

## 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 deplors 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.