

SOUTH AFRICA

Colonel Stallard, up till recently a Cabinet Minister in the South African Government, and now an Independent, spoke thus in the House of Assembly (Hansard, Col. 201, 1946):—

"Land in South Africa has been and is being very much mis-used. So long as we have not faced the position of the owner of land who, after all, is one of the most important monopolists in the country, for the amount of land available is strictly limited, so long as the owner is not compelled to use that land properly little headway can be made. Anybody who owns land should be under a legal obligation, as well as the moral one which already exists, to use that land to the public advantage, and therefore to conserve it and to develop its productive value. That is notoriously not done. The way to do that is to create a condition by which it would be unprofitable to hold land unless one developed it, and the way to do that is to have a tax on the unimproved value of land which will make it unprofitable to hold that land. It is one of the gravest blots on our agricultural policy that we do not compel people who own land to use to advantage the land they hold."

The foregoing is quoted in the April, 1946, issue of *The Free People* (Box 4680, Johannesburg), and there is also the following significant statement by Senator Conroy, Minister of Land, who had pointed out how the Government had made loans to irrigation boards:—

"The only result was that a few people enriched themselves and then left the baby on the doorstep. They sold their land. There was a tremendous amount of land speculation, and land changed hands at very high prices. It was sold to people who really could not afford to pay these prices, which were far above the economic prices. The result was that the people left these schemes. The schemes never paid the interest, let alone the capital amount, with the result the Government had to write off several millions."—(Hansard 1946, Col. 1533).

Dealing with the motion that the Government should buy more land for settlers, Senator Conroy (Col. 1630) said:—

"During the war the prices rose and rose until it became uneconomic to purchase land . . . we could not see our way to purchase land at those high prices existing to-day and then put settlers on it. If we had done that we would have had the same experience as after the previous war when land was purchased at such high prices and given to settlers. A small percentage of those people who had been given land to-day have come through. The others declined year by year and have fallen by the wayside, simply because the land was purchased at uneconomic prices."

When Professor John Dewey, the eminent American philosopher, was here 12 or 13 years ago, I wrote to him and got the following reply: "I am glad to hear that you are engaged in an active campaign to make known the economic and fiscal ideas of Henry George. If the United States had hearkened to his warnings 40 years ago it would have saved itself most of its present tribulations so largely due to monopoly fostered by private control of land and natural resources. South Africa has the opportunity to avoid similar future catastrophes by adopting in time the principle that the land and its natural resources are not to be monopolised, but are for the good of all."—Mather Smith in the Johannesburg *Sunday Times*.

CUBA

Mr. Rogelio Casas Cadilla, Havana, has sent the International Union a small supply of the eighth edition of his booklet *El Problema Economico de Cuba*. Dealing with Cuba's economic problems, it states in a masterly style, succinct and arresting, the Georgeist argument for full free trade and freedom of production. There are 18 two-page essays of information and instruction, each indeed an eloquent short speech. Some titles are: Fiscal Reform, Miopic Egoism, Free Trade, The Future of Cuba, The Progress of Puerto Rico, The Value of Land, The Moral Law, Feudalism and Democracy, No Customs and No Passports. A prefatory word describes what democracy is, viz.: "Production without tariffs, consumption without customs, movement without fetters, workshops without proletariat, wealth without parasites, strength without armies, conscience without prejudice, speech without gag, work

for all, the gallows for none." A pocket-size booklet (it is but 48 pages) to hand to any Spanish-understanding generous and intelligent person and so assist justice and human brotherhood.

M. J. S.

SCOTTISH LIBERALS

The Scottish Liberal Party held its Annual Conference in Glasgow on June 5. The Manifesto of the party, text of which we printed in our April issue, was reaffirmed. By way of reminder we give again Clause 4:—

"It is a condition of the development of freedom that there should exist in society no privileged classes or individuals, no monopolies which are not effectively controlled by the whole community and no inequality of opportunity as between one individual and another. All values in land and other natural resources created by the community should be taken in taxation for the benefit of the community."

Among other resolutions which the Conference adopted were these:—

The Scottish Liberal Party held its Annual Conference in exercise of foresight in the administration of public affairs, deploring the tendencies which are manifest in proposals to establish what is called a planned economy. In so far as this phrase is intended to mean an economy in which production and distribution of wealth are controlled and directed by a centralised State, the Scottish Liberal Party believes that such proposals will result in the establishment of totalitarianism and will ultimately reduce the standard of living of the whole people, and especially of the people of Scotland."

"The Scottish Liberal Party deploring the failure of the present Government to develop a satisfactory policy with regard to land, and accordingly resolves to press for the adoption of a system of Land Values Taxation which will restore to the community values created by the community."

The party is centred at 26, Frederick Street, Edinburgh, organising secretary, Major Carson.

THE NEW GOVERNOR OF MALTA

On June 6, at the Holborn Restaurant, members of the United Committee resident in London entertained at a farewell luncheon Mr. F. C. R. Douglas, the Governor designate of Malta, in appreciation of his long and distinguished services as their assistant secretary and associate editor of *LAND & LIBERTY*. Mr. Austin H. Peake, chairman of the International Union Executive, presided, and he and Mr. A. W. Madsen spoke for the company to express their high regard for Mr. Douglas as friend and colleague and their sense of the real loss felt by his absence from their counsels. But he had been called to high and responsible duties in the service of his country, and on behalf of the whole Henry George movement they offered him warmest good wishes for his success, looking forward also to the time when he and his good lady could be back amongst them.

JOSEPH EDWARDS

A veteran and pioneer passed away by the death, at his home in Streatham, of Joseph Edwards. He had been retired for some years from active life, but the older ones amongst us will remember well and be ever grateful for the immense services he rendered, especially as provider of the material which is invaluable for the student, the writer and the speaker on the platform. He was founder of the *Labour Annual* and *The Reformers' Year Book*. Devotedly he gave himself to research, historical and factual, on all that related to Land Value Taxation and Free Trade, putting it together in that *Land and Real Tariff Reform Handbook* for 1909, which even to-day is a never-failing source book. Scarce anywhere else, in equal compass or so concisely and with such illumination, is the story told of the rise of landholding in England. It is unfortunate that this book and the reprint of that story in pamphlet form are now out of print. In his quiet and patient manner, Joseph Edwards did an effective work. At his funeral, tribute to his memory was paid by Mr. Madsen who, representing the United Committee and the English League, conveyed to the assembled family the sympathy of all in the Henry George movement in their bereavement.

At its Quarterly General Meeting in Liverpool on June 21, the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values adopted resolution as follows:

"The Committee has noted with interest the declaration by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the Government is considering proposals to enable local authorities to levy rates on land values;

"The Committee calls the Government's attention to the widespread demand for this reform as instanced by the representations of hundreds of municipalities requesting Parliament to amend the rating and assessment laws whereby the market value of land, used or unused and irrespective of its actual use, shall be the source of public revenues with corresponding relief to houses, shops and other buildings and improvements;

"The Committee urges upon the Government the speedy passage of the necessary legislation because of its obvious social and economic effect in breaking down the speculative prices of land, liberating and cheapening the provision of houses, facilitating many needed municipal developments and promoting industry and employment;

"The overruling justification for the reform is that the site value attaching to land is incontestably the property of the community; therefore that value should be taxed into the public treasuries for the common good, whereas at present it is collected unearned by private individuals; and this misappropriation is aggravated by the schemes of public land purchase which in effect capitalise the rent of land for the indefensible endowment of monopoly and privilege, cause the community to surrender its public revenue, and perpetuate the conditions responsible for poverty and unemployment."

The Annual Meeting of the English League will be held at the offices, 4, Great Smith Street, on July 17, at 5.45 p.m. Mr. F. C. R. Douglas, having retired from the office of President, the President-nominate is Mr. T. Atholl Robertson, whose election together with the other officers and the Executive will be proposed at the meeting. The usual business reports will be submitted along with a resolution in the following terms: "This meeting welcomes the declaration by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the Government is willing to consider the introduction of legislation to establish rating of site values; urges that such legislation should be passed as speedily as possible in order to recover for the public values created by them, reduce the heavy burden of rates on houses and other improvements, and prevent the holding of land for speculation; and trusts that the fullest use will be made of such powers, which have long been asked for by many local authorities."

The Merseyside section of the Henry George School of Social Science is now conducting the following classes with *Progress and Poverty* as the text-book: Mondays at 7.30 p.m., at 2a, Aysgarth Avenue, Liverpool 12, conducted by Mr. S. I. Davies; Tuesdays at 7 p.m. at 56, Lord Street, Liverpool 2, conducted by Mr. C. S. Craig, B.A.; and Fridays at 8 p.m. at 54, Hillfoot Avenue, Liverpool 19, conducted by Mr. G. Miller.

The Yorkshire and Northern Land Values League held its Annual Meeting at its offices, 129, Skipton Road, Keighley, on June 22, which was followed in the evening by a Public Meeting in the Mechanics' Institute, where Alderman J. Spencer Binns presided, the speakers being A. W. Madsen, E. A. Bryan and Ashley Mitchell. At the business meeting, encouraging reports were given of the year's work, especially concerning the many meetings of Rotary Clubs, which League speakers had addressed. The President, Mr. Ashley Mitchell, paid a heartfelt tribute to the memory of P. V. Olver, the late chairman of the Committee. To that office Percy Roberts was elected, and other offices were filled as follows: Hon. Treasurer, Howard Binns, Hon. Secretaries, H. Coulton and R. Mitchell; together with an Executive considerably strengthened in number.

The Public Meeting adopted resolution in the following terms: "This meeting, protesting against the increase of rates levied on houses and shops and other buildings, sees in this mode of taxation the main cause of house famine, high rents and individual

hardship; it calls for a complete reform which, while taking rates off buildings, will derive the public revenue from the publicly created value of land by the rating of land values; and declares that this land-value policy is the effective way both of preventing the withholding of land from use in expectation of higher monopoly prices and of encouraging all building enterprise and the provision of the best type of houses to meet all demands. The meeting welcomes the recent statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that legislation enabling local authorities to rate land values is being considered."

The Henry George Foundation of Great Britain (Trustees, the United Committee) has been glad to support the British United Aid to China by the presentation of books destined for the 13 Christian Universities. For each University the set of books comprised *Progress and Poverty*, *Social Problems*, *Protection or Free Trade*, *A Perplexed Philosopher*, by Henry George; *Land and Freedom*, by Fredk. Verinder; and *A Biography of Henry George*, by Prof. George Geiger. The gift has been acknowledged with warm appreciation.

YOUR SUPPORT

The United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values Ltd. (publishers of LAND & LIBERTY, postal subscription 4s. or \$1 from U.S.A. and Canada), the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade, and the Leagues listed below are maintained by the voluntary support of those who believe in and would seek to advance the principle and policy which the Committee, the Union and the Leagues advocate: Land Value Taxation and Free Trade in its fullness, with removal of the tax burdens on industry and abolition of all monopolies and special privileges that interfere with the production of wealth and prevent its just distribution. Donations in aid of campaign funds will be allocated as desired among any of the associations named.

Cheques may be made payable to Wilfrid Harrison, 4, Great Smith Street, London, S.W.1. Friends in the U.S.A. and Canada can contribute through the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, 48-50, East 69th Street, New York, in which case they should name LAND & LIBERTY and make cheques, etc., payable to the Foundation.

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