

ASHLEY MITCHELL To Stand again for Parliament



At the annual meeting, on January 17, of the Keighley Division (Yorkshire) Liberal Association, Mr. Ashley Mitchell was adopted the prospective Liberal candidate to represent that Constituency. The *Keighley News* had a long report of the proceeding incidentally mentioning Mr. Mitchell's credentials as a prominent Yorkshire citizen, as worsted manufacturer in Huddersfield, as Vice-President of the Yorkshire Liberal Federation and as

having contested (though unsuccessfully) five General Elections in that county. He is a widely travelled man, is Treasurer of the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade, and member of the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values. He comes from a family well-known in the West Riding, his father having been a Mayor of Osset and his brother a Mayor of Huddersfield.

Addressing the meeting Mr. Mitchell said Britain needed Liberalism now more than ever before and he likened the present situation to that of 120 years ago when the country was riddled with restrictions. "At that time all the parties of reform or, as they are called in modern jargon, the parties of the Left, stood for freedom and opportunity against restrictionism, whereas the Labour Party has shown by its actions in government that it stands not for liberty and opportunity, but for the same kind of restrictionism which was controlling the country in those days. The experience of six years of Labour government based on Socialist theory proves that they are not a progressive party and have not made things secure for the masses of the community. They maintained taxation and increased it on some commodities, which increased the cost of living and put up costs of production.

"It is folly to think that the world owes this country a livelihood. Unless we can stand on our own feet the condition of this country will become desperate. There is no time to lose. We have wasted so many years on Socialist futility—such as development charges in the Town and Country Planning Act—and now another Government is having to spend the nation's time in trying to remove the follies of the previous six years. The situation now cries out for better representation in Parliament. If the present Conservative Government were facing reality it would realise that it was urgently necessary that the electoral system should be reformed by Proportional Representation so that there can be no danger of the country being submerged in further Socialism, unless the majority of the electors could be sufficiently deluded into supporting it.

"The trade unionists have been deceived into thinking that monopoly under State control could be to their advantage. They are now finding out their mistakes. For those people who have only their

labour to sell it is most essential that they should have competition for their services, rather than be tied down to only one employer.

"If Liberals do not fight when the next election comes along, people who might well be disappointed with any sitting government would be crying out, 'Where are the Liberals? Have we only the Socialists to vote for?' So that it was never more necessary that the Liberal Party should be restored to influence and proceed to adopt sound old Liberal policy; get back to free trade and reform the rating system, this being accomplished by taking rates off all buildings, both houses and industrial properties, through the rating and taxation of land values."

Other Prospective Candidates

"We in the Liberal Party see that man depends for his existence on the land, and that private ownership prevents men from getting access to those natural opportunities. We agree with neither the Labour Party's method of getting that land by nationalisation with compensation, nor Russia's method of confiscation. We believe in taxation of land values, which will eventually make the land freely available to the people, to be worked for their own profit." From a *Kentish Times* report, of the reply by Mr. Charles Aitken, prospective Liberal candidate for Dartford (Kent) and member of the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, in a recent public debate with the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

"To me the private and absolute ownership of property is the very foundation stone of freedom," Oliver Smedley said at Norwood last week. "If the concept of private ownership goes then everything goes. Our present Government are administering the wrong machine for the job. The more the machine fails to produce the right answer, the more they resort to force. We get Sir Thomas Dugdale instructing the County Agricultural Committees to 'get tough' with the farmers they choose to dub inefficient and compulsorily to dispossess them. We get Mr. Macmillan concentrating, apparently to the exclusion of all other considerations, on the job of building more houses than Mr. Bevan did. He therefore instructs local councils not to hesitate to take land for house-building under the compulsory purchase provisions.

"The adoption of the brilliantly simple plan for taxing the annual value of land without regard to the use that is made of it would neatly solve the problems of both Sir Thomas and Mr. Macmillan without the need for crude and clumsy interference with the sanctity of ownership."—From a *Liberal News* report, January 23 (Mr. Smedley is prospective Liberal candidate for Saffron Walden, Mr. R. A. Butler's constituency which he has contested twice previously).

Mr. Roy Douglas, prospective Liberal candidate for Bethnal Green, said recently: "Cases have appeared recently in which quite fabulous sums have been asked for hotel rooms overlooking the Coronation procession. Who has given these rooms this great value? Obviously not the proprietor, for they would not fetch a 50th of the sum in normal times. Clearly the value has been given by the community, since the procession is taking place along that route. We Liberals say that the same is true of land values everywhere; they are created either by nature or by the community, not by the man who happens to own the site. Since he has not created these values, why should he receive them? We Liberals say that land values should be returned to the community in the form of a tax on these values.

"Ultimately, all exploitation derives from monopoly. By free trade we mean to destroy the monopoly of production which is denying workers the cheap goods they could otherwise enjoy. By the taxation of land values we mean to destroy the even greater land monopoly which lies at the root of poverty and unemployment.—*East London Advertiser*