

LAND & LIBERTY

FREE LAND

FREE TRADE

FREE PEOPLE

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MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL AND LAND VALUE TAXATION HIS OPPORTUNITY AS CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER

The Right Hon. Winston Churchill, M.P., now Chancellor of the Exchequer in a Conservative Government, has been in his time one of the foremost platform exponents of the Taxation of Land Values. Now is his opportunity to give effect to the views he has expressed with so much conviction and emphasis. In his own words, he has "made speeches by the yard" on the Taxation of Land Values. His most notable declarations were those at the Drury Lane Theatre, London, on 20th April, 1907; in Edinburgh on 17th July, 1909; in Dundee on 19th October, 1909; in Manchester on 6th December, 1909; and once more in Dundee on 11th September, 1912. The following uncompromising attack on Land Monopoly, in the Edinburgh speech, holds good to-day with more force and justification than ever, and we reproduce it in these columns by the request of many readers.

SPEECH IN EDINBURGH

King's Theatre, 17th July, 1909

It is quite true that the land monopoly is not the only monopoly which exists, but it is by far the greatest of monopolies—it is a perpetual monopoly, and it is the mother of all other forms of monopoly. It is quite true that unearned increments in land are not the only form of unearned or undeserved profit which individuals are able to secure; but it is the principal form of unearned increment which is derived from processes which are not merely not beneficial but which are positively detrimental to the general public. Land, which is a necessity of human existence, which is

the original source of all wealth,

which is strictly limited in extent, which is fixed in geographical position—land, I say, differs from all other forms of property in these primary and fundamental conditions. Nothing is more amusing than to watch the efforts of our monopolist opponents to prove that other forms of property and increment are exactly the same and are similar in all respects to the unearned increment in land. They talk to us of the increased profits of a doctor or a lawyer from the growth of population in the towns in which they live. They talk to us of the profits of a railway through a greater degree of wealth and activity in the districts through which it runs. They tell us of the profits which are derived from a rise in stocks and shares, and even of those which are sometimes derived from the sale of pictures and works of art, and they ask us—as if it were the only complaint—"Ought not all these other forms to be taxed too?" But see how misleading and false all these analogies are.

The windfalls

which people with artistic gifts are able from time to time to derive from the sale of a picture—from a

Vandyke or a Holbein—may here and there be very considerable. But pictures do not get in anybody's way. They do not lay a toll on anybody's labour; they do not touch enterprise and production at any point; they do not affect any of those creative processes upon which the material well-being of millions depends; and if a rise in stocks and shares confers profits on the fortunate holders far beyond what they expected or indeed deserved, nevertheless that profit has not been reaped by

withholding from the community the land

which it needs, but on the contrary, apart from mere gambling, it has been reaped by supplying industry with the capital without which it could not be carried on. If the railway makes greater profits, it is usually because it carries more goods and more passengers. If a doctor or a lawyer enjoys a better practice, it is because the doctor attends more patients and more exacting patients, and because the lawyer pleads more suits in the courts and more important suits. At every stage the doctor or the lawyer is giving service in return for his fees, and if the service is too poor or the fees are too high other doctors and other lawyers can come freely into competition. There is constant service, there is constant competition; there is no monopoly, there is no injury to the public interest, there is no impediment to the general progress. Fancy comparing these healthy processes with

the enrichment which comes to the landlord

who happens to own a plot of land on the outskirts or at the centre of one of our great cities, who watches the busy population around him making the city larger, richer, more convenient, more famous every day, and all the while sits still and does nothing. Roads are made, streets are made, railway services are improved, electric light turns night into day, electric trams glide swiftly to and

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fro, water is brought from reservoirs a hundred miles off in the mountains—and all the while the landlord sits still. Every one of those improvements is effected by the labour and at the cost of other people. Many of the most important are effected at the cost of the municipality and of the ratepayers. To not one of those improvements does the land monopolist as a land monopolist contribute, and yet by every one of them

the value of his land is sensibly enhanced.

He renders no service to the community, he contributes nothing to the general welfare; he contributes nothing even to the process from which his own enrichment is derived. If the land were occupied by shops or by dwellings, the municipality at least would secure the rates upon them in aid of the general fund, but the land may be unoccupied, undeveloped, it may be what is called "ripening," ripening at the expense of the whole city, of the whole country, for the unearned increment of its owner. Roads perhaps have to be diverted to avoid this forbidden area. The merchant going to his office, the artisan going to his work, have to make a detour or pay a tram fare to avoid it. The citizens are losing their chance of developing the land,

the city is losing its rates,

the State is losing its taxes which would have accrued if the natural development had taken place; and that share has to be replaced at the expense of the other ratepayers and taxpayers and the nation as a whole is losing in the competition of the world—the hard and growing competition of the world—both in time and money. And all the while the land monopolist has only to sit still and watch complacently his property multiplying in value sometimes manifold without either effort or contribution on his part; and that is justice. But let us follow the process a little further. The population of the city grows and grows still larger year by year, the congestion in the poorer quarters becomes acute, rents and rates rise hand in hand and thousands of families are

crowded into one-roomed tenements.

There are 120,000 persons living in one-roomed tenements in Glasgow alone at the present time. At last the land becomes ripe for sale—that means that the price is too tempting to be resisted any longer. And then, and not till then, it is sold by the yard or by the inch at 10 times, or 20 times, or even 50 times its agricultural value, on which alone hitherto it has been rated for the public service. The greater the population around the land, the greater the injury which they have sustained by its protracted denial, the more inconvenience which has been caused to everybody, the more serious the loss in economic strength and

activity, the larger will be the profit of the landlord when the sale is finally accomplished. In fact, you may say that the unearned increment on the land is on all fours with the profit gathered by one of those American speculators who engineer a corner in corn, or meat, or cotton, or some other vital commodity, and that the unearned increment in land is reaped by the land monopolist in exact proportion, not to the service, but to the disservice done.

It is monopoly which is the keynote, and

where monopoly prevails

the greater the injury to society the greater the reward of the monopolist will be. See how all this evil process strikes at every form of industrial activity. The municipality, wishing for broader streets, better houses, more healthy, decent, scientifically planned towns, is made to pay, and is made to pay in exact proportion or to a very great extent in proportion as it has exerted itself in the past to make improvements. The more it has improved the town, the more it has increased the land value, and the more it will have to pay for any land it may wish to acquire. The manufacturer proposing to start a new industry, proposing to erect a great factory offering employment to thousands of hands, is made to pay such a price for his land that the purchase price hangs round the neck of his whole business, hampering his competitive power in every market, clogging him

far more than any foreign tariff

in his export competition, and the land values strike down through the profits of the manufacturer on to the wages of the workman. The railway company wishing to build a new line finds that the price of land which yesterday was only rated at agricultural value has risen to a prohibitive figure the moment it was known that the new line was projected, and either the railway is not built or, if it is, is built only on terms which largely transfer to the landowner the profits which are due to the shareholders and the advantages which should have accrued to the travelling public.

It does not matter where you look or what examples you select, you will see that every form of enterprise, every step in material progress, is only undertaken after the land monopolist has skimmed the cream off for himself, and everywhere to-day the man or the public body who wishes to put land to its highest use is

forced to pay a preliminary fine

in land values to the man who is putting it to an inferior use, and in some cases to no use at all. All comes back to the land value, and its owner for the time being is able to levy his toll upon all other forms of wealth and upon every form of industry. A portion, in some cases the whole, of every benefit which is laboriously acquired by the community, is represented in the land value and finds its way automatically into the landlord's pocket. If there is a rise in wages, rents are able to move forward, because the workers can afford to pay a little more. If the opening of a new railway or a new tramway or the institution of an improved service of workmen's trains or a lowering of fares or a new invention or any other public convenience affords a benefit to the workers in any particular district, it becomes

easier for them to live, and therefore the landlord and the ground landlord, one on top of the other, are able to

charge them more for the privilege

of living there. Some years ago in London there was a toll-bar on a bridge across the Thames, and all the working people who lived on the south side of the river had to pay a daily toll of one penny for going and returning from their work. The spectacle of these poor people thus mulcted on so large a proportion of their earnings appealed to the public conscience, an agitation was set on foot, municipal authorities were roused, and at the cost of the ratepayers the bridge was freed and the toll removed. All those people who used the bridge were saved 6d. a week. Within a very short period from that time the rents on the south side of the river were found to have advanced by about 6d. a week, or the amount of the toll which had been remitted. And a friend of mine was telling me the other day that in the parish of Southwark about £350 a year, roughly speaking, was given away in doles of bread by charitable people in connection with one of the churches, and as a consequence of this the competition for small houses, but more particularly for single-roomed tenements, is, we are told, so great that

rents are considerably higher

than in the neighbouring district. All goes back to the land, and the landowner, who in many cases, in most cases, is a worthy person utterly unconscious of the character of the methods by which he is enriched, is enabled with resistless strength to absorb to himself a share of almost every public and every private benefit, however important or however pitiful those benefits may be.

I hope you will understand that when I speak of the land monopolist I am dealing more with the process than with the individual landowner. I have no wish to hold any class up to public disapprobation. I do not think that the man who makes money by unearned increment in land is morally a worse man than anyone else who gathers his profit where he finds it in this hard world under the law and according to common usage. It is not the individual I attack, it is the system. It is not the man who is bad, it is the law which is bad.

It is not the man who is blameworthy for doing what the law allows and what other men do; it is the State which would be blameworthy were it not to endeavour to reform the law and correct the practice. We do not want to punish the landlord.

We want to alter the law.

The income derived from land and its rateable value under the present law depend upon the use to which the land is put, consequently income and rateable value are not always true or complete measures of the value of the land. Take the case to which I have already referred of the man who keeps a large plot in or near a growing town idle for years while it is ripening—that is to say, while it is rising in price through the exertions of the surrounding community, and the need of that community for more room to live. Take that case. I dare say you have formed your own opinion upon it. Mr. Balfour, Lord Lansdowne, and the Conservative Party generally think that that is an admirable arrangement. They speak of the profits of the land

monopolist as if they were the fruits of thrift and industry and a pleasing example for the poorer classes to imitate. We do not take that view of the process. We think it is

a dog-in-the-manger game.

We see the evil, we see the imposture upon the public, and we see the consequences in crowded slums, in hampered commerce, in distorted or restricted development, and in congested centres of population, and we say here and now to the land monopolist who is holding up his land—and the pity is it was not said before—you shall judge for yourselves whether it is a fair offer or not—we say to the land monopolist: "This property of yours might be put to immediate use with general advantage. It is at this minute saleable in the market at 10 times the value at which it is rated. If you choose to keep it idle in the expectation of still further unearned increment, then at least you shall be

taxed at the true selling value

in the meanwhile." I have come to Scotland to exhort you to engage in this battle and devote your whole energy and influence to securing a memorable victory. Every nation in the world has its own way of doing things, its own successes and its own failures.

All over Europe we see systems of land tenure which economically, socially and politically are far superior to ours; but the benefits that those countries derive from their improved land systems are largely swept away, or, at any rate, neutralized by grinding tariffs on the necessaries of life and the materials of manufacture. In this country we have long enjoyed the blessings of Free Trade and of untaxed bread and meat, but against these inestimable benefits we have

the evils of an unreformed and vicious land system.

In no great country in the new world or the old have the working people yet secured the double advantage of free trade and free land together, by which I mean a commercial system and a land system from which, so far as possible, all forms of monopoly have been rigorously excluded. Sixty years ago our system of national taxation was effectively reformed, and immense and undisputed advantages accrued therefrom to all classes, the richest as well as the poorest. The system of local taxation to-day is just as vicious and wasteful, just as great an impediment to enterprise and progress, just as harsh a burden upon the poor, as the thousand taxes and Corn Law sliding scales of the "hungry 'forties." We are met in an hour of tremendous opportunity. "You who shall liberate the land," said Mr. Cobden, "will do more for your country than we have done in the liberation of its commerce."

"SPEECHES BY THE YARD."

During the Dundee bye-election in 1917, Mr. Churchill was asked by an elector at one of his meetings: "Are you in favour of the Taxation of Land Values?"

Mr. Churchill replied (*Dundee Advertiser*, 28th July, 1917): "I have made speeches to you by the yard on the Taxation of Land Values, and you know what a strong supporter I have always been of that policy."

Recognition and a Correction.—Our contemporary, the *LAND UNION JOURNAL*, lacks nothing in the way of courtesy in its compliments upon our propaganda. The issue for November pays a tribute to the work of the United Committee that should exhort our friends to increase the pace as they best know how. The *LAND UNION JOURNAL* frankly admits the progress that has brought us so near to a substantial and lasting achievement, and utters this warning to its readers :—

As is well known, both the Labour and Liberal Parties are pledged to the Taxation of Land Values, and Mr. Snowden, the Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer, during the campaign, stated that, if he were Chancellor of the Exchequer in the spring of next year, he would introduce a scheme for the Taxation of Land Values.

When one realizes that there was in the late House of Commons a majority for this form of taxation, one will understand that a great effort would have been required to have prevented any such scheme having been carried into effect. We may, however, at once state that the Land Union was confident that it could prevent the introduction of this scheme of penal taxation had the Chancellor of the Exchequer been in a position to make such a proposal, but we would warn property-owners that the propaganda carried on in favour of the Taxation of Land Values, has reached enormous proportions, and, in spite of the tremendous set-back which has been received, no doubt such propaganda will still continue. According to the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, of the candidates standing in the recent Election, no less than 510 had answered their questionnaire favourably, the number of candidates being Labour, 353; and Liberals, 157. Moreover, the Committee also stated that, included in their propaganda was the issue of one million leaflets showing the advantages of the Taxation of Land Values. These are striking statements which show that the United Committee must have received very great financial support for it to undertake a campaign of this magnitude.

There is only one fault in these observations, and that is with respect to the alleged great financial support behind the United Committee. It won't do us any harm for the Land Union to say so, but, in a word, we can assure them that they are labouring under a delusion. We badly need the financial support they say we possess, but we are rich in numbers and can boast of the ever-ready service of a band of voluntary co-workers, whose enthusiasm is always at our command to carry out the kind of work that has struck the imagination even of our obtuse though well-placed opponents.

The Claims of the Living.—Unveiling a war memorial at Paddington, 9th November, General Sir Ian Hamilton said: "Let us reserve our sorrow for their families, and our sympathy for their comrades, the survivors, who, ageing, broken, unemployed, and already half-forgotten, are a standing cause of dishonour to the successive Governments of this country. We remember our dead, and that is well. But the dead don't eat and drink and don't want work; wreaths will satisfy them. How about the living? We have our wonderful sale of poppies—the British Legion and the British public have done that—but surely our Governments have been trying as hard as they can to forget those uncomfortable 800,000 ex-service men who—mostly young—walk the streets in idleness."

And this, six years after the war is ended. But it is hardly fair to say that our Governments have been trying as hard as they can to forget the unemployed who walk the streets in idleness. They very well remember them, but can do nothing. It was Mr. Snowden

who said during the election contest that no Government would ever solve the unemployment problem without a radical change in our economic system. That is true enough, and it is the mischief of our politics that Mr. Snowden was denied the chance he had of making the change. There is any amount of patching and mending and talk by the yard on the need for drastic measures that will go to the root of the matter. And when these schemes appear they are framed on the principle that any cure for this social malady must respect the existing legalized monopoly barriers that are responsible for idle land and idle workers. It is evident that the politicians are more concerned to down their opponents than to provide a positive policy that would end "the standing dishonour" Sir Ian Hamilton so perseveringly deplores.

Roads for Nothing.—Addressing the members of the Glasgow Liberal Club, 26th September, Mr. Comyns Carr, K.C., referring to development schemes, said :—

"The present system of rating was a hindrance to these. To take the example of the Glasgow-Edinburgh road, on which Glasgow was going to spend this winter £2,000,000, the frontages along that road were going to be worth in ten years' time a great deal more than £2,000,000. Wherever there were great developments, the public was robbed, but, moreover, much-needed schemes were held up, because unless at the public expense the thing could not be done so long as a system was tolerated by which the benefits of enterprise went, not to the people who had carried it out, but to people who had sat by and done nothing except wait for the money to fall into their pockets. If we were now to have a charge upon the increased values of land which was going to be created along that Edinburgh-Glasgow road, the road could be constructed for nothing—its cost would be repaid in ten years."

A Glasgow colleague remarks :—

"The speaker was warmly praised by his Glasgow public for his bold advocacy of the land value policy, and the lasting benefits it would bring to enterprise and all forms of municipal expansion." In the making of new roads we have a glaring example of how the public is robbed by the present system of rating, and our speakers and Press correspondents should miss no opportunity of making the most of all such openings. But in their efforts they should avoid all reference to "any charge upon the increased value of land." The phrase suggests an "increment tax," and the plain policy is the Taxation of Land Values and the untaxing of improvements. That includes any increase in land value, and helps to keep the true principle in the argument free from all spurious imitation. We have had all the experience necessary in the 1909-10 increment tax.

£1,150 per Acre.—The *MANCHESTER GUARDIAN* of 21st November reports that the increase in the land values at Blyth is illustrated by the experience of 40 amateur gardeners, who have allotments leased from local landowners, and have received notice to quit next February. The local town councillors, on behalf of the Allotments Association, offered to buy the land at £250 per acre, but have been informed that the land is worth £1,150 per acre for building purposes.

A glaring example that gives force to the argument for the Taxation of Land Values. The town councillors are helpless, the allotment holders are denied access to land, and the community is cheated of its revenue. The landowner holds sway over all. Around every town and city there is land and to spare for allotments and market gardens, but when anyone tries to get it on secure tenure, it is found suddenly to have acquired a speculative "building value," although it continues to be rated and taxed at a purely nominal figure—until at last the

owner gets his monopoly price and leaves the improver to shoulder the public burdens he ought to have borne.

The United Committee wrote to every one of the Town Councillors of Blyth, and explained the remedy for this iniquity, but it is a case for making opinion also among the 40 amateur gardeners, and we should be obliged to anyone who will undertake an effective distribution of our leaflets in that neighbourhood.

An Echo of Limehouse at the Election.—Speaking at Pembroke (*THE TIMES*, October 24th, 1924), Mr. Lloyd George said: "The land is a monopoly, and both in town and in the country we are now, as Liberals, working out a system, which I predict to you will be carried, that will emancipate this land, this country, the soil of the country in the town and outside, from the horrible grip and oppression and tyranny and thralldom of a land monopoly that is crowding the people into the towns, into insanitary houses in so many cases, and which is robbing honest people of the fruits of their industry." (Loud cheers.) It's all in the cheers, where it was left by the speaker in the days of his abortive land campaign. The plan put forward now is as futile as, if not worse than, the discredited land duties of 1909.

In a Conservative Sense.—The promoters of the Spanish "Lineal City" movement entertained members of the English National Housing and Town Planning Council on their visit to Madrid in September. A feature of the occasion was the issuing of an illustrated booklet for the special edification of the visitors, from which we quote:—

"EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF THE LAND.

"The design of a lineal city is the accomplishment of Henry George's doctrine, since it permits of dispossessing landowners, both in their own benefit and in the benefit of everybody, in a most practical and simple manner, without giving rise to litigations or troubles of any kind. It is also a means of practically carrying out, in a conservative sense and by conservative methods, the idea of the equitable distribution of the land, which is at present considered as a revolutionary one."

It looks like something for Mr. Baldwin to investigate. He once declared in the Commons that to raise the question of taxing Land Values meant the raising of seven devils. The Spanish interpretation may be more soothing and more in keeping with his own Conservative notion of land reform. It is just possible, however, that on examination, the more revolutionary "seven devils" method may turn out to be the speediest and surest way out.

Not Room for Both.—"The number of non-producers in relation to producers is too large, and that is why the wage of the producers is too small."—*Mr. W. L. Hichens*.

The statement carries its own truth, and provokes the further question: Are the non-producers to be controlled, or removed?

In the economy of nature there is no place for the non-producer; the more he takes the less there is for the wage-earner. That is quite clear, but who, or what is it that divides the produce of industry between non-producer and producer, to the hurt of the latter? Will not Mr. Hichens undertake to answer this question? It has some bearing on his good intentions. In an arresting passage in *PROGRESS AND POVERTY* Henry George says: "It is a well provisioned ship, this on which we sail through space. If the bread and beef above decks seem to grow scarce, we but open a hatch and there is a new supply, of which before we never dreamed. And very great command over the services of others comes to those who as the hatches are open are permitted to say, 'This is mine.'"

This is the case in a paragraph. There are any number of new hatches to be opened; nature is not niggardly in her material gifts, and the necessary labour

is available. But as the new hatches are approached the monopolizer is at hand authorized by landlord-made law to confiscate wealth that morally belongs to the community as a whole. And if his price is a prohibitive one, as it often is, the hatches are not opened. This common practice explains "why the wage of the producers is too small." It explains the true cause of unemployment and to know the cause is to be on speaking terms with the remedy.

Babylonish Nonsense.—"W. P.", a popular writer of the special articles that appear in the *GLASGOW HERALD* once a week with so much acceptance, in the issue of Saturday, 15th November, laments the slow and painful reawakening of the spirit that inspired the literary and social activity of Allan Ramsay, the poetry of Robert Burns, and the poetry and earlier novels of Scott. He looks at our emptied countrysides, and continues: The people bunched in our industrial areas squeak and gibber quaint Babylonish nonsense about Land Values, and that what they want to say is that a nation in which three-fourths of the population are completely divorced from the land and from the sanative variety of rural life is not in a healthy state.

This appears to be a dull and sad reflection, but the remedy for "W. P." is at hand. Let him take a turn at *PROGRESS AND POVERTY*, and learn there how taxation of land values is but a practical proposal to give point and character to his dream of a Renaissance. If he has another and a better plan, let him "gibber" away at it for all he is worth. Neither poetry nor any other form of art will suffice to re-people the countryside. As a fact, the exodus from the country to the industrial areas has kept pace with the advance of all art and science, and all higher service, so-called. What is needed is that one stroke of social justice worth seventy years of longing and dreaming, and making faces in the Press at the tragedy evolved from the divorcement of the people from the soil, and the sin and misery that comes of it.

The Poverty Aspect.—Our literary critic in his meandering through the troubles and trials and the misunderstandings between literary scholars and creative writers, bumps up against the poverty problem, and puts it in evidence as a sort of song that progress need not fear. He says: All it (the Scottish literary renaissance) demands that it cannot itself supply are critical sympathy and the primary requisites of material encouragement. This reminds us of the man who in reply to a casual inquiry about a mutual friend said: "Oh, he is all right; all he wants is a little more money to encourage him." The inquiring friend smiled, and said: "I think that's your case and mine, as well; and there are others in the same boat!" Of course, it goes without saying, as "W. P." avers, that authors cannot write even for nothing without publishers and a public. It is equally true, and more to the point, to say that a public overburdened with high taxation, idleness and monopoly rents and prices are not just in the position to consider how best to encourage even the most gifted authors, inspired by lofty national ideals. The real question for authors, and for their public, is why this lack of material things? and until that question is settled, there is little hope for "W. P.'s" upward movement. He may not care to admit this, but it is written that as we open new schools, so do we extend our prison accommodation, build new hospitals, and perfect and develop our charitable and philanthropic institutions; and able-bodied scholars walk the streets in search of a wage sufficient to keep body and soul together. By all means let us open up the new opportunities that are in the land. There are acres by the ten thousand in Scotland, as in every other country, calling upon us, as Carlyle would have put it, in God's name to permit them to bear their due share of the heat and burden of the day.

Small Holdings in Scotland.—The Scottish Land Court, enacted to deal with the Small Holdings Act, held a sitting at Edinburgh, 3rd November, and considered

“an application” (GLASGOW HERALD report) “by the Board of Agriculture to fix compensation due to Sir Archibald S. L. Campbell of Succoth, Bt., Garscube House, Dumbartonshire, in respect of a small holdings scheme on the farm of West Millichen on the estate of Garscube. The Land Court ordered the proprietor to lodge a claim for compensation. His claim amounted to £5,150. This sum included £2,600 in respect of buildings to be taken over by the Board; £1,600 in respect of loss of value of minerals rendered unworkable owing to increased liability for damage by subsidence, difficulty of resuming land, etc.; £400 in respect of increased cost of management; £150 for upkeep of fences; £100 for loss on shooting rent; and £300 for depreciation of value of Millichen Wood for selling or letting.”

It is this compensation provision in the Act that has reduced it to a thing of shreds and patches, and it accounts for the ghastly failure of the measure to put the people back on the land. The Board of Agriculture in their answer disallows most of this landlord's claim and so the conversations continue year after year. Meanwhile the potential small holders have abandoned hope and ships are engaged to take them in hundreds at a time across the seas. There is land enough and to spare at home, but the landlord interest and our helpless and hopeless politicians combine to make a travesty of the imperative need for land reform. The Small Holdings Act was framed up as a sort of menace and appeal to the territorial landlords to let go something for the good of the nation. Its complete failure can only suggest the urgency of the more drastic legislation required. The Taxation of Land Values and the untaxing of industry is the essential first step to “make the land less of a pleasure ground for the rich and more of a treasure-house for the nation.”

CONSIDER THIS CALL FOR SERVICE

Many people write to the newspapers on political and economic questions who might well get a personal letter from any of our correspondents, calling attention to the Taxation of Land Values and sending some suitable pamphlet or a copy of LAND & LIBERTY. The United Committee and the Leagues are constantly busy with work of this kind, taking advantage of the opportunity to bring our policy before those who do not mention it or do not seem to appreciate its bearing upon the matters they discuss. We ask our readers to help in this special “individual” campaign by watching the correspondence in their local papers, reports of meetings, special articles, etc., and either writing themselves to the persons concerned (if their addresses are stated or are known) or passing on the clipping from the paper to this office or to any of the Leagues, so that it can be dealt with. Whoever is sufficiently interested in social problems to take his pen in his hand or his place on the platform should have our policy put before him. It may be for the first time, and he (the recipient) may heartily appreciate the service, especially if it comes in the form of a personal communication. We know that many of our supporters devote themselves continuously to work of this kind, and with good results, and we warmly recommend it to others who only need the suggestion to act upon it at once.

YOUTH AND THE LAND QUESTION

You are preparing to take your place in the great workaday world—a world in which all the Social Problems, which have beset the workers for generations, still remain to be solved; in which all these problems have been made more urgent and more difficult by the effects of the Great War.

You will be seeking *employment*, by which to earn an honest living, at a time when enormous numbers of men and women are unable to find any work at all; at a time when jobs are very difficult to get, and very difficult to keep; when, in the presence of widespread unemployment, *wages* almost everywhere tend to be reduced.

You will be seeking a *home of your own*, and will find that houses are scarce and dear; that there are few houses to be let, and many that are for sale, only at a price beyond your means.

When you marry, you will be faced with the problem of supporting your family on an income which is heavily burdened by *rates and taxes*. You will be taxed on what you earn, and on what you spend on necessary foods, comforts, amusements, etc., and on many of your business transactions; you will be heavily rated on the house in which you live. Rent, taxes, rates, prices of food and clothing, cost of recreation, etc., are all higher than before the war.

But you will have a vote, and, if you rightly use it, you may help to get rid of these troubles. It is not too soon to begin to think how your vote can best be used.

There is one great question which underlies all our economic difficulties: the question of the Land—“the field of all labour and the source of all wealth.”

All our foodstuffs, all the raw material of our manufacturing industries, are drawn from land. Our houses are built on land, out of materials—brick, stone, mortar, timber, slate, glass, metals, etc.—obtained from land. Every productive and distributive industry, and consequently all productive employment, depends upon access to land for raw material, for the site of factories, mills, warehouses, shops, offices and so on.

The denial of access to land, therefore, means dear food, dear houses, dear clothing, dear coal, dear raw materials; scarcity of jobs and low wages; high rents and overcrowding; not so many shillings a week in wages, and not so much value for each shilling when we spend it.

Yet landholders who withhold land from use, and by so doing hinder the production of wealth, and increase unemployment, are not taxed or rated on the value of their land, even when the labour and expenditure of the community has given this land a high value, and is enhancing that value every year. But the man who uses land well, by cultivating it, or by building upon it, or by mining in it—thus giving employment to his fellows and increasing the wealth of the nation—is taxed and rated; and the better he uses the land, the more heavily he is rated and taxed on the results of his industry.

If you and your children are to have good times, you must tackle the Land Question. The Land Monopoly, which is the cause of so many social ills, can be broken up by the Taxation and Rating of Land Values, which will open up the land for food-producing, for house building, for coal and iron mining, and other useful employments, and at the same time make it possible to lighten the heavy burden of taxation and rating upon the foods, the homes, and the industry of the workers.

Issued in booklet form by the English League for the Taxation of Land Values, 376-7, Strand, London, W.C.2. Campaign Series No. 1, price one penny, 3s. 6d. per 100 post free.