effective second legislative chamber independent of the dictates of a mere numerical majority of the voters. We have seen legislation passed which the whole professional world has condemned. We see foreshadowed legislation which, to the well-informed man, is even more grossly inequitable. Can the surveyor, with his intimate practical knowledge of land and its economics, stand aside any longer? By virtue of his education, his experience of life, his whole equipment, he is in a position which enables him to speak with authority, and, in my opinion, it is incumbent upon him to-day to take more definite and active steps to make his voice heard in the country. These proposals for the Taxation of Land Values should be met now before they reach the stage of a Bill before Parliament. We know they are coming, and the day they become a Bill we know that in present conditions that rule in regard to our legislation there will be little chance of effective opposition.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE AT A CHURCH CONFERENCE.

THE PROBLEM OF POVERTY.

Speaking on December 29th at Cardiff at a conference of clergymen and lay-workers who on an unsectarian and non-political basis met to discuss the relation of the Churches to social questions, Mr. Lloyd George said, according to the TIMES:—

It is as deep a stain upon the national flag that its folds should wave over slum-bred and half-starved children, over ill-paid, ill-fed, ill-housed working men and women, as if it were to wave over defeat in a stricken field. (Cheers.) The first thing we have got to do is to create a temper, a spirit, an atmosphere that will compel men of all parties to deal with these problems, whichever party is in power for the time being.

Stating his proposition, Mr. Lloyd George went on to say that poverty is not the fault of Providence, which provides abundance. Poverty, misery, wretchedness, do not exist in the land because the land is sterile and bare and does not provide enough for all. Next there are millions of men, women and children in this the richest country in the world who, through no fault of their own, go through life sodden in poverty, wretchedness, and despair. Again the area of poverty fluctuates without any fault of the people who endure it. My other proposition is this, that there are multitudes who live a life of wretchedness, misery, and despair partly through their own fault, but largely through the fault of their surroundings.

COMMUNAL RESPONSIBILITY.

You cannot deal with a problem of this magnitude by mere spasmodic appeals to the charity of the benevolent. That is hopelessly inadequate as a remedy. You might as well try to run the Army and Navy by voluntary subscriptions. If you depended for the defence of our shores upon mere eloquent appeals to the patriotism and the sympathy and the humanity of the people you could not build or maintain a navy of Chinese junks in this country. (Laughter.) In the same way you cannot get rid of poverty and wretchedness and bad housing by mere appeals of that character. The community as a community will have to deal with them with the whole of their might. It is the community that alone can command the resources to drain this morass of wretchedness so as to convert it into a verdant and fertile plain. (Cheers.)

What is the responsibility of the Churches here? The responsibility of the Churches is this. The Churches of Christ in this land guide, control, and direct the conscience of the community. They establish the moral standards which fix the ideals of the people. They direct affairs, not merely in the Senate and in the Council Chamber, but in the shop and the factory, and in all the affairs of life. No interest, however powerful it may be, can long withstand the resolute united opposition of the Churches. Public opinion in this land invariably responds to the call of the united Churches. As their power is great so is their responsibility. (Cheers.)

He did not agree with the view that the Church was concerned solely with spiritual things. Those who took that view reflected on the career of the Master. They repudiated the precept and doctrines of the greatest disciple whose first act on founding a church was to establish a fund for the care of the poor—the first Poor Law Guardians ever established—(laughter)—and he remembered the trouble which befel one man who did not fill in his forms properly, and who did not give a correct account of his property to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. (Laughter.) Those who held this narrow view were false to the traditions of the Christian Church. To-day we had greater poverty in the aggregate in the land than we ever had; there was a more severe economic bondage; for labour to-day there was not always guaranteed sustenance or security—a condition of things foreign to the barbaric darker ages.

What was the function of the Church in reference to social evils? The function of the Church, he said, is not to engage in party brawls. It is not to urge or to advocate any specific measures. It is to create an atmosphere in which the rulers of this country, whether in the Legislature or in the municipalities, not only can engage in reforming these dire evils, but in which it will be impossible for them not to do so. (Cheers.) How? First by rousing the

national conscience to a knowledge of the existence of these evils and afterwards to a sense of the nation's responsibilities for dealing with them. And the second way is by inculcating the necessary spirit of self-sacrifice without which it is impossible for any nation to deal with gigantic problems of this kind. The Churches must insist on the truth being known and on the truth being told about these social wrongs.

THE CONDITION OF WALES.

South Wales, he proceeded, was naturally one of the wealthiest parts in the world. Yet they had in certain districts housing conditions which were a disgrace to civilisation. In some cases they were such that common decency was scarcely possible. He shuddered to think what would have happened in those valleys but for the fact that they had hundreds of churches and chapels whose influence did really sweeten the atmosphere. But their duty did not end here. They really ought to take a greater responsibility in the matter of removing the cause. He was appalled the other day by a report he received of the housing conditions of a small town in North Wales surrounded by miles of land. What were the Churches doing? The Churches ought to be like a searchlight turned on all these slums to expose them, to shame those in authority into doing something. (Cheers.)

He had also been reading reports on the housing conditions in rural Wales. These conditions did not result from the want of land or from over-population. Yet there, in one of the healthiest climates in the world, were cottages reeking with tuberculosis, damp, wretched, dark, dismal abodes. The plague of consumption was sweeping away men, women, and children at the very period of their lives when they ought to be full of vigour, strength, usefulness, and service. It is rather hard, Mr. Lloyd George went on, that women should be condemned to death for the sole crime of sticking too closely to their homes, and that little children should have the germs of death sown into their systems by abominable housing accommodation in some counties of Wales.

The Churches must have responsibility for this. Most of these men, women, and children are members of the Churches in Wales. The Churches should call attention to it. They should rouse the national conscience on the subject to a sense of its responsibility. It is not for the Churches to draft Housing Acts, it is not for the Churches to enter into a political propaganda or to support one particular measure or another; but let the Churches hunt out evil conditions, let them expose them, let them drag them into the light of day, and, when they come to be dealt with, let them (as the Church did of old) hand them over to the secular arm. (Cheers.)

THE MEANING OF POVERTY.

What did poverty mean? It was not that men were deprived of luxuries, it was not that men were deprived even of the comforts of existence, it was that they had not enough to purchase the barest necessities of life for themselves and their children. According to Mr. Rowntree, one-fourth of the population of this country, even in times of prosperity, were living under conditions of poverty thus defined. Was it because the country could not maintain them, or because the land was poor? The national income was 1,800 millions. That was the revealed income—(laughter)—and that meant £200 a year for every family. Yet one-third of that income was received and spent by 250,000 people, one 200th part of the population of this country, or, in families, one-fortieth of the population was receiving and spending one-third of the income of the country. Poverty was not here because there was not abundance.

It was incumbent upon those who had been blessed by Providence to make sacrifice for others. That was said to be talking Socialism, to be setting class against class. Let us get rid of these cockatoo phrases which are repeated from mouth to mouth by the unthinking, after getting them from people whose brains are just as shallow and whose vision is just as limited as their own. (Cheers.) Let us get to the real, terrible, human, living facts writhing and seething below; let us tear from this pit of wretchedness its flimsy covering of phrases so as to reveal that mass of human agony, with the help and sympathy of those able to help. (Cheers.) Let us say it is the business of the

Churches to insist upon the facts being known, upon every man realising his own responsibility, upon every man realising that he has got to sacrifice in order to help. (Cheers.)

DUTY AND INTERESTS.

It is idle to attempt to deal with a colossal problem of this kind unless those who are well-to-do are prepared to make great sacrifices. The great lesson of Christianity is this: you cannot redeem those who are below except by the sacrifice of those who are above. (Cheers.) You cannot touch any evil in this country without finding that there are interests that have struck their roots deep into it and are flourishing even upon its very putrescence. Attack it and you bring upon yourself, not unpopularity—that is not what you have to face; you have to face a very hailstorm of abuse, insult, calumny. Help men who are fighting. (Cheers.)

The Chancellor of the Exchequer added that he was not putting in a plea for himself. He was too weather-beaten a mariner to mind. But he had seen gallant men beaten back by the biting blast they met along the path of progress. No follower of Jesus of Nazareth, he said, has a right to allow any man to go out alone into the weather for fallen humanity. God help him if he does! The task is a great, a colossal one. It is the task our Master came here for—to lift the needy from the mire and the poor from the dunghill—and it is the Christian Churches alone that can accomplish it. (Cheers.) If half the increased amount spent annually in preparation for war was devoted to the clearing out of slums, there was no statesman who could not do it with that sum. The Church cannot stand by with folded arms or pleated hands while millions are in despair. The Church certainly cannot say, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

I wonder what would happen if during this Christmas those who have been sitting comfortably enjoying their Christmas dinner found at the height of the festival an invisible hand sliding a panel in the wall and opening a window and showing them another household of men, women, and children like themselves, no worse, some of them—probably better—in all the essentials of character, huddled shivering in wretched dens. I tell you what would happen. Movement would be frozen in every heart. The conscience of the nation would be roused in a way it has never been roused before, the demand would rise from every quarter in this country that our rulers should do something to rid the land of this pestilence of wretchedness. (Cheers.) It is the business of the Church to open that window—(cheers)—to keep it open, to keep our eyes steadfast until that spectacle of wretchedness, woe, and despair shall have been transfigured into one of happiness and of hope. (Loud cheers.)

EARL CARRINGTON ON RURAL DEPOPULATION.

In the course of his speech on January 11th, at the rent audit dinner of the South Lincolnshire and Norfolk Small Holdings Association at Spalding, Earl Carrington made the following reference to the influence of small holdings on checking rural depopulation. "As you know," he said, "we have often been ridiculed by our opponents for our belief that the provision of small holdings will stem the tide of rural depopulation which has been running for the last thirty or forty years. I am sure, however, that the experience of your Association has proved that one important result of your work has been to increase the number of those who get their living off the land, and I find very striking confirmation of our belief in the recent Census returns. I have examined the figures for the three parishes of Burwell, Moulton, and Deeping St. Nicholas, in all of which a considerable number of small holdings have been established during the last five years, and in each case I find that the Census returns for 1911 show a very considerable increase in population as compared with the returns for 1901, as follows:—

	1901.	1911.
Burwell	1,974	2,144
Moulton	2,017	2,226
St. Nicholas	1,255	1,439

"That this result is almost entirely due to the provision of small holdings is proved by the fact that in adjoining parishes, where nothing has been done in that direction, the population has continued to decline, or at any rate shows no signs of increasing."