

6—SPECIAL CASES

[This section deals with mortgages, trust-settlements, and other special cases.]

7—DEFINITION OF CAPITAL LAND-VALUE

The definition of "capital land-value" may be based on that of "full site value" in section 25 of the Finance (1909-10) Act, 1910, with the amendments proposed in clauses 1 and 2 of the Revenue Bill, 1914, and several other modifications. The definition might be in some such terms as these:—

"The expression 'capital land-value of a property' means the amount which the fee simple of the land might be expected to realise if sold at the time in the open market by a willing seller, free from incumbrances and from any burden, charge, or restriction (other than rates and taxes), but subject to any public right of way, or public right of user, or public easement, or any right of common, and apart from improvements as herein defined.

"The expression 'improvements' means—

(a) any buildings and any other structures (including fixed or attached machinery) on, in, or under the surface; and

(b) any growing timber, fruit trees, fruit bushes, growing crops, fruit on the land, and other things growing thereon (except grass or any natural herbage or any other natural growth on the land); and

(c) any ploughings, seeds, sowings, and tillages, or other things done on the land for the purpose of cropping or feeding the land in the ordinary course of husbandry; and

(d) any works of fencing, dry-diking, draining, reclaiming, embanking, levelling, and the like (including the making of such private roads as are maintained exclusively at private expense), in so far as these have been made within thirty years preceding the date of valuation.

"The 'capital land-value of a property' shall be deemed to include the value (if any) of the right to obtain any minerals therein, except in so far as that right has been severed from the other rights and is the subject of a separate valuation under the Finance (1909-10) Act, 1910."

8—GENERAL EFFECTS OF SCHEME

The adoption of this scheme for the taxation of land-values would secure the benefits of that reform, and would also have the following advantages. It would:—

- (1) obtain prompt payment from the right people;
- (2) reduce the cost of collection to a minimum;
- (3) prevent the possibility of bad debts;
- (4) bring about a general registration of titles;
- (5) suspend the titles of defaulters while they remain in default, and extinguish their titles if they remain in default beyond a certain time;
- (6) fortify the titles of the payers by means of their tax-payments;
- (7) constitute a complete record of tax-payments and a growingly complete record of effective titles;
- (8) make the ascertainment of title to land easy and cheap; and
- (9) show in whose hands the land of the country really is.

9—POSTSCRIPT

[This section contains certain references and acknowledgments].

WHY WAR?

(Preface of Frederic C. Howe's Latest Book, WHY WAR. Published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.)

Modern War is the result of a combination of explosives much as a thunder-storm is the result of a combination of unusual atmospheric conditions. The spark may be ignited in Berlin, Petrograd, Vienna, or London, but the explosive combination is likely to be found in obscure portions of the world.

The cause of the present European war is not to be discovered in the White Book, the Yellow Book, or the Orange Book; the war did not originate in the capitals of Europe, even though the first overt acts were there committed. The war is not the result of patriotic uprisings on the part of the people, of the over-crowding of population, of any social unrest at home, or a national desire for overseas markets. This war is not the personal war of any ruler as were the wars of Frederick the Great or Napoleon, as were the wars of Bismarck fifty years ago. In its final causes it is not a war of aggression or defence, as were the recent wars of Germany, Austria, Italy, and France. When the history of the war is finally written these forces will be found to be of secondary importance. The real cause of the war is to be found far back of the summer of 1914; it is to be found in the new economic and financial forces set in motion in the closing years of the last century.

The present war and the wars of the past ten years are the result of endless conflicts and suspicions, of balked ambitions and fears, of diplomatic overreachings and injured dignity, of a thousand irritations that do not appear in the diplomatic correspondence. Present-day wars are primarily the result of the conflict of powerful economic interests radiating out from the capitals of Europe, which, with the foreign office behind them, have laid the whole world with explosives which only needed a spark to set all Europe aflame. Surplus wealth seeking privileges in foreign lands is the proximate cause of the war just as wealth seeking monopoly profits is the cause of the civil conflicts that have involved our cities and States. It is the struggle of high finance bent on the exploitation of weaker peoples that has turned Europe into a human slaughter-house and arrayed 400,000,000 peaceful people against one another in a death struggle.

When the story of the war comes to be written the origin will be found hidden in the diplomatic victories and resentments over Morocco and Turkey rather than in the murder of the Archduke Ferdinand; it will be found in the aggressions of British, French, and German financiers and concession seekers rather than in the ambitions of the Czar and Kaiser, it will be found in the struggle for the exploitation of weaker peoples, of whom no less than 140,000,000 together with 10,000,000 square miles of territory have fallen under the dominion of Great Britain, France, and Germany during the last thirty years.

These conflicts have been on a titanic scale. They have led to the ending of the liberties of free peoples, to colonies and protectorates, to the closed door, to the imprisonment of the Mediterranean, to the raising of obstacles and Gibaltars to freedom of trade and commerce. They have created a thousand rumours, suspicions, and hatreds, a great increase in armaments for the protection of private investments; they have given birth to diplomatic intrigues and demonstrations of force that have changed a conflict of private groups into a conflict of peoples.

Behind these private groups of financiers and concession seekers one finds the foreign office and diplomacy, the war lords and the ruling caste. Together they have made common cause with the munition makers and the trading classes. These classes own or control great portions of the press. They mould public opinion. They control political

advancement. They are society. These forces are the state much as Louis XIV or Frederick the Great was the state. Outside of France, and to some extent Great Britain and Italy, the State in its foreign relations is little more than the political and financial will of the ruling classes. It is a merger of seventeenth and twentieth century feudalism.

Any question as to the correctness of this interpretation of the cause of the European war will, I think, be laid at rest by reading of the record of British penetration into Egypt and Africa; of French aggressions in Algeria, Tunis, and Morocco; of the partition of Persia by Russia and England; of German relations with Turkey; of the intrigues and bad faith of the powers towards the Balkan States, China, Persia, and Morocco; of the struggles of the powers over the building of the Bagdad railway; of the intimacy of the munition makers and the financiers with their respective governments and foreign offices; of the balked ambitions of the mine-owners that brought on the Boer War; of the diplomatic moves of the chancelleries of Europe during the last quarter of a century.

And were we moved by acts of oppression committed by the Christian powers as we are by the atrocities of the Turks in Armenia, we should find in these records a story of cruelty and disregard of human rights and liberties that has few parallels in modern times.

In this record there is little to distinguish the act of one nation from another's. If greater emphasis seems to be laid on the acts of Great Britain and France it is due to the fact that greater liberty of expression prevails in these countries than in Germany and Russia, and the records have been more frankly exposed to view. But a cross-section of one nation is a cross-section of the other. Financial morals are the same the world over when weaker peoples are involved. The indictment is against the ruling classes not against the people; it is against Junkerism in politics, in diplomacy, and primarily in finance. But it is not the Junkerism of Germany alone, it is the Junkerism of England, Russia, and Austria-Hungary as well.

As a result of the European war the United States is confronted with the same forces that have drawn Europe into the present conflict. Ambitions and fears have been aroused that have united the privileged classes in a movement for financial imperialism, for a great naval programme, for colossal expenditures for preparedness, and unless some hand interposes to prevent it the ideals of America and the democratic traditions of a century will be submerged in the new imperialistic programme that has no place in our life.

The gravest danger to the country is from within. The danger is as real as any that ever confronted us. Private interests are at war with the interests of the nation. They menace our peaceful security. Surplus wealth has appeared. We have become a creditor nation. The resources and railroads of the country have passed under monopoly control. The colossal profits of the past two decades from exploitation are no longer possible. They can only be secured in the less-developed places of the globe, where backward peoples and lack of capital offer opportunities for investment. These are the conditions that have preceded imperialism and aggression the world over. Surplus wealth in search of monopoly profits led the financiers of Europe into distant parts. Here they came into conflict with other financiers in search of similar gains. To protect their investments and insure their loans and concessions the investors demanded a great military and naval establishment. The foreign offices and governments became involved. Irritations and diplomatic controversies finally ripened into war as the only means for the arbitrament of the conflict.

This is the danger which now confronts us. It is a danger from within rather than from without. It is a danger we should anticipate and provide against, just as we provide against a foreign foe. And if we take adequate

precautions against the foes within the country we shall safeguard ourselves against those without. For if the war in Europe teaches anything it is that the foes within are responsible for the foes without. It is they who are the jingoes, it is they who are loudest in advocating preparedness, it is they who talk most of national dignity and honor. It is they, too, who insist on the destiny of the country and a place in the sun. There is scarcely a war or war scare of the past twenty years, unless it be those of the Balkans, that, in its last analysis, is not the result of the activities of individuals and classes within the country rather than that of aggressive foes from without.

A SURVIVAL

The name of Lord Clanricarde, who died yesterday at the age of 83, carries the mind back to an evil, and, as it now seems, remote chapter of our domestic history. The personality of this individual landlord contributed not a little to the inflamed passions which so long made the problems of Ireland so incapable of solution. He was an effective type of the absentee proprietor whose predominance was the worst factor of the land system, and he fought all measures of reform with an egotism that would have goaded even more phlegmatic races into hatred and violence. Recognising only one standard in "the rights of property," he refused to co-operate in the reconstruction of land tenure, and was fighting down to almost the other day his private battle of defiance and obstruction. His estates were to him but the source of revenues for which he rendered no social return. While he insisted upon the dues of life and labour to property, the doctrine that property owed anything in return to these human interests appears to have gained no recognition at his hands.

It will be a mystery to posterity how any civilised society could have so long tolerated an exponent of such unblushingly self-centred claims and allowed him to resist, almost single-handed, every programme of settlement and conciliation. That a "lone miser," tottering about the West-End of London, should have controlled large estates in a country which he never visited, without accepting any responsibility for his relations with their cultivators beyond the exaction of his legal dues, will seem as gross an example of "barbarism" as the nakedness of economic conflict has ever produced. His demise typifies not only the disappearance of those irritants which had so much to do with the bitterness of Irish politics, but the emergence everywhere of a new kind of reciprocity between property and the communities by whose grace it is possessed and enjoyed.—(From the PALL MALL GAZETTE, 14th April.)

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