

THE SCOTTISH HOUSING COMMISSION.

Land - Values

JOURNAL OF THE MOVEMENT FOR THE TAXATION OF LAND VALUES.

Twenty-Fourth Year—No. 284.

JANUARY, 1918.

1d.; Post, 2/- per annum.

Telephone: Victoria 7323

11, Tothill Street, London, S.W. 1.

Telegrams: "Eulav, Vic., London."

The Hopelessness of Mr. Bonar Law.

When Mr. Outhwaite asked Mr. Bonar Law whether he would take steps, following the lead of Australia, to secure a valuation of land-values in the United Kingdom for the purpose of a tax on land-values, Mr. Bonar Law said (House of Commons, 13th October) that he had "no hope of getting money by that means," and when Mr. Outhwaite asked whether his attitude was due to the opposition of the land-owners, he said that it was "due to the lack of belief that money can be got from that source." If he will look at page 57 of the latest Report of the Inland Revenue Commissioners, he will see that the "total values" of the lands in Great Britain included in the provisional valuations up to 31st March, 1916, amount to the enormous sum of £5,267,784,055, so that, even if the values attributable to the land, apart from the improvements, were put as low as a quarter of the "total values" (which, it will be remembered, are the "gross values" less fixed charges and some other deductions) they would aggregate more than £1,300,000,000. If he looks at pages 56 and 61 of the same Report he will see that during the last few years the Mineral Rights Duty (exclusive of the Excess Mineral Rights Duty) has amounted to about £300,000 a year, and as it is at the rate of 1s. in the £ on royalties, etc., the gross annual value of these royalties etc., is about £6,000,000 a-year, or, if this is regarded as a 5 per cent. on the capital value, the capital value of these mineral rights is about £120,000,000. These mineral values are not included in the values already mentioned; and they do not by any means represent nearly the full value of the mineral rights in this country, because they relate only to those which are actually being worked or used. Even deducting income tax and in some cases super tax, from these quantities, one can but wonder that a Chancellor of the Exchequer should have "no hope of getting money" from this source.

"A Provisional Estimate."

When, a few days later, Mr. Dundas White asked him what was the estimated aggregate of the full-site values of the United Kingdom, he replied that large numbers of valuations had to be postponed till after the war, and that none but the roughest estimates could be given; and when pressed for a provisional estimate, he said that "a provisional estimate could only be unsatisfactory." Unsatisfactory! It might be unsatisfactory to those who are monopolizing this natural

storehouse of wealth, but it would be eminently satisfactory to those who hold that the land ought to be the heritage of the people, and that those who hold it should be called upon to make a special contribution towards its defence. Did Mr. Bonar Law forget that the aggregate of the "total values" as far as ascertained to the end of the last financial year have been given in the Annual Report of the Commissioners? Is he not aware of the significance of these figures? Why should he not give at least a corresponding estimate of the full-site values as far as they have been ascertained? Does he realise that the taxation of land-values is becoming inevitable, and that a knowledge of the facts would bring it on with a rush?

Increased Agricultural Values.

The high prices of food, coupled with the guarantees of the Corn Production Bill, have sent the value of agricultural land to prices undreamed of a few years ago. Are these extra values which are due to war conditions to be swept into the landlords' pockets? Surely the value of agricultural land which has been greatly augmented by these causes ought to receive attention from the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Petroleum Values.

Take the proposal for Petroleum Royalties, which would have given the sanction of Parliament to the view that movable petroleum under the soil, is the property of the landowners, and couple it with Mr. Walter Long's statement in the House of Commons on 25th October in which after reviewing the situation, he said:—

Under the circumstances, I would not make myself responsible for a Bill which did not offer royalties to those who are in the position in which the people are in to whom I have referred.

As our readers know, the proposal was not only for petroleum royalties to landowners, but for placing them on such a basis that they would be payable even though the cost of getting the petroleum were to exceed the value of it, so that not only the deficit on the undertaking, but the royalties as well, might have been a deadweight burden on the taxpayer. The proposal is not likely to survive its exposure and defeat. But this bare-faced attempt to plunder the public for the benefit of the landowners reveals the character of the Government. There is nothing for me in land values, says the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the look-out

for additional revenue, while the Secretary of State for the Colonies brings before Parliament a Bill expressly designed to provide additional royalties not for the public exchequer but for his friends the landowners. Unless this principle is accepted he unblushingly declares he is not interested in the Bill to provide petroleum for the Nation in its hour of crisis. Verily, these gentlemen are helping us more than they know to hasten the time when the Land Valuation Department will be requisitioned for a national tax on land values.

A Trade Paper on the Question.

We reproduce for the benefit of all concerned, including Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Walter Long, the following extract from the *WORLD'S TRADE REVIEW*, of December 7th:—

"The Excess Profits Tax barely touches the principal culprits (the profiteers) who pose in the public view as the most patriotic of men. And, in fact, many of them really are, and it is no fault of theirs that they are profiteers. It is the fault of a system. We refer to landowners, who by a self-denying ordinance have agreed to capitalise their gains rather than pay excess profits. But they reserved the option of securing those gains if they wished to do so, by selling their lands, as many have done, and these lands, since the war commenced, have realised from 50 to 70 years purchase, or even more in some cases.

"Profiteering would have been impossible if it had not been for our land system, as there would have been abundant land for cultivation, and our food supplies would have been secure long ago. Most of the difficulties which the Government have had to encounter have been due to the fact that they could not or would not face this question. The political pact has made it almost impossible for them to do so.

"Excess Profits Tax was one of the measures substituted for a tax on land, and it appears to us that those who claim the ownership of the land ought to have been the ones to pay for its retention."

The Corn (Rent) Production Act in Operation.

The Marquis de Casteja Scarisbrick, Hall, Ormskirk, the owner of an extensive agricultural estate in West Lancashire, has communicated with his farm tenants in the following terms:—

"... On the other hand, I think it is generally admitted that the farming industry has been passing through a period of unexampled prosperity, and as my increased burdens are due, directly or indirectly, to the same causes which have led to that prosperity, I propose to increase the rents on my Estate by 15 per cent. as from the 2nd February next. There are, as you know, ways and means by which rents can be legitimately raised, though I am well aware this cannot be effected by a circular letter except by agreement. But I have always looked upon the interests of landlords and tenants as mutual, and I think the small increase such as I propose can be effected most satisfactorily by a friendly arrangement.

"I may add that if the tithe rentcharge and the rates of interest revert to their pre-war level, or if a period of agricultural depression supervenes in this part of Lancashire, I shall be quite ready to reconsider the matter.

"These suggestions appear to me to be eminently reasonable, and I shall be glad if you will sign and forward to me the annexed form of reply on or before the seventh of January next.

"I ought also to remind you that if you agree to my proposition you will have a right to refer to arbitration

the question of whether the increase could have been demanded if Part I. of the Corn Production Act had not been passed."

Should the farmers be in doubt as to the right of the landowner to share in the graft provided by the C.P.D. they can always console themselves by the soothing reflection of the Prime Minister that, whatever they hand over to the landlord the money still remains in the family; it is not being sent out of the country to benefit any outsider.

Mr. J. M. Robertson on the Land Question.

Lecturing at the National Liberal Club on November 9th, Mr. J. M. Robertson, M.P., said according to the *WESTMINSTER GAZETTE* that "all idle land should be called upon to pay a national tax, since the owner was either holding it as a luxury or withholding its means of production from use." It is not clear whether Mr. Robertson contemplated a general tax on land values. He is quoted in saying that it was questionable whether it were possible to isolate for taxation the unimproved value of the land, for it was not only labour, but also material, which was continually being put into it; whilst it must not be forgotten that what to-day might be good land was a century ago bogland or sand-dunes.

We thought that this ancient fallacy as to the difficulty of separating land value from the value due to improvements had long ago been set at rest by the practical success with which it has been done in America, Australia, New Zealand and elsewhere. The problem of valuing land can be solved with more accuracy than most fiscal difficulties. But if this be an argument against the Taxation of Land Values it is a tenfold greater argument against our present rating system with its problems of estimating what is the rental value of factories, wharves, railways, and in many cases of apportioning such a value between many different rating areas. No such problem, and indeed no problem in government can be solved with mathematical accuracy, but experience has shown that valuation of land at least can be done with an accuracy and fairness which will satisfy any practical man.

Stone, Clay and Ores.

At another point of his lecture Mr. Robertson repeated a blunder which we have dealt with once before. (*LAND VALUES*, June, 1914, p. 5). "If land, he says, were called on to pay a perpetual rent to the State, so too ought stone, clay and the ores." Now either Mr. Robertson means produced stone, clay and ore, or else he means the natural deposits of these things. If the first, then his argument is a *non sequitur*, for these articles being produced are not land which by definition is not produced. If the second, then the point requires no special treatment, being natural deposits these things are land and their value would be taxed as such.

Mr. Robertson also remarked that investment in land was quite as legitimate as investment in stocks and shares, and the purchaser of the latter was morally upon the same level as a purchaser of land, inasmuch as both lived upon the production of other people.

We may ask if land may morally be made a subject of private property in the same fashion as the products

of labour, then why not the sea, air, and sunlight? Surely there is the widest distinction between the gifts of nature and the products of human exertion. Private ownership of the latter secures to men the just reward of their exertion; private ownership of the land enables the owners to despoil others of the fruits of their labour or indeed to prevent them from producing at all.

Manchester Municipal Housing.

In a recently issued Statement of Accounts for the year 1915-16, prepared by the City Treasurer, some interesting information is given about municipal housing schemes in Manchester. The total expenditure during a term of years amounts to £457,366, and of that sum no less than £314,262 is still outstanding debt. A net income of £6,150 is derived in rents from the dwellings, lodging-houses, and other properties, and as the total expenditure on chief rents, interest and sinking fund amounts to £21,711, there is an annual net deficiency of £15,561. Chief rents and debt charges, which total £16,893, represent 131.71 per cent. of the gross rental.

For many years Manchester ratepayers have been losing thousands of pounds in the attempt to provide accommodation for their poorer brethren, and in view of the present urgent need for houses it is proposed to increase the expenditure and the loss in the future. That would be excusable if the schemes already undertaken had been in any degree successful in solving the problem, or if there were no other steps that could be taken. In those circumstances no public-spirited ratepayer would begrudge the expense or protest against its increase, but this branch of municipal enterprise will not bear such a test. These schemes have but touched the fringe of the housing problem in Manchester which has been growing in acuteness during the whole period of their operation. The fact is that neither the City Council nor private builders can build cheap houses on dear land nor let them at low rents when high rates make them still dearer to the tenants. In one scheme sanctioned by the Council, for example, these burdens of dear land and high rates amounted to a weekly charge of 1s. for ground rent and 1s. for rates on single rooms. Yet in the city there are many scores of plots of derelict land and one-quarter of its area (5,300 acres) is used, or misused, for agricultural purposes, on which the assessment for rates represents only a fraction of its real value. On this unused and misused land more than enough houses could be built to provide for immediate needs, and if it were made available and cheap, houses would soon be provided. Housing schemes then—either municipal or private—would have a reasonable chance of success.

The housing problem is but a part of the larger problem of poverty, and poverty can be eliminated only by a drastic reform of our land laws. Meanwhile, the rating of land values and the unrating of houses, as an effective means of cheapening land and distributing the burden of rates equitably over the whole area of the city, is essentially the first step, and it should be made the test question at all municipal elections so soon as the right to elect their representatives is restored to the ratepayers.

The Freedom of Trade.

The following resolution was passed by the Executive Committee of the Free Trade Union on November 28th, 1917:—

The Free Trade Union was established to resist the imposition of tariffs and restrictions upon external trade. The reasons which make these tariffs and restrictions objectionable apply with equal force to restrictions upon the freedom of the internal trade of the country.

While the exigencies of war render impossible for the moment the complete freedom of internal trade hitherto enjoyed in this country, the Free Trade Union records its opinion that the interference by Government with the individual's liberty to trade is inflicting grave injury on the present and future trade of the country. The Union recognises the necessity for careful scrutiny of all Government measures restricting the freedom of trade, and for taking steps to secure the removal at the earliest possible moment of any which are not essential to national safety.

We are glad to observe that at last the Free Trade Union is coming to realise that freedom for the internal trade of the country deserves some little consideration and not alone its foreign trade. The resolution is no doubt directed against such measures as the Non-Ferrous Metal Industry Bill, but perhaps the Union may find time in its sudden desire for internal freedom of trade to direct its attention to those internal taxes such as rates on houses, factories, and other improvements which Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman characterised as a hostile tariff on our industries. The Free Trade Union, like the Cobden Club, has in the past resolutely closed its eyes to that larger vision of freedom which inspired Cobden and others of that period. Let us hope that this step marks the beginning of a broader and more effective policy.

HOUSING

The suggestion I venture to make is that the municipalities of this country should be empowered to follow the example of Sydney, New South Wales, a city with a population of over 700,000, which, in April, 1916, abolished all rates on houses and other buildings, and substituted a rate of 4d. in the pound on the capital value of the land within the city boundary. A similar impost in any of our great cities would bring a relief practically equal to that afforded by the proposed State subsidy, because at present quite a third of the annual income from house property is absorbed in rates. The relief would be the same, but how different the effect on the housing problem as a whole! Municipal effort would not suffer, while private and co-operative effort would be stimulated instead of retarded. There would be no burden on the taxpayer or the ratepayer, and most important of all, so far from entrenching and extending land monopoly, it would be absolutely broken down. The unbuilt-on sites in our cities, and the belts of land outside, would be subject to this new land values rate, and 4d. per £1 on capital value would be sufficient inducement to the landlord to place his land on the market on reasonable terms. I predict with confidence that before many years are over we would see such a boom in house building as this country has never experienced, and the housing difficulty would rapidly become a thing of the past. This is the true line of advance, and I commend it to the consideration alike of the Government and of the new democracy—*P. Wilson Raffan, M.P., in "Reynolds's Newspaper," December 16th.*

LAND VALUES

Twenty-fourth Year. (Established June, 1894)

Monthly 1d. By Post 2s. per annum.
(United States and Canada, 50 cents.)

Editorial Offices:

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of Land Values,
11, Tothill Street, London, S.W.1.

Telegrams: "Eulav, Vic, London."

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"OUR POLICY"

"We would simply take for the community what belongs to the community—the value that attaches to land by the growth of the community; leave sacredly to the individual all that belongs to the individual."—
Henry George.

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THE SCOTTISH HOUSING COMMISSION

These are the broad results of our survey: unsatisfactory sites of houses and villages, . . . widespread absence of decent sanitary conveniences, . . . badly constructed, incurably damp labourers' cottages on farms, whole townships unfit for human occupation in the crofting counties and islands, . . . gross overcrowding and huddling of the sexes together in the congested industrial villages and towns, occupation of one-room houses by large families, . . . clotted masses of slums in the great cities.

The Royal Commission on the Housing of the Industrial Population of Scotland Rural and Urban was appointed on the 30th October, 1912. Its Report, published on the 6th October, 1917, is a ponderous volume 460 pages, presenting in thirty-five chapters and in a Minority Report of ten chapters a veritable encyclopædia of information, evidence and opinion. The result of five years' consideration, it devotes the first 224 pages to quite a useful survey of existing conditions in town and country and of the extensive administrative powers conferred on local authorities by innumerable Acts of Parliament. It is a repository for the zealous social worker seeking facts, a self-educator for the town or parish councillor on the intricacies of building by-laws and housing legislation, and a comparatively cheap text-book for the public health inspector charged with control of such abortions as common lodging-houses and ticketed dwellings. Six valuable chapters follow on the relation of the tenure and price of land to housing, in which the Commissioners publish a long record of startling examples; and although themselves insisting that they reach here the fundamental cause of the evil, advocate no remedy against land monopoly but compromise and futility. The functions of building societies and public utility societies, the possibilities of good arising from town-planning and better transit, and the use of public money to help the "working classes," take up three more chapters. Finally, a "Housing Policy" is elaborated in four chapters, out of which arise an enlarged Local Government Board, some hundred additional by-laws, a score of amended or fresh Acts of Parliament, and the expenditure of an unnamed sum of public funds upon land purchase and "working-class houses." Quite 420 of the 428 separate recommendations of the Report cover matters of inconsequent detail and the extensive catalogue embraces such "minor reforms" as the whitewashing of common stairs and the control of ashpits.

It will be asked what then, saving the details and the minor reforms, are the chief proposals advocated? The Commission supplies overwhelming evidence for drastic treatment of a widespread evil; what are its substantial recommendations? They are difficult to find, but an industrious search through the many pages of the Report discovers a policy which may be arranged under the following heads:—

1. *Use of Public Money.* The State itself, through the Local Authorities, is alone in a position to assume responsibility. . . . The Local Authorities must be placed under an unmistakable obligation to maintain

a continuous and systematic survey of their housing accommodation, to ascertain how far private enterprise can meet the demands, but, failing provision of houses by other agencies, to undertake themselves—with financial assistance from the State—the necessary building schemes (p. 347).

2. *More Officials.* The Local Government Board, as Central Authority, should be strengthened by an increase of its executive powers, and an increase in its membership and staff (p. 347).

3. *Landlord Restrictions.* Building conditions and restrictions should be eliminated from feu charters, and that it should be the duty of the local authority to compile a register of such conditions and restrictions as they may consider appropriate to their building areas, both developed and undeveloped, within their administrative boundaries (p. 234).

4. *To Establish Popular Land Rights* (sic). The law should be amended, to provide that an heir of entail in possession may, or if required by public authorities shall, sell or feu to such public authorities at a price to be fixed by an arbiter, land required by them for purposes connected with housing (p. 231).

5. *Basis of land prices bought or feued by Local Authorities.* In arbitrations, valuations made under the Finance (1909-10) Act, 1910, be held as *prima facie* evidence of the value, but that it should be open to either party to adduce proof of their inaccuracy or of a change of circumstances since the date of the valuation. In the case of one of the parties claiming that the Government valuation should be disturbed, and failing to establish that to the satisfaction of the arbiter, that party should pay the costs of the arbitration (p. 265).

6. *Rating Reform.* It is worthy of consideration whether a system could be evolved whereby the smaller working-class houses could not be relieved to some extent of the disproportionately heavy burden which falls upon them in the matter of rating. New houses, certainly houses for the working classes, should not be rated till they are actually occupied (p. 298).

The evidence produced by the Commission pointed to something very different from this stop-gap legislation, at once reactionary, inadequate and ridiculous. The patent facts, so eloquently revealed in the chapters on the cost of land, arbitration expenses and the plunder of the public, are left to speak for themselves. It is as if they had been published to be forgotten or ignored. Nor is there any comment or expression of opinion upon the incidence of taxation on building, save that it is a subject with which the Commission are "not called on to deal." They shelter behind the Departmental Committee on Local Taxation, the majority of which (as is known) has rejected the proposal to transfer rates from improvements to the value of land. Their indifference to that reform, after having supported it by a wealth of fact and argument, is the outstanding feature of the Report.

The condemnation is justifiable. Here is a Report which throws a fierce light on the unhappy lot of those who are living in poverty no matter how hard they work, who build houses they cannot inhabit, and produce things they cannot possess. The causes of and the remedy for this deprivation were the subjects to be rigorously pursued and courageously stated. Unfortunately and despite the significant admission (p. 230) that "the mass of the people have no rights either to housing or protection, or even to the possession of any area sufficient to stand upon," the enquiry has been conducted on a quite different plane. It has treated the alleged "problem" of housing as something which can be and in fact ought to be separated from the real inability of low wages to procure a sufficiency of anything whether it be houses or clothes or food. The tone throughout is that poverty must be taken for granted, that reform can only soften its effects and assuage its sufferings: the subject is faced as one to find houses for those who, because they are members of the "working classes," are necessarily unable to provide for themselves. An investigation so started and based on that fatal and baffling enigma leads naturally to the conclusion that there must be further humiliation in public charity and regimentation, that private enterprise is impotent, that the only course is to dole out taxpayers' money, increase the army of petty officials and strengthen their powers of inspection, supervision and control.

No doubt the difficulty of obtaining the ground on which to build houses is acknowledged, but the landowner is to be "controlled" too, much in the same way as food prices are controlled after the maximum has been fixed. The land rights of the people are to be established by purchase from the landowner on the basis of the Finance Act Valuation, which is itself a register of monopoly price bearing no relation whatever to the value on which the owner is assessed. Or at best the right of the people to the land is to be asserted by altering the law of entail!

With much else that the Commission discusses we cannot deal at the moment, but the Report should not be dismissed without emphasising as strongly as we can the contrast between the insufficient remedies proposed and the blame laid at the door of land speculation. The Commissioners are as timid in respect of the former as they are emphatic in respect of the latter. "Land," they say, "is in many ways the most important factor in housing. Without a plentiful supply of cheap land and easy access to it, house-dwellers cannot get sufficient space, nor water, nor sunshine; they cannot even get sufficient air" (p. 226). "The high feuing rates which have been in the past paid for building land undoubtedly influence owners of land in the direction of holding up land until they can obtain those high prices—and that without particular regard as to whether or not their land is as ripe for building as the land for which these high prices were paid. The result frequently is that the owner of the ground waits till the requirements of the community

becomes so urgent that he is able to exact his own price for land" (p. 235). And again, "We advance very definite views on the relation of land to housing. The question of the land is fundamental. If nothing is done to make it possible either for individuals or for public authorities to obtain building land at more reasonable prices than hitherto, housing reform will be paralysed at the outset" (p. 347).

The Commissioners review the returns they have obtained of the feuing rates in 115 Scottish burghs, and after quoting many particular examples give the following summary:

In sixty-eight burghs with a population below 5000 the feuing rates range from about four or five times to about thirty to thirty-five times the agricultural value.

In the case of eighteen burghs with populations between 5000 and 10,000 the feuing rates range from about six to nine (in five cases) and from ten to twenty times the agricultural value.

In the case of the twenty burghs between 10,000 and 25,000, the feuing rates vary between five and six times the agricultural value, up to twenty to forty times the agricultural value in the case of Rutherglen, and twenty to fifty times the agricultural value in the case of Port-Glasgow.

In the case of nine burghs between 25,000 and 50,000, the feuing rates vary from about seven to twenty times the agricultural value in the case of Dunfermline, to about twenty to twenty-five times in the case of Hamilton, and in the extreme case of Clydebank from ten up to about seventy-five times.

Calculations similar to those given for the burghs under 50,000 could be made for each of the seven large cities where the majority of the working classes reside. In Dundee, a very usual rate of working-class houses is £80 to £120, and it has been as high as £400 per acre per annum. In Glasgow, the prevailing rates are from £200 to £300 per acre per annum, and sometimes go much higher. In Edinburgh, the prevailing rates have been £150, £200, to £300, and, in many instances, much higher—even up to £656 per acre per annum; the agricultural value has been multiplied by hundreds and the excess over agricultural values represents many thousands per cent.

What is the plain inference from these facts? The outstanding circumstance does not lie merely in the high prices charged and got by owners, but in the anomaly of the difference between the price obtainable for land for building purposes and the previous agricultural value. Here lies the explanation of the power of monopoly to hold land from use, bring industry to a standstill, and convert what should be a fair city into a "clotted mass of slums." Reaping a value he has not created, the landowner exacts his tribute when the pressure has reached breaking-point. The ring of land monopoly around each village, town and city is made and maintained by a system of taxation constituting an injustice that must be overthrown. The Commission do not even whisper the natural and obvious remedy of ending the exemption enjoyed by

the owners of under-used and idle land and of freeing buildings from the taxation that acts like a tariff on their construction. Its only contribution to the rating question is the solitary and singular recommendation, unsupported by any argument, that certain houses should be exempt from rating *until occupied*, which is precisely what happens now, and it often proves a very convenient arrangement for the speculative builder. It means that for the time being the land on which the house is built is treated like vacant land—exempt from all taxation—and as soon as it is used it is taxed.

If that is to be taken as the considered view of the Commissioners it is perhaps after all as well that the subject was not further pursued. Their service has been in acting as witnesses bringing evidence which, if we mistake not, will be used with effect in all parts of a landlord-ridden country. It is for the public to pronounce the verdict on the strength of such testimony, and action, we are certain, will be no such travesty of a "solution" of the housing question as the Commission has seen fit to propose.

A. W. M.

EXAMPLES OF HIGH-PRICED LAND

In a detailed statement furnished by the City Engineer (Edinburgh), there are two instances of working-class tenements, viz., North Merchiston, with a feu-duty of £150 to £200 per acre per annum. These may be contrasted with certain villa rates given in the statement, viz., £50 per acre per annum for Fettes and Cluny Estates, and £80 per acre per annum for Murrayfield Estate. . . . Mr. Roxburgh, a member of the Executive of the Edinburgh Branch of the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association, stated that the feuing rates for tenements range from £100 to £250 per acre per annum. Mr. Roxburgh's view as to what a reasonable rate (to permit of decent housing) is found in his evidence. He says:—

The price of land is a very important thing. There are a number of people who say it is not important, but I think in Scotland the price of land is the important thing at present. Of course if you are dealing with land at an annual feu-duty of £5 per annum there is no difficulty but even the increase from £5 to £10 makes the difference in a big scheme for housing paying or not paying. When the extra feu-duty is capitalised, supposing you are taking 300 acres, it runs up to £30,000, or something of that sort additional, so that the question of land is really important, even at a small feu-duty, if you are dealing with any large scheme.

Mr. Roxburgh quoted Mr. Vivian of the Co-partnership Tenants, Limited, as stating that he could not do a scheme on the English cottage system at a ground rent of £25 a year unless he had a frontage to a street, where he would get very large ground rents for shops. These figures may be contrasted with the enormous ground rents actually charged in all our large towns which have been quoted throughout this chapter.—*From the Report of the Scottish Housing Commission.*

A STRING OF PEARLS

"The Earth hath He given to the children of men."—Ps. cxv. 16.

"The Land shall not be sold for ever: for the Land is Mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with Me."—Levit. xxv. 23.

Our Mother-land

"The Land is Mother of us all; nourishes, shelters, gladdens, lovingly enriches us all; in how many ways, from our first wakening to our last sleep on her blessed mother-bosom, does she, as with blessed mother-arms, enfold us all!"—Thomas Carlyle: "Past and Present," iii. 8.

"Selling" Land

"Men talk of 'selling' Land. Land, it is true, like Epic Poems and even higher things, in such a trading world, has to be presented in the market for what it will bring, and as we say be 'sold': but the notion of 'selling,' for certain bits of metal, the Iliad of Homer, how much more the land of the World-Creator, is a ridiculous impossibility! We buy what is saleable of it; nothing more was ever buyable. Who can or could sell it to us? Properly speaking, the Land belongs to these two: To the Almighty God; and to all His Children of Men. . . . No generation of men can or could, with never such solemnity and effort, sell Land on any other principle; it is not the property of any generation, we say, but that of all the past generations that have worked on it, and of all the future ones that shall work on it."—Thomas Carlyle: "Past and Present," iii. 8.

The Bottom Question

"This land question is the bottom question. Man is a land animal."—Henry George: Speeches and Addresses; "The Crime of Poverty."

The Herd of Cows

"Certain persons have driven a herd of cows, on whose milk they live, into an enclosure. The cows have eaten and trampled the forage, they have chewed each others' tails, and they low and moan, seeking to get out. But the very men who live on the milk of these cows have set around the enclosure plantations of mint, they have cultivated flowers, laid out a race-course, a park, and a lawn tennis ground, and they do not let out the cows lest they should spoil these arrangements. . . . The cows get thin. Then the men think that the cows may cease to yield milk, and they invent various means for improving the condition of the cows. They build sheds over them, they gild their horns, they alter the hour of milking, they concern themselves with the treatment of old and invalid cows . . . but they will not do the one thing needful, which is to remove the barrier and let the cows have access to the pasture."—Leo Tolstoi: "A Great Iniquity."

The Mythic Earth-tree

"Man is an animal; but he is an animal plus something else. He is the mythic earth tree, whose roots

are in the ground, but whose topmost branches may blossom in the heavens!"—Henry George: "Progress and Poverty," ii. 3.

"Two Blades of Grass"

"He gave it for his opinion, 'That whoever could make two ears of corn, or two blades of grass, to grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before, would deserve better of mankind, and do more essential service to his country, than the whole race of politicians put together.'"—Swift: "Gulliver's Travels," ii. 7.

For Whose Benefit?

"Supposing . . . that for every blade of grass that now grows two should spring up, and the seed that now increases fiftyfold should increase a hundredfold! Would poverty be abated or want relieved? Manifestly no! Whatever benefit would accrue would be but temporary. The new powers streaming through the material universe could only be utilised through land. And land, being private property, the classes that now monopolise the bounty of the Creator would monopolise all the new bounty. Landowners would alone be benefited. Rents would increase, but wages would still tend to the starvation point!"—Henry George: "Progress and Poverty," x. 5.

The Well-provisioned Ship

"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 opened are permitted to say, 'This is mine!'"—Henry George: "Progress and Poverty," iv. 2.

"The Treasure House"

"We desire to develop our undeveloped estates in this country—to colonise our own country—to give the farmer greater freedom and greater security in the exercise of his business—to secure a home and a career for the labourer, who is now in many cases cut off from the soil. We wish to make the land less of a pleasure ground for the rich and more of a treasure-house for the nation."—Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, at the Albert Hall, 21st Dec., 1905.

Employment and Self-employment

"Political economists have insisted much on the small matters that affect the value of labour. By far the most important is the mode in which the land is distributed. Wherever there is a free soil, labour maintains its value. . . . If men could get the land to labour on, they would manufacture only for a remuneration that afforded more profit than God has attached to the cultivation of the earth. Where they cannot get the land to labour on, they are starved into working for a bare subsistence."—P. E. Dove: "Theory of Human Progression," p. 406.

Why Wages are Low

"Why is it that men have to work for such low wages? Because if they were to demand higher wages, there are plenty of unemployed men ready to step into their places. It is this mass of unemployed men who compel that fierce competition that drives wages down to the point of bare subsistence. Why is it that there are men who cannot find employment? Did you ever think what a strange thing it is that men cannot find employment? Adam had no difficulty in finding employment, neither had Robinson Crusoe; the finding of employment was the last thing that troubled them. If men cannot find an employer, why cannot they employ themselves? Simply because they are shut out from the element on which human labour can alone be exerted. Men are compelled to compete with each other for the wages of an employer, because they have been robbed of the natural opportunities of employing themselves; because they cannot find a piece of God's world on which to work without paying some other human creature for the privilege."—Henry George: *Speeches and Addresses, "The Crime of Poverty."*

An Early Statement

"The earth, in its natural state, is capable of supporting but a small number of inhabitants, compared with what it is capable of doing in a cultivated state. And as it is impossible to separate the improvement made by cultivation from the earth itself upon which that improvement is made, the idea of landed property arose from that inseparable connection; but it is nevertheless true that it is the value of the improvement only, and not the earth itself, that is individual property. Every proprietor, therefore, of cultivated land owes to the community a ground-rent, for I know no better term to express the idea by, for the land which he holds."—Thomas Paine: *"Agrarian Justice"* (1796).

"Improvements"

"You have turned over the soil to a few inches in depth with a spade or a plough; you have scattered over this prepared surface a few seeds; and you have gathered the fruits which the sun, rain and air helped the soil to produce. Just tell me, if you please, by what magic have these acts made you sole owner of that vast mass of matter, having for its base the surface of your estate, and for its apex the centre of the globe? . . . You say truly, when you say that 'whilst they were unreclaimed these lands belonged to all men.' And it is my duty to tell you that they belong to all men still, and that your 'improvements' as you call them, cannot vitiate the claims of all men. You may plough and harrow, and sow and reap, you may turn over the soil as often as you like; but all your manipulations will fail to make that soil yours, which was not yours to begin with. . . . This extra worth which your labour has imparted to it is fairly yours; . . . but admitting this, is quite a different thing from recognising your right to the land itself."—Herbert Spencer: *"Social Statics,"* 1851 ed., ix. 4.

Nature of Land Value

"The rent of any one portion of soil does not depend on the labour or capital that has been expended on that portion. . . . For instance, if, in the heart of London, a space of twenty acres had been enclosed by a high wall at the time of the Norman Conquest, and if no man had ever touched that portion of soil, or even seen it from that time to this, it would, if let by auction, produce an enormously high rent."—P. E. Dove: *"Elements of Political Science,"* p. 283.

The Twin Principles

"Here are two principles, both of which are self-evident:

"I. That all men have equal rights to the use and enjoyment of the elements provided by Nature.

"II. That each man has an exclusive right to the use and enjoyment of what is produced by his own labour.

"There is no conflict between these principles. On the contrary, they are correlative. To fully secure the individual right of property in the produce of labour, we must treat the elements of Nature as common property."—Henry George: *"Protection and Free Trade,"* ch. 26.

A True Policy

"We would simply take for the community what belongs to the community, the value that attaches to the land by the growth of the community; leave sacred to the individual all that belongs to the individual; and, treating necessary monopolies as functions of the State, abolish all restrictions and prohibitions save those required for public health, safety, morals, and convenience."—Henry George: *"Condition of Labour,"* iii.

Cumulative Effects

"To abolish the taxation which, acting and reacting, now hampers every wheel of exchange and presses upon every form of industry, would be like removing an immense weight from a powerful spring. . . . And to shift the burden of taxation from production and exchange to the value or rent of land would be not merely to give new stimulus to the production of wealth, it would be to open up new opportunities. For under this system no one would care to hold land unless to use it, and land now withheld from use would everywhere be thrown open to improvement."—Henry George: *"Progress and Poverty,"* ix. 1.

The Island

"Place one hundred men on an island from which there is no escape, and whether you make one of these men the absolute owner of the other ninety-nine, or the absolute owner of the soil of the island, will make no difference either to him or to them.

"In the one case, as the other, the one will be the absolute master of the ninety-nine—his power extending even to life and death, for simply to refuse them

permission to live upon the island would be to force them into the sea.

"Upon a larger scale, and through more complex relations, the same cause must operate in the same way and to the same end—the ultimate result, the enslavement of labourers, becoming apparent just as the pressure increases which compels them to live on and from land which is treated as the exclusive property of others. Take a country in which the soil is divided among a number of proprietors, instead of being in the hands of one, and in which, as in modern production, the capitalist has been specialised from the labourer, and manufactures and exchange, in all their many branches, have been separated from agriculture. Though less direct and obvious, the relations between the owners of the soil and the labourers will, with increase of population and the improvement of the arts, tend to the same absolute mastery on the one hand, and the same abject helplessness on the other, as in the case of the island we have supposed. . . . Just as removal to cheaper land becomes difficult or impossible, labourers, no matter what they produce, will be reduced to a bare living, and the free competition among them, where land is monopolised, will force them to a condition which, though they may be mocked with the titles and insignia of freedom, will be virtually that of slavery."—Henry George: "Progress and Poverty," vii. 2.

Wealth and the Sources of Wealth

"It is not in the relations of capital and labour; it is not in the pressure of population against subsistence that an explanation of the unequal development of our civilisation is to be found. The great cause of inequality in the distribution of wealth is inequality in the ownership of land. The ownership of land is the great fundamental fact which ultimately determines the social, the political, and consequently the intellectual and moral condition of a people. And it must be so. For land is the habitation of man, the storehouse upon which he must draw for all his needs, the material to which his labour must be applied for the supply of all his desires; for even the products of the sea cannot be taken, the light of the sun enjoyed, or any of the forces of nature utilised, without the use of land or its products. On the land we are born, from it we live, to it we return again—children of the soil as truly as is the blade of grass or the flower of the field. Take away from man all that belongs to land, and he is but a disembodied spirit. Material progress cannot rid us of our dependence upon land; it can but add to the power of producing wealth from land; and hence, when land is monopolised, it might go on to infinity without increasing wages or improving the condition of those who have but their labour. It can but add to the value of land and the power which its possession gives.

"Everywhere, in all times, among all peoples, the possession of land is the base of aristocracy, the foundation of great fortunes, the source of power. As said the Brahmins, ages ago: 'To whomsoever the soil at any time belongs, to him belong the fruits of it. White parasols and elephants mad with pride are the flowers

of a grant of land.'"—Henry George: "Progress and Poverty," v. 2.

Security of Improvements

"What is necessary for the use of land is not its private ownership, but the security of improvements. It is not necessary to say to a man, 'This land is yours,' in order to induce him to cultivate or improve it. It is only necessary to say to him, 'Whatever your labour or capital produces on this land shall be yours.' Give a man security that he may reap, and he will sow; assure him of the possession of the house he wants to build, and he will build it. These are the natural rewards of labour. It is for the sake of the reaping that men sow; it is for the sake of possessing houses that men build. The ownership of land has nothing to do with it."—Henry George: "Progress and Poverty," viii. 1.

Dictates of Equity

"It may by and by be perceived that Equity utters dictates to which we have not yet listened; and men may then learn that to deprive others of their rights to the use of the earth, is to commit a crime inferior only in wickedness to the crime of taking away their lives or personal liberties."—Herbert Spencer, "Social Statics," 1851 ed., ix. 9.

J. D. W.

THE NEW LABOUR PARTY CONSTITUTION

Election Plans

The draft of the new constitution of the Labour Party will be published this week. It is designed to meet the needs of the new electorate, and especially of the 6,000,000 women voters to be created by the Reform Bill, and to broaden the basis of the party by including producers "by hand or by brain."

With this constitution in their hands, the Labour Party organisers, with Mr. Arthur Henderson at their head, are already laying ambitious plans for the next General Election. Eighty candidates have already been approved. Many more have been put forward, with financial guarantees by trade unions and Socialist societies, and, although no figure has yet been fixed, the number may run to 300 or more. Local Labour parties are being created in constituencies in which they have been unknown hitherto. Serious attention is being paid for the first time to rural areas. And when the new constitution has been approved by the Nottingham Conference, special efforts will be made to secure candidates from the new class of individually enrolled "producers by brain." The party organisers declare that they are receiving support from widely different and unexpected quarters for their new scheme. They expect to obtain much greater support from the co-operative movement than before. But, clearly, they have most to gain from the disappointed left wing of the old Liberal Party, and they have the inestimable advantage of being first in the field with plans for the new political era.—*The "Times," November 27th.*

NEWS OF THE MOVEMENT

ENGLISH LEAGUE

376 and 377, Strand, London, W.C.2

FREDK. VERINDER, General Secretary

A Happy New Year to the Members and friends of the English League and of its sister-Leagues at home and abroad.

The January Quarterly Meeting will be held on Saturday, January 12th, at 3 p.m., in the Conference Hall of the (Wesleyan) Central Hall, Westminster. The chair will be taken by Alderman P. Wilson Raffan, M.P., C.C., President, and the subject for discussion will be "Women's Interest in the Land Question." The General Secretary, by request of the Executive, will open, and among the other speakers will be Mrs. R. L. Outhwaite and the Hon. Ethel Wedgwood. The meeting will be open to all members and friends of the League, but it is asked that a special effort be made to secure the attendance of as many women as possible. Collection towards expenses. Literature will be on sale at the meeting.

The new leaflet, "Allotments: in War Time and After," in the form of a small 8-page booklet, is going well. Any reader of LAND VALUES who can give any help, directly or indirectly, in getting copies into the hands of allotment-holders should kindly communicate with the General Secretary.

The following Resolution was passed by the Executive at its December meeting:—

This Executive vigorously protests against the recent action of the Government in ordering raids upon the offices of organisations and upon private houses, and in seizing papers and printed matter (including such publications as John Stuart Mill's "Liberty" and pamphlets on the Taxation of Land Values). The Executive further protests against the evident intention of the Government, under cover of an attempt to suppress pacifist propaganda, to fetter criticism of its policy by means of Regulations under the Defence of the Realm Act; and calls upon the Government to discontinue these attacks upon the liberty of the citizen.

The Spanish League (LIGA ESPAÑOLA PARA EL IMPUESTO UNICO) has paid the General Secretary the compliment, which he most highly appreciates, of electing him one of its Vice-Presidents; an honour which he now shares with another Member of the English League, Captain Mervyn Stewart. On behalf of the English League, the General Secretary congratulates the Spanish League, and its distinguished President, Señor Antonio Albendin, on the splendid fight for our common cause which they are maintaining under circumstances of special difficulty, and hopes that an early restoration of Peace, at home and abroad, may soon enable our Spanish colleagues to reap the reward of their arduous and unceasing labours.

A Spanish member of the English League recently renewed his subscription with an apology for some delay in forwarding it. "I have been imprisoned for a month," he added, "charged, as many other persons of a radical signification, of a supposed participation in the political troubles in August-September last." It is not only in the belligerent countries that the War has resulted in the restriction of public liberties.

The General Secretary has heard with great regret that Lieut. W. E. Allen, R.F., formerly junior clerk in the League Office, was severely wounded in one of the recent advances, and that one of his legs has been amputated above the knee. Deep sympathy will be felt with Mrs. Allen, and with the Rev. Stewart D. Headlam, L.C.C., one of the founders of the League and for many years

its Hon. Treasurer, who has been informed of the death of Gunner G. H. Headlam, his nephew and ward, in France.

An article by the General Secretary, on "Taxation of Land Values," will appear at an early date in the HERALD OF THE STAR (Theosophist), which proposes to devote a special issue to the Land Question.

A Conference, convened by the Land Nationalisation Society, was held in a Committee Room of the House of Commons on November 26th, to consider "the appointment of a deputation to the Government to urge the vital importance of more stringent action in regard to the acquisition of land for the production of food." Mr. Baillie-Weaver, who presided, suggested that the Government should issue "floods of circulars," get Committees formed everywhere, send out missionaries, &c. Later in the discussion, Mr. Verinder protested against the general tone of the speeches, all in favour of Government interference, and called attention to the admitted failure of Government action in the matter of potatoes, tea, sugar, and many other things. He suggested that the deputation should remind the Prime Minister that he was already committed to the view that the best way to get land used was to value it and to tax it on its value. Dr. Dundas White, M.P., specially desired to be associated with this protest. The President of the League was unable to be present at the Conference, owing to its date having been changed at the last moment while he was absent from London.

Mr. J. A. Marshall (a member of the League's Executive) has been co-opted to the Town Council of Kingston-on-Thames, to fill a vacancy.

The General Secretary lectured to the Hammersmith Branch of the I.L.P., on December 7th, on "The Land for the People."

Mr. H. J. Bullivant (of the League Executive) spoke at the United Free Methodist Church, Catford, on Sunday, December 30th, on Taxation of Land Values. The Catford Allotment Association, promoted by Mr. Bullivant, has secured an additional three acres of land for food production.

The President of the League had an article on the Housing Question in REYNOLDS'S NEWSPAPER on Sunday, December 16th. Part of the article, with a portrait of Mr. Raffan, was reproduced in the SUNDAY EVENING TELEGRAM of the same date.

The Kingston-on-Thames Branch of the League will resume its weekly meetings after the Christmas holidays in the Fife Hall, Fife Road, on Wednesdays at 8 p.m. The speakers and subjects will be as follow:—

- Jan. 9.—Dr. R. E. Pearson, "Who are the Workers?"
- " 16.—Mr. H. T. Weeks, "The impregnable basis for the acquisition of Land Values by the Government."
- " 23.—Mr. M. Warriner, "How not to do it: in the United States."
- " 30.—Mr. J. E. Grant, "Making the World safe for Democracy."

The following meetings will also be held in January:—

- Mon. 7.—Harlesden Liberal Association, Green's Coffee Rooms, 49, Station Road, Willesden Junction: Fredk. Verinder, "Land, Labour and Taxation after the War."
- Fri. 11.—Enfield Women's Liberal Association, Christ Church Parlour, Chase Side: Fredk. Verinder. 2.30 p.m.
- Sat. 12.—Quarterly meeting of Central Council, Central Hall: 2.30, followed by Public Meeting and Discussion at 3 (see above).
- Mon. 14.—Executive. 7 p.m.
- Tu. 15.—Wood Green Women's Co-operative Guild, Congregational Church Hall, Lordship Lane: Fredk. Verinder, "Our Daily Bread." 2.30 p.m.

MIDLAND LEAGUE

20, Cannon Street, Birmingham

CHAPMAN WRIGHT, Secretary

Acting on the suggestion of Mr. S. W. Challen, and supported by his very generous help, the League has commenced an advertising campaign. The first of the following advertisements has been inserted several times in the "Public Notices" of a Birmingham paper with a large circulation, and many replies have resulted in our being brought in touch with ratepayers who are interested and should give us their support.

The second advertisement appears in ONE AND ALL, the organ of the Adult School Movement. Half a page has been secured for twelve months, and our notices should appeal to a large body of intelligent citizens who are specially interested in securing "just social conditions" for all men.

Since the last report the Secretary has addressed meetings as follows:—

- Nov. 8.—Harborne Liberals. "No Import Duties."
 „ 18.—Birmingham Labour Church. "Capital: Now and under Just Conditions."
 „ 25.—Labour Church, Dudley Road. "The Next Great Reform."

TO BIRMINGHAM RATEPAYERS.

YOUR RATES FOR THE CURRENT YEAR ARE 10s. IN THE £ ON YOUR HOUSE OR BUSINESS PREMISES. SYDNEY, N.S.W., RATES ON SIMILAR PROPERTIES ARE *nil*.

WHY ?

BOTH CITIES ARE PRACTICALLY EQUAL IN POPULATION AND GOVERNMENT.
 SEND FOR LEAFLET, "A TALE OF TWO CITIES," AND READ HOW IT IS DONE.

POST FREE FROM THE

MIDLAND LAND VALUES LEAGUE,

20, CANNON STREET, BIRMINGHAM.

AS A READER OF "ONE AND ALL" YOU MUST BE INTERESTED IN SECURING

JUST SOCIAL CONDITIONS FOR ALL.

"LAND VALUES" is the monthly journal which deals with the fundamental CAUSE of unjust Social Conditions AND THE REMEDY.

For free copy of "LAND VALUES" and Leaflets send your name and address to CHAPMAN WRIGHT, Secretary, Midland Land Values League, 20, CANNON STREET, BIRMINGHAM.

A Birmingham correspondent writes:

Mr. C. H. Smithson (President of the Yorkshire League) addressed a very representative meeting of workers on the progressive side of politics here, December 13th. I never heard Mr. Smithson in better form, and at the close of his excellent address he received a splendid ovation. His answers to some questions raised were most convincing. Everyone present enjoyed the evening, and I only wish the proceedings could have been fully reported.

YORKSHIRE AND NORTHERN LAND VALUES LEAGUE

71, North Street, Keighley

F. SKIRROW, Secretary.

Meetings have been held as follows:—

- Friday, Nov. 23rd.—The Chairman (Mr. Smithson) and the Secretary addressed a body of representative working men at the Elsecar Working Men's Club, and on Saturday evening met members of the Trades and Labour Council for that district.
 Friday, Nov. 30th.—The Chairman and the Secretary addressed the Castleford Trades and Labour Council.
 Friday, Dec. 7th.—Mr. Fred. Adams addressed the Young Men's Guild, Penistone.
 Sunday, Dec. 9th.—The Secretary addressed members of Thorpes Working Men's Club.

The Secretary has also addressed half-a-dozen meetings in South Wales between December 13th and 21st.

Members and friends of the League are requested to make a note of the fact that a General Meeting will be held in the "Henry George" Room, at the house of Mr. Smithson, "Tentercroft," Saville Road, Halifax, on Saturday, February 2nd. Commander J. C. Wedgwood has promised to attend and address the meeting. Time of meeting will be announced in next issue of LAND VALUES.

MANCHESTER LEAGUE

5, Cross Street, Manchester

GEORGE WRIGHT, Hon. Secretary

At a recent meeting of the Allotment-Holders in Manchester and District, held in the Milton Hall, the discussion turned on the value of allotments and the need for security of tenure. One speaker said that in Salford alone enough food had been produced on allotments to feed 3,000 persons for five months. Another speaker stated that he had to dismantle £250 worth of glass because he would not renew a lease at three times the amount of rent he had been paying previously, and, he added, in the absence of better means of marketing the produce, he had to sell his tomatoes at 1s. 9d. a dozen pounds while adjoining shops were offering them at 5s. 6d.

Here is a glaring instance of allotment holders being penalised for responding to the urgent appeal to help the nation in its extremity by producing food. At Nottingham on December 9th Mr. Prothero, the Minister for Agriculture, appealed to farmers to go over the top and show in their attack on the land the same endurance and sacrifice as their brothers had shown on the Western Front. He said:—

The message he wished to bring was that war or no war, submarine menace or no submarine menace, whether the victory was won or the war prolonged, the world was going to be short of food in 1918 and for some time afterwards, and peace was not going to relieve the difficulty. It might even increase it.

There were difficulties ahead, but never before had nations been so united as now, and it was with this spirit we could hope to solve the tremendous problem of hunger.

Would the farmers do their utmost to avert the unspeakable calamity of hunger?

If production is to be increased to the extent that is necessary, in addition to "attacking the land," both allotment-holders and farmers will have to attack the land system which gives the owners the power to penalise their tenants and rob them of a large portion of the fruits of their labour. If a substantial tax were put upon the value of all the land, whether used or not, it would be to the interest of the landowners to offer their land at fair terms and to give security of tenure.

The Land Values Conference, which it was proposed to hold in Manchester in January, has had to be postponed until the spring. We hope friends will not be unduly disappointed.

Members and friends are asked to note that Mr. Outhwaite's new book, *THE LAND OR REVOLUTION* (1s.), and also the new pamphlet by Mr. Lester, *A WORKER'S QUESTION* (1d.), are now on sale at the office. No better work for the cause can be done at this time than by getting a wide circulation for these new publications, and offers of assistance, either financial or otherwise, will be gladly received. *THE LAND OR REVOLUTION* will make an ideal New Year gift.

DARLINGTON LEAGUE

Post Office Chambers, Northgate, Darlington

C. NEWRICK, Hon. Secretary

The Darlington League has issued a new leaflet entitled "The Taxation of Land Values: what it is, what it would do, and what it would undo." The leaflet is a brief exposition of first principles and what would result from their application, and has been drawn up and set to type in a manner calculated to draw the attention and stimulate the curiosity of the most casual reader.

A public meeting was held at Shildon on December 15th. The speakers billed were Mr. J. A. Newrick and Mr. S. Hardwick, J.P., with Mr. T. Brown in the chair.

Mr. S. Hardwick was, however, unable to appear owing to illness, and his place was filled by the Secretary.

The Chairman opened the meeting in a manner which showed he had an unusually good grasp of our policy, and he made an earnest appeal to the audience to study the taxation of land values and work for it actively and financially.

He was followed by Mr. J. A. Newrick, who in an hour's speech demonstrated the necessity for attacking and overthrowing land monopoly before any real social progress can be made.

The Secretary then dealt with a few of the objections generally raised to the taxation of land values.

The audience, although smaller than we hoped for, was keenly interested, and the interest was sustained for over two hours, much literature being sold at the close.

The Darlington Branch of the Railway Clerks' Association are proposing to hold a series of Educational Classes next year, and have invited our League to provide the first speaker.

NEW LEAFLET

Issued by the Darlington League

THE TAXATION OF LAND VALUES

(1) What it is. (2) What it would do. (3) What it would undo.

WHAT IT IS.

By the Taxation of Land Values we mean, that the unimproved value of land, *i.e.*, that part of the value which is not due to the efforts of the occupier but exists because of the presence and activities of the community, shall be taken in taxation for the benefit of the community.

It is that policy of taxation which gives effect to the principle that the land is the common property of the whole people. It is obviously out of the question to recognise the claim of the people to the land by dividing it up into so much land for each person; the Taxation of Land Values achieves the same object by turning the whole value into the National Exchequer, to be used for the benefit of all—in other words, the Taxation of Land Values means the "Nationalisation of Land Values."

WHAT IT WOULD DO.

(1) It would secure that the land, as placed by the Creator for the benefit of all His children, would be enjoyed equally by all.

(2) It would secure that the value added to land by the presence and industry of the whole community, would be used for the benefit of the community.

(3) It would make it impossible for landlords to keep desired land idle, as they would be annually taxed on its value, whether used or unused.

(4) By bringing the idle land into the market for the benefit of those who would use it, and by so increasing the available supply, land would be cheapened.

(5) By driving all unused and partly used land into the best use, the opportunities of employment would be so increased that there would be competition amongst employers for men, and no man need consent to work for an employer unless guaranteed the full produce of his labour.

(6) The cheapening of land resulting from increased available supply, would remove the greatest obstacle to housing reform, which is the price of land.

(7) The power of the landlord to charge what he likes for permission to work on the land would no longer exist, because the increase of the supply of available land would bring rents down to a just basis, and even those rents would, under the Taxation of Land Values, find their way into the communal purse.

WHAT IT WOULD UNDO.

(1) It would put an end to many of the injustices of our present method of raising revenue which places burdens on the thrift and industry of the community.

(2) It would make it possible to remove the taxes that are at present levied on improvements in land and property, which constitute a fine on industry and a discouragement of all enterprise.

(3) It would make it unnecessary to levy the present-day taxes on houses, foodstuffs, and articles of every-day necessity, which bear so hardly on the poorer section of the community.

(4) It would abolish all taxes of a "protective" nature which constitute a hindrance to international trade, *i.e.*, the free exchange of goods between the different nations of the world, recognising that freedom, both of production and exchange, is essential to the economic freedom of the worker.

(5) IT WOULD BREAK LAND MONOPOLY, WHICH IS THE MOTHER OF ALL MONOPOLIES, AND PAVE THE WAY FOR THE FULL EMANCIPATION OF DEMOCRACY.

If, after reading this pamphlet, you desire to associate yourself with those who have banded themselves together to promote the Cause of Individual and Social Justice, you are earnestly invited to join the Darlington Taxation of Land Values League. The Hon. Secretary, Mr. C. Newrick, Post Office Chambers, 87, Northgate, Darlington, will be glad, on receipt of a post card, to enrol you in membership with the League, membership of which is open to all who approve of the objects of the League, on payment of One Shilling and upwards annually to its funds.

The Monthly Paper of the League "Land Values," is posted to all members who pay an Annual Subscription of 3/- or upwards.

SCOTTISH LEAGUE

67, West Nile Street
JAS. BUSBY, Secretary

The Memorandum issued by the League on the Report of the Scottish Housing Commission is receiving a fair amount of attention from the 993 Trade Unions and Town Councils it was sent to. A number of Burgh

Councils have replied stating that the Memorandum and synopsis will be considered in due course. Others have asked for copies to be sent to their members, while one (Dumbarton) has passed a resolution in favour of the "taxation of land values as a means of acquiring land for housing." The Memorandum was also sent to all the Scottish Members of Parliament, and to the Scottish Press. Considering the very large curtailment of space the reports have been satisfactory. In view of the fact that the bulk of the bodies circularised will not deal with the matter at their first meeting the results to date are very satisfactory indeed.

At the great Co-operative Conference in October in London "to record its indignation at the contempt with which the Prime Minister has treated British Co-operators," Mr. James Deans (Scottish section) moved a comprehensive resolution of 11 clauses embodying the political policy of the movement; Clause 5 reads: "The abolition of all taxes on foodstuffs to be replaced by the taxation of land values and the further increase of income-tax and death duties upon large incomes and estates." This is a sign of the times.

The Friday evening meetings of the members and friends have been well attended during the past four weeks. The subjects under review were: "The Individual and the State" and that never-failing provider of keen argument, the "Interest" question. Mr. Alex. M. Little and Mr. William Reid opened on November 30th and December 7th on the first topic, and on December 14th Mr. Chas. E. Collier discussed some new aspects of the second. The discussions, especially on the "Individual and the State," were animated and interesting.

Under the auspices of the Cathcart Co-operative Society, Ltd., Mr. A. B. Mackay gave a lecture on the above subject in the Co-operative Hall, to a well-attended meeting, on Monday evening, Dec. 10th.

Mr. Mackay gave an excellent elucidation of the principles of land values as applied to co-operation in building and food production.

This is the first lecture on this subject that members of this Society have had, and the lecturer succeeded in creating an interest in land values which was hitherto unknown to the members. In the discussion that ensued the various speakers heartily endorsed the lecturer's claim in all that land values stands for. An important result of the meeting was that one of the delegates from a neighbouring Society invited Mr. Mackay to repeat his lecture to their Society.

SCOTTISH LIBERALS AND HOUSING

Scottish Liberals considered, on Tuesday, 18th December, in the House of Commons, the housing problem on the report of their sub-committee which dealt with the report of the Royal Commission on Housing. It was agreed that immediate emergency legislation is called for to remedy in part the evils described, and that representations should be made to the Government in this sense. An emergency Bill, the members agreed, should contain provisions dealing with the following points:—

- (1) State help through the local authorities to meet immediately the existing shortage of houses;
- (2) The limitation of the number of houses to area;
- (3) Revised machinery for the compulsory acquisition of land at reasonable prices by the local authorities;
- (4) The preparation of town-planning schemes by the local authorities;
- (5) The general abolition of the one-roomed house and other houses unfit to live in by reason of the conditions mentioned in the Report, and greater powers to deal adequately with the existing conditions of inadequate drainage, sanitation, &c., and to prevent the extension of these conditions.

The Prime Minister, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, said at Liverpool, when dealing with his

Budget proposals to tax land values: "Do not let us have false remedies. We want to do something to bring the land within the grasp of the people. We want to put an end to the system whereby the land of this country is retailed by the ounce."

The policy outlined is a policy of retailing the land required by the ounce, and the sooner Scottish Liberal Members of Parliament recognise that no statement on how to acquire land for housing, without the taxation of land values, will be complete and satisfactory to Scottish land reformers the better for their reputations. They will not be allowed to forget that two General Elections have been fought and won on this principle, nor will they be allowed to forget that nothing practical has been accomplished by them to redeem their pledges to the electors of Scotland.

EDINBURGH LEAGUE

11, Dublin Street, Edinburgh

A. W. MADSEN, Hon. Secretary

On the 30th November, the Treasurer of the League, Mr. W. J. Young, and Mr. Wm. Gray (organiser for Mr. J. W. Hogge, M.P.) addressed a meeting of the Bonnyrigg Branch of the Women's Co-operative Guild. There were 38 members present, who listened earnestly to the discussion on the "Land Question." On the 11th December, Mr. Young spoke to the Broughton Branch of the above Guild on the topic "Plenty of Room for Housing." The Secretary addressed meetings of the St. Cuthbert's Men's Co-operative Guild on 14th November, the N.U.R. at Leith on 7th December, and the Building Trades Committee on 11th December. On the 26th December the Secretary addressed a public meeting at Broxburn on "Housing Proposals and the Land Question." This meeting was specially organised by the local Secretary of the Assurance Agents' Union, which was represented at the recent conference in Edinburgh.

Councillor Stevenson, speaking at the Women's Freedom League on 5th December, on "Housing," quoted some interesting examples of the sub-division of houses owing to pressure of population on the accommodation available. In a street in the New Town, where originally there were 148 houses with a population of 740, there were now 317 houses with a population of 1,161. Three tenements in the neighbourhood of the University originally contained 21 separate dwellings with a population of 105; there were now 80 dwellings with a population of 269. An even more aggravated case was where 35 houses had been converted into 107.

Councillor Stevenson referred also to the Gorgie Estate, belonging to the Corporation, and said that if it was to be developed on up-to-date lines the capital cost of the land must be written down, thus involving the city in a certain loss.

We are obtaining some information on this estate which we think will be of more than passing interest to the housing and land reformer.

The Report of the Royal Commission on Housing teems with instances showing how the public is plundered in high prices for land. This is, of course, not the last word in the exactions, since arbitration fees equally run away with public money and with equally little to show for the expenditure. From the long catalogue of Edinburgh instances we take the following list of prices paid for sites by the Edinburgh School Board, including such buildings as were on the sites and which were demolished after purchase, viz.:—

In 1901, at Comely Bank (for the Flora Stevenson School), 5,500 square yards, feu-duty 1d., price £4,994 11s. 11d.; buildings of little value before sale. (19s. 11d. per square yard, or £4,850 per acre.)

In 1901, at Parson's Green, 1 acre, feu 5s., price £3,144 15s. 10d. (13s. per square yard.)

In 1903, at Craiglockhart, 6,050 square yards, feu-duty 1d., price £4,467 5s. 3d., vacant land. (17s. 7d. per square yard, or £3,573 per acre.)

In 1907, at Gilmore Place, 5,500 square yards, feu-duty £13 8s. 6d., price, fixed by arbitration, £9,313 0s. 2d.; buildings merely builders' sheds and temporary workshops of no great value. (Equivalent to £8,140 per acre; if including feu-duty, £8,410.) *Note.*—This is the only site that has been acquired by arbitration under Lands Clauses Acts. The costs amounted to £2,303 0s. 2d.

In 1911, at Tynecastle, 3,717 acres, feu-duty 1s., price £7,957 5s. 7d., vacant land. (Equivalent to £2,140 15s. 7d. per acre.)

In 1912, at Bellevue, 4,73 acres, feu-duty nominal, price £8,640 2s. vacant land. (Equivalent to £1,826 13s. 2d. per acre.)

On the point of compensation and arbitration costs, the Commission (quoting Sir Thomas Hunter) says: "Each claimant knows that if he does not get what he demands, the Corporation will be mulcted in heavy expenses; and the Corporation know that if they give the price demanded, they are not merely paying too much in these particular cases, but they are raising the price against themselves for all future transactions." And it is refreshing to find Sir Thomas moved to indignation in the words: "This abuse of the provisions intended for the protection of an owner's just compensation renders almost impossible numerous widenings and improvements involving small sums of loss and compensation in all parts of the city, and is thus a great public injury."

For this healthy admission we can almost pardon our Town Clerk for his one-time view that the great caravan-terai called the North British Station Hotel, because it had proved a white elephant, had "exhausted" the value of the site on which it is built.

HIGHLAND LEAGUE

The Arcade, Inverness

I. MACKENZIE, Hon. Treasurer

The Treasurer has sent a letter to the Inverness School Board Clerk recommending that Political Economy should form one of the subjects taught to the night continuation classes during the winter months, and at the same time offering on behalf of the League suitable text books free. So far there has been no response, but, no doubt, at the next meeting of the School Board the matter will be brought up for consideration.

The principal subject for discussion at the monthly meeting of the League was the cruel eviction of Mrs. Fraser at Invergordon, an old woman bordering on 70 years of age. As the *HIGHLAND NEWS* and other papers gave a full report and questions were put in the House of Commons, there is no need for going into details. This case, however, throws a glaring light on the greed and the power monopoly gives to the "little Land Monopolists," who have sprung into being through the artificial prosperity of war. For example, besides many others, in the town referred to, there has been, since the war commenced, three shops built on about a fourth of an acre of land at the expense of the occupiers, who for their business enterprise have to pay between them a feu-duty (ground-rent) of about £50 per annum to the original feuar, who only pays 30s. for half an acre to the superior.

In the distribution of literature throughout the Highlands one of our members finds on his rounds that in nearly every home there is a son or a husband on "foreign service" to whom the wives and mothers send, besides other necessities, literature on home affairs and when our

member presents a choice pamphlet dealing with the land question it is invariably sent abroad to the "boys." Only the other day the better-half of a gallant gunner received a letter thanking our member and saying that the pamphlet had passed from gunner to gunner till the whole battery had been covered. Of course the pamphlets are all more educational than political.

I take this opportunity of reminding members at a distance from Inverness that our next Annual Meeting for the re-election of office-bearers, and financial report, takes place on the 9th January at rooms 22, High Street, at 8 p.m. Full attendance of members is earnestly requested.

CAPE PROVINCE

The Land Value Rating Ordinance

Assent was given on 20th August, 1917, to the Ordinance No. 17 of 1917, which amends the provisions of the Cape Municipal Ordinance No. 10 of 1912. Clause 6 is of great importance as it gives power to local authorities to rate land values. It is as follows:—

(A) Notwithstanding anything contained in Ordinance No. 10 of 1912 the Council of any Municipality may, by resolution passed at an ordinary or special meeting and supported by the votes of a majority of the members of such Council, determine that as and from the date of the passing of the said resolution all general or special rates imposed for municipal purposes shall be so imposed on the site values of land.

(B) Upon the passing of any resolution as aforesaid and while the said resolution remains in force all general or special rates imposed for municipal purposes shall be assessed and levied on the site value of land within the Municipality as appearing in the Provincial Valuation Roll and not on the total assessed value of property as appearing in the said Roll.

(C) The provisions of Ordinance No. 10 of 1912 (as amended by any law) relating to rates shall *mutatis mutandis* apply to any rate assessed and levied on the site value of land: provided that no general rate on the site value of land shall be levied exceeding in its total amount the amount estimated as returnable from a levy within the Municipality of the maximum amount permitted to be levied under section one hundred and fifty of Ordinance No. 10 of 1912 (as amended by any law) and in accordance with the provisions thereof by means of a general rate on the assessed value of rateable property within the Municipality; and provided further that nothing in this section contained shall be construed as rendering liable to rates any property which may be exempt from the payment of rates under the provisions of any law.

(D) Any Council as aforesaid may by resolution passed at any ordinary or special meeting and supported by the votes of a majority of the members of such Council determine that any resolution passed as provided in sub-section (a) hereof be revoked and rescinded and thereupon the provisions of Ordinance No. 10 of 1912 (as amended by any law) shall apply as though the resolution so revoked and rescinded had not been passed.

(E) None of the powers conferred by this section shall be exercised by a Council until a Resolution requesting the Council so to do has been carried by a majority of enrolled voters present and voting at a general meeting of enrolled voters, duly convened for that purpose, and in the event of a poll being demanded at such meeting unless carried by a majority of votes cast at such poll.

The Cape Province has thus come into line with the notable progress made with land values taxation in the Transvaal, Australia, New Zealand and Western Canada. The Ordinance is the fruit of the steady educative campaign of the Land Values League in East London, who, first getting the support of the local Town Council, have brought the issue through the Municipal Congresses to all local authorities in the Colony and gained their influence in Parliament.

The East London League point out that, in empowering local authorities to transfer all rates to land values, the Ordinance is likely to stand in the way of immediate reform. A Council must either place all rates on land values or leave things as they are. It cannot make a

partial imposition; there is no chance for a local demand to make even a beginning experiment with an instalment. This is an inherent weakness which will embarrass the reformers where the majority would plead that the complete and immediate transference was a measure far too extreme to be considered. The League are accordingly advocating an amendment of the Ordinance which will give local Councils permissive powers to place either part of the rates or all of them on land values. This is as it should be. Permissive legislation can only be successful on these lines and its only proper alternative is compulsory legislation making it obligatory on all the local authorities to rate land values either wholly or to some specific degree. Short of an amendment to the Ordinance the advocates of the rating of land values must carry their agitation to such a point of popular support that the Town or District Council will adopt the complete relief of improvements by the spontaneous imposition of a land value rate alone. And that point may arrive much later in these circumstances than it would if reform were allowed to proceed by stages.

The sentiment in favour of the reform in the Cape Province is, we are assured, strong enough to overcome these difficulties. The beginning made in 1914 when the separate valuation of improvements from land values was enacted has proved to be the greatest step to a beneficent change in taxation. Given a valuation of this kind the rest is easy where there is a body of earnest men and women like those in East London. They have shown the way, and we look to the formation of similar leagues in all the chief centres of the Province, who will be emulated by the example they have got from the "Border town." The East London League have enriched the literature of the movement with lofty and informing statements of the case. These we hope to reprint in an early issue of this journal.

Cape Town

A Land Values League was started in Cape Town, South Africa, in October, following on a reading circle study of PROGRESS AND POVERTY (Mr. Chas. H. Lamb, Secretary, P.O. Box 94, Capetown, South Africa). The reading circle did not in fact wait to finish the book before forming the League, for at the end of October they were only one-third through the book.

It was their quick grasp of the law of rent that settled the matter; as soon as the working of this inexorable law is realised by sincere thinkers they are roused to action. It is hoped that an instalment of the Henry George remedy may be soon introduced to the notice of the ratepayers in the Cape Town municipality.

The initiators of this new League have to thank the Committee of the East London (Cape Colony) League for their moral support and encouragement; in fact the inspiration originally came from that enlightened port. They should also pass a hearty vote of thanks to LAND VALUES because the copies that have been available have greatly contributed to maintain interest in the reform aimed at and especially its practicability.

The Land Values folk in South Africa will be glad to hear from friends in Holland as to the condition and progress of Land Reform in that country because a very large proportion of the population here are of Dutch parentage; consequently it is natural that some amount of interest is felt in the great little Netherlands.

Receipt of a free copy of

"LAND VALUES"

is an invitation to become a subscriber

By Post, 2s. per Annum

LAND-VALUE TAXATION IN NEW ZEALAND

We are indebted to the LIBERATOR (Auckland, N.Z.) for the following statistical tables which are based on the New Zealand Official Year Book, 1916.

AMOUNT AND PROPORTION OF TAXATION

	Customs.	Per Cent.	Land Tax.	Per Cent.
1907 ..	£3,048,622	71.49	£447,342	10.49
1912 ..	£3,398,145	64.16	£647,015	12.21
1916 ..	£3,524,063	48.49	£1,048,356	14.43

	Income Tax.	Per Cent.	Death Duties.	Per Cent.
1907 ..	£227,867	6.51	£191,509	4.49
1912 ..	£448,955	8.48	£361,186	6.82
1916 ..	£1,398,119	19.16	£610,350	8.40

It will be remembered that the Land Tax consists of two parts, the Ordinary Tax and the Graduated Tax. The ordinary tax is 1d. in the £ on the capital land value with an exemption of £500 on estates where the land value is less than £1,500; above that value the exemption diminishes till £2,500 value is reached, after which there is no exemption. The graduated tax rises from one-thirty-second of a penny on estates of £5,000 land value up to 5½d., where the value is £200,000 or over. According to the LIBERATOR, the yield of the ordinary tax in 1915 was £696,930. The unimproved land value of the Dominion was £230,705,147, from which a tax of 1d. in the £ would give a revenue of £961,273. It is evident, therefore, that the exceptions and exemptions caused a loss to the revenue on the ordinary tax of £264,343.

Particularly interesting are the tables showing the valuations in areas which rate on the unimproved value as compared with those that do not.

VALUATIONS OF AREAS UNDER THE SYSTEM OF RATING ON THE UNIMPROVED VALUES

No. of Places.	Capital Value.	Unimproved Value (Included in other Col.).	Proportion of Improvements.
37	£62,518,115	£41,944,699	33 per cent.
61 Bor. 12 T.D.	—	—	—
73	£78,298,948	£32,943,163	58 per cent.

PARTICULARS FOR THE REST OF THE DOMINION RATING UNDER THE CAPITAL OR ANNUAL VALUE

	Capital Value.	Unimproved Value.	Proportion of Improvements.
88	£169,447,328	£118,975,859	30 per cent.
79	£60,712,292	£36,843,426	40 per cent.

The following table shows the increase in land values:—

ANNUAL INCREASE IN UNIMPROVED LAND VALUES			
1911	1912	1913	1914
5 per cent.	8 per cent.	7 per cent.	7 per cent.
Average Increase—6½ per cent.			

We conclude with a table which shows the wastefulness and inefficiency of the Land Settlement Act, the parallel of our own Small Holdings Acts:—

LAND FOR SETTLEMENT ACT
Particulars of Estates Acquired

No. Estates.	No. of Selectors.	Area Acres.	Freehold.
288	5,504	1,556,018	78,090
Leasehold Acres.		Area. Unlet Acres.	Area Occupied by Roads, &c., Acres.
1,506,417		91,606	21,062
Purchase Money.	Cost per Settler.	Cost per Acre.	
£7,393,801	£1,450	£5 2s. 7d.	
	Incidental Expenses—Improvements, Roads, &c.		
	£588,564		

Commenting on the preceding tables the LIBERATOR says: "The above percentages show that in the areas operating under the rating on the unimproved values, the proportion of improvements is larger than in the sections rating on the improvements."

It should be remembered, however, that part of the relative difference in respect of the proportion of improvements to unimproved value may be due to the effect of the rating of land values diminishing the selling (or the assessable value) in the districts where it operates. Allowing for this, it still seems clear that the rating of land values and exemption of improvements has stimulated improvement, particularly in boroughs and town districts where the rates are naturally heavier.

PROPERTY IN MEXICO

The writer, Mr. J. P. Chamberlain, writing in the September number of the POLITICAL SCIENCE QUARTERLY, points out that the chief object of the Mexican revolution was a reform in the land system of the country, and in particular of the growing tendency for the land and natural resources generally "to fall into the hands of a few favoured individuals, in many cases absentee foreigners." Article 27 of the new Constitution is particularly directed to the solution of two difficulties: (1) the ownership of lands and concessions by foreigners, chiefly American and British, either directly or as stockholders in Mexican corporations, or foreign corporations authorised to hold property in Mexico; and (2) the great properties held by the Roman Catholic Church, despite the prohibition of the 1857 Constitution.

Article 27 of the new Constitution begins by stating that the property of all lands and waters within the national territory belongs originally to the nation (not the State, as held in the U.S.), which "has and holds" the right to transfer dominion to individuals. But property in certain minerals—*e.g.*, coal, petroleum and natural gas—and in water, cannot be transferred to individuals, while the Federal Congress, as representative of the nation, may limit extensively the use of real property. As regards coal, petroleum, gas, &c., confiscation seems to be intended. At the same time Article 14 forbids retroactive legislation and Article 27 expropriation "except for public utility and on payment." All concessions granted since 1876 which have resulted in monopolisation are to be subject to revision.

Ownership already vested in foreigners is not disturbed by Article 27, but no future rights of ownership in land or waters, and no concessions for the exploitation of mines, waters, and mineral combustibles, can be acquired by foreigners. The nation, through Congress, grants a foreigner such a right in return for an undertaking on his part to consider himself as a Mexican as regards such property, and not to invoke the protection of his own Government in respect thereto. If such intervention is asked, the right to the property is forfeit. Religious associations may not hold or administer real estate. In general the Constitution looks with disfavour on landholding by any corporations.

"Land for the Peons" was the great war-cry of the Revolution; and "the formation of a landholding class of small farmers interested in the stability of the national institution has been freely proclaimed as the only safeguard for the Republic." The peon, like the Russian moujik, is a community dweller, and the provisions in the Constitution for assisting him are sharply though helpfully criticised by Mr. Chamberlain, who recommends the Californian model.—*Reprinted from "Common Sense," December 1st.*

THROUGH THE RUSSIAN PROVINCES THE PEASANTS, PEACE AND LAND

[With glad acknowledgments to the MANCHESTER GUARDIAN and with warm appreciation, we reprint the following extracts from the illuminating articles by Mr. M. Philips Price appearing in that journal on 27th and 29th November and 4th and 8th December. We wish space had allowed us to republish the whole story some part of which, especially that appearing in other issues of the MANCHESTER GUARDIAN, we have had to omit. We contrast its sympathetic outlook and its intimate knowledge of the origins and springs of the Revolution with the vilification of all the revolutionary sections without discrimination (the partly veiled but more frequently open support of monarchy and the landed interest) which has been the daily contribution of our imperialist and Whig Press for the past nine months. Mr. Price explodes the false assumption that the Revolution was instigated in any degree by a demand for the more vigorous prosecution of the War. It was and is a peasant revolt in the face of oppression and land hunger, and an uprising of the people against unlimited tyranny which had exacted the most frightful sacrifices, recently estimated at 15,000,000 casualties and 5,000,000 dead. The massacre of 500,000 nomads—not at the Front but in the interior—their punishment for a "rebellion" which had opposed one of the greatest land-grabs of modern times, tells its own tale. Apart from that, the chief interest and instruction will be found in the expression of the idea "LAND AND LIBERTY," the Tolstoyan doctrine which in theory and practice now holds the Russian peoples together in spirit and determination. Mr. Price writes before the Maximalists had "usurped" power, a usurpation which has merely exercised a privilege belonging to anybody and everybody in the chaos of revolution, but he predicts and explains what was inevitable. We have only edited the articles by supplying the cross-headings.—A. W. M.]

Writing from Orenburg on 1st October, Mr. Price says:—

When last week I reached this place, the former capital of the Central Asian Cossacks, the Korniloff rebellion had just been put down. Everywhere I found an atmosphere of suspicion which I did not notice six months ago among the local revolutionaries towards the Cossacks. After leaving Samara it was clear that I had passed out of the area where the revolutionary masses were united in the workers, peasants, and soldiers. I had reached in this gateway into Asia a region where the Revolution was complicated by other factors, cutting across it and apparently hindering its development.

Cossack Land Holdings

On the day after my arrival I interviewed the Ataman of the Orenburg Cossacks, and the first question I asked him was: What was the attitude of his Cossacks towards the programme of the Russian revolutionary democracy? "We Cossacks," he replied, "are above all things democratic, for we were free when the Russian peasant was a serf. Our ancestors fled out here to escape the Tsar's tyranny, and the Tsar rewarded us with land in return for our services against the Tartars. Our whole institutions are democratic. I, for instance, am elected by the Cossacks of my 'krug' (the Cossack term for a military area) on an adult suffrage and secret ballot. None of us may own land. Each stanitza (Cossack term for a village) has an

area of land allotted to it by the 'krug' and this is divided equally among the families of the stanitza. Every 25 years the land is redistributed, as is the custom also among the communes of the Russian peasant. Co-operation has made great strides among us. In the last ten years 106 societies have started in the Orenburg district alone."

Peasant Migration

"Then why," I asked, "is there a feeling that you are not in sympathy with the land programme of the Revolution, seeing that in practice you carry out its ideas?" The Ataman smiled. "Our lands were bought by the blood of our ancestors; they have been Cossack for centuries. By occupying them we saved Russia from invasion from the East. But Russian peasants are continually wanting to migrate into our territories, and now the Socialist revolutionary party tells them that they are equal with us and have a right to the same amount of land as ourselves. We have nothing against those peasants who have lived among us for decades. In the stanitzas we even admit them on equal terms, but we must have the right to keep fresh immigrants from invading our ancestral territories. What our fathers won we shall not give up."

The Average Land Allotment

"What is the average land allotment received by a Cossack from his 'krug'?" I asked. "The Orenburg Cossacks," he replied, "get about 20 dessiatines* each, the Don and Kuban Cossacks less, the Siberian and Semiretch Cossacks about 20 dessiatines, and the Transbaikal 35." I then remembered that in the adjoining Samara province the average land allotment of the peasant before the Revolution was three dessiatines, and even now, after dividing the landlords' land, it will still not be more than seven. I could see, therefore, why peasants from European Russia have been migrating into these regions on the confines of Asia (400,000 have come to the Orenburg province since 1897) and why the Ataman insisted so strongly on the rights of his Cossacks.

Buying Cossack Support for Tsardom

Numbering only seven millions, the Cossacks have in these strips still great reserves of land, and their average allotment per man is much higher than that of the Russian peasant. The Tsar's Government used this privileged position to secure the support of the Cossacks against the Russian people. But their free nature revolted against this moral servitude, and they became at last ardent revolutionaries and republicans. Now, however, when the Revolution sets itself to solve the land question and aims to establish the principle of equal rights for all Russian subjects to the land the traditions of a privileged caste begin to appear again, and as the first occupiers of large Asiatic territories the Cossacks now claim rights of local autonomy to protect their land interests. Thus the revolutionary idea of equality for all and privilege for none meets the Cossack idea of family traditions and territorial rights of ancestors.

Growth of a Cossack Landless Class

On the other hand, it must not be thought that the Cossacks are everywhere a united mass. There is evidence of the beginnings of a split in their ranks which may some

day become a decisive factor in favour of the Revolution. Thousands of Cossacks from the Don and Kuban, where the land allotments are not large and the population ever increasing, have gone to work in mine and factory or as labourers on farms. The Cossacks of Western Siberia also have come under the influence of the great agricultural and mining development of these regions, and are being gradually drawn closer to the Russian peasant and workman. Thus in many parts of the Cossack territories, where modern industries are beginning to spread, a Cossack bourgeois and proletariat class is gradually being formed. Meanwhile the revolutionary democracy has a territorial problem no less difficult to solve than the Ukraine and Finland. The fundamental cause of unrest among the Cossacks is the land, and the Cossack land question is an inheritance of the race migrations between Europe and Asia in the early days of Russian history.

Siberian Land for the Siberians

The colonists of the black-earth lands of Tomsk and Tobolsk and the foothills of the Altai have an enormous reserve of land fit for colonisation still at their doors. Up to now this land has been at the disposal of Petrograd. But the revolutionary organisations which have sprung up all over Siberia in the last six months have now assembled at Tomsk and are engaged in drawing up a scheme of land autonomy in relation to the unoccupied lands of North Asiatic Russia. I understand that the Siberian Council of Peasants' Deputies, together with the Siberian co-operators' alliance, are the most influential of all the revolutionary organisations. The Council of Workers' Deputies is strong in some of the towns, and in Krasnoyarsk is controlled by the Maximalists, but the predominant element everywhere is the peasant and the co-operator, not the urban worker. Therefore watchwords about the "dictatorship of the proletariat" are less popular than watchwords like "Siberian land for the Siberians." The embryo Siberian Parliament, now sitting at Tomsk, has drawn up a scheme for future land colonisation. The reserve lands are to be placed under the control of a Siberian Land Commission, which is to decide how many immigrants from European Russia shall be allowed to come in after the war, and how much is to be reserved for the future needs of the native population. The Siberians have in the past suffered so much from Petrograd officials and the Tsar's Ministers, who have given away their lands to favourites, that they intend in the future to be masters of their own house. I have reason to think also that the West Siberian Cossacks are disposed to enter into the Siberian autonomy scheme.

The Massacre of the Nomad Kirghiz

Beyond the Siberian black-earth zone come the steppes of Turgai, Akmolinsk, and Semiretch, where live the Nomad Kirghiz and many hundred thousands of recently arrived Russian peasants. The late Tsar's Government adopted the policy of settling this dry steppe region, especially that near the Chinese frontier, with colonists from the Ukraine. Apart from the strategic "interests" here involved, landlords and Ministers obtained profitable areas of land where they could settle their more unruly peasants and get good rents. But this involved ousting the Nomad Kirghiz from some of their best grazing lands. This, in fact, was done, and the 2,000,000 Kirghiz of these regions were by 1916 reduced to something like half of the territories they possessed ten years ago. When on the

* A dessiatine is equivalent to 2.7 acres.

top of this the Tsar's Government demanded military service in the rear from the Moslems of Asia the camel's back broke. The nomad population of Central Asia rose in rebellion in the summer of 1916 and civil war resulted. About 500,000 Kirghiz were massacred, and something like a million fled into the confines of China at the beginning of this year. While Western Europe has heard about Armenian massacres, the massacre of Central Asian Moslems by the Tsar's agents has been studiously hidden.

A Russo-Tartar Land Parliament

In the Turgai steppe, to the east of this town (Orenburg) the Revolution has already succeeded in making peace between the Russian colonists and the Kirghiz. The expropriation of the latter has never been carried on to such a degree here as in the regions adjoining the Chinese frontier. When the Revolution came, therefore, the two races living side by side on the steppes elected their revolutionary committees and began to work together. I was present last week at a meeting of the Land Committee of the Turgai province. I found that about three-quarters of the Committee were Kirghiz and the rest Russian peasants. Both races sat side by side on terms of equality, spoke each other's language, and had so far forgotten old land quarrels that they were actually engaged in working out a common land programme which will protect their joint interests against future colonists from European Russia. Thus there was actually being formed here a joint Russo-Tartar Parliament demanding autonomy in land matters for the north part of the Central Asian steppes. I understand that when the Siberian autonomy scheme is further developed the Turgai territories will probably join in.

A Cossack Assembly

Last week I had the opportunity of being present at the gathering of the Orenburg Cossacks—the first that has been held for 150 years. On the day of assembly in the square outside the staff headquarters a squadron of horsemen were drawn up. Their long lances glittered in a steel line over their heads, their round forage caps were pressed down on one side, and a long lock of hair protruded in the style always adopted by the Orenburg Cossacks. The deputies from the stanitzas (Cossack villages) began to arrive. Officers with blue-striped trousers and orderlies in attendance on them rode up on shaggy Asiatic ponies. Heels clicked and salutes were exchanged, a thing rarely seen in the Russian Regular Army to-day. Inside I saw a stately gathering, but the whole atmosphere was a striking contrast to the revolutionary meetings of these days. There was no comradeship, no warm enthusiasm of those working and suffering in a common cause.

In theory the assembly had been elected democratically on the basis of universal suffrage and secret ballot. Every 5,000 Cossacks in the stanitzas of the Orenburg "krug" had elected one delegate. Each Cossack from the ranks had equal rights with his officer. But the interesting question was whether the spirit of equality in the assembly hall was or was not in reality influenced by the spirit of subordination from the parade ground.

Cossack Headmen and Revolution

The initiative for the first two days of the assembly came entirely from the Generals, Colonels, and officials

sitting on the front benches, and the whole proceedings were in strong opposition to the spirit of the times.

Some interesting speeches were made on the second day by certain officials from the Cossack land organisations. The Cossack lands were sacred, they said. Let not the so-called revolutionary democracy defile these lands with their unclean hands. The Cossacks fought for their lands and will die for them. But let these lands be democratically held. Let there be no private exploitation of land. The Cossacks have suffered in the past from the Tsars, who took away pieces of their lands to give to favourites. The Cossacks can support the Russian revolutionary democracy in general principles of land tenure, but they are against their indiscriminate application without taking into consideration traditions, historical rights, and local peculiarities of the different territories of Russia. These views obtained strong support throughout the whole assembly.

A Cry from the Ranks

The third day was perhaps the most interesting of all, for it was only then that the silent mass at the back of the hall began to become articulate. We heard at last the voice of the labouring Cossacks and of those from the regiments at the Front, which up to now had been drowned by the trumpet calls of the Generals on the front benches. The spokesman for the Cossacks in the South-Western Army was a handsome lad of 25. He came dressed in the simple uniform of a Cossack horseman. Timidly he rose on the tribune and haltingly began to speak. Unlike the Russian revolutionary soldier, he was unused to expressing his thoughts in words. But an impulse seemed to urge him to bring out an idea that lay within him. He struggled with the words, seemed to fail, began again, and pushed through. "Let not the Cossacks separate themselves from their brothers the Russian soldiers," he said, "for we are united in spirit with them. Our soldier comrades are weak, but their hearts are sound. If they do wrong things; if they fail sometimes, remember the slavery they have lived in. Blame the Tsar's Government for that, and not the Revolutionary Councils. Let us help our brother soldiers and not embitter them against us. Let us work with the Councils which are trying to teach them self-respect. Only a union between Cossack and soldiers will save the Russian Army. We Cossacks from the South-Western Army look on the Russian soldier as a brother failing sometimes through his weakness but in spirit one with us, struggling upwards to the light."

A dead silence came over the hall as the speaker finished. The Generals in the front row were too astounded to utter a sound. But before they had time to recover themselves the representative of the Cossack section of the Council of Workers' and Soldiers' Delegates, which contains Cossack workers and labourers from the factories and mines on the Don, rose on the platform and addressed the "krug." "We are all agreed," he said, "that there should be in Russia a strong Government authority. But some people want to establish that authority by creating confidence and hope in the minds of the masses, and there are those who think they can establish it by the blood and iron of the old regime. We Cossack workers warn you officers against that course. If you try to destroy the Councils you will poison the source whence courage and hope flow to the Russian masses. Start on this mad game if you will, but in that case you leave us behind you."

Popular Education

Writing from Yaroslav on 24th October, Mr. Price says:—
The whole country is now divided up into "cultural" areas—Moscow, the northern provinces, the Don basin, the central provinces, the Volga, Siberia, Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the Ukraine. In every provincial town the political societies that centre round the C.W.S.D. have libraries from which books on politics, history, literature, and economics are lent out to the smaller centres in the surrounding rural districts. There is an immense sale for pamphlets, and the demand is such that it cannot be supplied on account of the paper shortage. The recently elected town councils and zemstvos are organising lectures everywhere to educate the people in the duty of citizenship and the meaning of the Constituent Assembly. I could see, moreover, that a new type of intelligentsia is being created. The old intelligentsia, such as the professors at the universities, the students, doctors, and advocates, have now joined the Army of Cadet landlords and bankers. But the new type has sprung more recently from the native mass, and is seen in the young men from the villages who by hard struggle have received a primary education, and then by service in the Army have travelled and seen the world. To them a helping hand has been lent by the school teachers, co-operators, and agronomes. It is this type that is now controlling the provincial democratic bodies and is struggling against terrific odds to spread light where darkness was before.

Legally Elected Local Authorities

I found that the Revolutionary Councils of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies in the provinces, though still influential, are to a large extent now being replaced by other bodies. Among the most important of these are the professional alliances or trade unions. There are some two million workers in Russia who are now organised in these unions. But besides the trade unions there have been set up now in every locality municipalities and rural zemstvos, elected on an adult suffrage. Much of the work formerly done by the councils has now passed into the hands of these legally elected local authorities. But it need not be thought that the opinions expressed by the councils to-day do not reflect the opinions of these new public bodies. On the question of peace and the programme of the Revolution the central executive of the C.W.S.D. in Petrograd expresses the sentiments of thousands of rural zemstvos scattered all over Russia, while on internal economic policy the trade unions are more advanced than the Council. Everything would seem to point to a gradual deepening and broadening of the Revolution throughout the country, and the strengthening of the ideas set forth by the councils among the masses.

The Village Committee

Writing from Samara, Mr. Price says:—
The Province of Samara may be taken as typical of South-eastern Russia and the Lower Volga. Throughout this region the production and export of corn to the northern and western manufacturing areas is the main industry. The ideas of the Revolution have taken deep root here among the peasantry, and great strides have been made in the solution of the land question. Throughout the summer in every village a committee of public safety was formed. At the instigation of peasant soldiers from the neighbouring town the older villagers summoned

rural communes and elected representatives to the revolutionary committees. The voting was open, as was likely to be the case in primitive gatherings. This little executive for the commune or group of communes, known as "volost," became *ipso facto* the revolutionary political party in the district and was called the Council of Peasant Deputies. In course of time these district parties and committees formed into bodies serving larger areas, called "uyesds," and these again into those serving provinces. The provincial executive committees elected a commissioner, who was confirmed by the Provisional Government in Petrograd and became the figure-head of revolution in the provinces.

The New Democracy

The urgent need for dealing with the problems facing the Revolution then forced the peasants and the peasant-soldiers to go further. The land and the food question had to be tackled, and so there grew up automatically in each district a local Land and Produce Committee, the former to control the division and sowing of the land, and the latter the distribution of food and necessaries. Here again the members of the revolutionary committees were elected from the local Council of Peasant Deputies, which thus became the political organisation inspiring their work.

In the last two months, however, the Revolutionary Committees have begun to give place to bodies elected upon a legal system of adult suffrage and secret ballot, drawn up by the Provisional Government. In this way the district zemstvos are now coming into existence. These in turn elect the provincial zemstvos and are replacing the old zemstvos, which, like the Duma, were elected under the Tsar's regime on a gerrymandered franchise, giving all preponderance to the propertied and official classes. These democratic zemstvos are now taking under their control the local militia and the Land and Produce Committees. Again, the local Council of Peasant Deputies is the political party inspiring the new authority.

The Burning Question

I find that everywhere in these Lower Volga provinces the burning question is the land. The policy of the Council of Peasant Deputies is directed solely with a view to solving this question, and within its ranks can be observed various political tendencies which express the opinions among the peasantry of those regions. In it is included 99 per cent. of the politically conscious peasantry, all the soldiers of the garrisons of the neighbouring towns (themselves the sons of peasants), and a few intellectuals. In the absence of urban factory workers it is clear that Marxian ideas are not widespread in the C.P.D. The chief interest of the members is in the expropriation of the landlords and dividing the land. Therefore the Socialist Revolutionary party is predominant in the C.P.D. The policy of the latter differs from that of the Marxist Social Democrats in the question of land division.

Marxian versus Tolstoyan Ideas

The Marxists stand for State nationalisation, the capitalisation of the agricultural industry, and the proletarianisation of the peasantry. The Socialist Revolutionary Party, on the other hand, see the rich possibilities for social experiment in the Russian peasant, just freed from mediæval serfdom and untainted with Western industrialism. They hope to utilise his native instinct for creating communal institutions, to modernise the latter, and so to lead up

to a system in which the land is socialised by the local communes. The peasant, they say, must not be the wage-slave even of the State, as the Social Democrats want, nor a proprietor, as the Cadets want, but a member of a social unit with a right to work an area of land and to reap the products of his labour upon it. To the social unit should belong the land, but to the peasant the products of the land. In order to meet the modern necessity for working industries on a large scale the Socialist Revolutionaries would make use of the agricultural co-operative movement.

No More Private Property in Land

But if the Socialist Revolutionaries who inspire the S.P.D. in the villages and the Social Democrats who inspire the C.W.S.D. in the towns differ on land distribution and the future of the agricultural industry, they are nevertheless united in their determination once and for all to abolish landlordism and the rights of private property. "The land comes from God, and can belong to no one," is an old Russian saying, and it correctly expresses the spirit of the peasant. The revolutionary democracy therefore in town and country presents a solid front to the Cadets, who talk about the sacredness of property and try to represent the Russian peasant as developing into a type like the British farmer or the French small proprietor. With this great mass of revolutionary opinion solid against private ownership it is certain that whatever else may happen the Russian landlord will become a thing of the past.

Compensation, the Land Banks, and Mortgages

The question, however, remains whether the landlords ought to be compensated for their land. The Socialist Revolutionaries say that they should not be. They point to the fact that the Russian landlords are not, as in Western Europe, also capitalists who are continually applying capital to the land, and whose rent consists of interest on their own improvements as well as exploitation profits from the needs of the people. In the case of the Russian landlord his rent consists solely of the latter, for he has never, except in the case of the sugar companies, improved or developed it. But simple expropriation without compensation may lead to a disastrous financial crisis, because many landlords have mortgaged their lands to banks. The Land Bank, specially formed by the Tsar's Government to bolster up the landlords, has in many cases advanced money on land for much more than the latter was worth. Therefore the ruin of several banks is probable unless some compensation is afforded. It is interesting to note that at the last conference of the Socialist Revolutionary party at Samara a resolution was passed that the banks should be compensated for their losses by an extra super-tax upon large incomes. This view also received support in the All-Russia Conference of the Social Democrats recently held in Petrograd.

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BOOK REVIEW

THE LAND OR REVOLUTION

Mr. Outhwaite has written a book which well reveals the spirit of the time. His subject is the land question or the social problem—call it what you will, for it is one—and his background is the war and the vision of the nations tottering into bankruptcy, civil strife, and ruin. "The old order is doomed, its disruption is rightly seen to be inevitable, the tax-gatherer will be its executioner, an empty treasury provide its grave.

War, Famine, High Taxation, Revolution, such is the historical progression. War we have, famine confronts the world, the end of borrowing is at hand, and taxation without precedent must follow. Only revolution is in doubt. It comes towards our gates with the overthrow of Czardom. In the East the conclusion has been reached, the full course has been run. Will the constitutional systems of the West be sundered by the forces generated by war?"

It is a question fraught with deep interest not only to landlords, financiers and bondholders, but also for the great masses who are now by their blood and labour carrying on the war and whom the powers that be wish to pay for it out of their hard-earned scanty wages in the years to come. For here is the secret of revolution, the conflict between the working mass and the parasitic few, brought to a sudden and desperate issue by famine and the attempt of the privileged to continue extorting rent and dividends out of the famine-stricken.

But let us look a little deeper, Revolution has a deeper root than this. It is due to the obstinacy of the ruling minority, the Bourbonism that will yield none of its privileges, although it be those privileges that have reduced the masses to starvation; and in part it is due to ignorance on the part of the despoiled as to how by peaceful economic means they might satisfy their needs. Let us hope that Mr. Outhwaite's book will enlighten both classes, and so fulfil its author's purpose of forestalling the revolution of gun and bayonet by a peaceable change which will revolutionise the economic position of the toilers.

We must pass, however, from this thought to pay a tribute to the brilliancy and vigour with which Mr. Outhwaite has developed the argument for the taxation of land values. The main objections are clearly dealt with, and the chapters on Socialism and Capital should be particularly useful. Those who, like Mr. J. M. Robertson, think that the large farm is the best means of production and that it is better to be a farm servant than a small-holder will read with especial interest the chapter in which Danish agriculture is dealt with; and others who are interested in "baby weeks" and similar mild excitement would do well to read in the chapter on "clearing the slums" what are the real difficulties which sweep away in thousands those little lives about which we all profess to be anxious. The chapter on "The Status of Woman," declared by one reviewer to be irrelevant, will appeal to all who have the insight to see what are the possibilities of a society freed from the tyranny of want and greed. We almost

wish that Mr. Outhwaite had added a chapter on "Status for man," but the whole book is that: it is animated by the desire to destroy all the bonds which trammel the free growth and development of the human spirit. We hope to deal with some arresting points later.

One word of praise must be added in respect of the attention which has been paid to the form and printing which has resulted in the production of a volume most pleasing to the eye.

PROFITEERING IN LAND

Tenants' Notice to Quit

Are the Government going to stand idly by and let the owners of agricultural land take huge profits owing to war conditions? asks "A Tenant Farmer" in a letter giving particulars of farms for sale.

"Farmers are urged to do their best to produce more food," he writes, "and are doing it with a good heart under the most trying conditions. But the one thing essential to their doing so must be security of tenure. Yet many landlords have given notice to their tenants that their farms are to be sold, simply because they know that if they are put on the market now they will sell for nearly double what they would have made before the war.

"It is true the farmer has a chance to purchase his farm and his own improvements, but at such prices that are out of his reach; and the little capital that he has to work with will be locked up. Often he will have to sell his stock before he could even pay the deposit on the purchase of his land. I give the following particulars of farms for sale, the rents, and the price asked of the tenant if he wishes to acquire the land:—

Brook Farm, 69 acres (54 ploughing); rent £80. Price asked £2,000.

Rectory Farm, 175 acres (70 ploughing); rent £110. Price £3,500.

Glebe Farm, 59 acres (50 ploughing); rent £60. Price £1,500.

Accommodation land, 21 acres; rent £33. Price £800.

Accommodation land, 27 acres; rent £44. Price £1,000.

Rectory Farm, 287 acres; rent £300. Price asked £6,000.

Another farm in same parish, 132 acres; rent £110. Price asked £2,650.

A small holding same parish, 16 acres; rent £21. Price £400.

"I know the land well, and the rents paid were all they were worth before the war—in fact, a precarious living was obtained from them. It is not fair to ask them to plough up more land and put more energy and capital into it if they are not secure in their tenancy."—*Daily Chronicle* (London), December 27th.

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HERE AND THERE

As usual we wish our readers everywhere the compliments of the season, and may the New Year carry with it the great Peace that mankind, weary of war, seeks to achieve.

LAND VALUES begin this month a new volume. Hitherto the volume has ended in May. The alteration means that the volume now in course of binding will be for eighteen months, June, 1916, to December, 1917. In future LAND VALUES volume will begin in January and end in December. But what we want is new and additional readers, and we look to our people to continue their good efforts to extend our subscribers' list.

Lord Guthrie made reference to the lightness of the calendar, and said that it was very satisfactory to note the small amount of crime that had been before the Court, Dec. 27th. Some people said that the criminals were all at the front. He thought there was a better reason than that—namely, that through the amount of employment available and good wages men were now doing honest work who formerly, through poverty and irregular employment, would have fallen into crime. It was another instance that at the root of the whole criminal question was not what our forefathers called original sin, but poverty and absence of regular employment.—*Lord Guthrie at the High Court of Justiciary sitting at Glasgow, "Glasgow Herald," December 28th.*

Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Romanoff's windows in their flat at Tobolsk, Siberia, give a view of the sheds in which, during his reign (as Czar of all the Russias), about 200,000 men and women were lodged like animals on their way to the mines in Siberia—"Cast thy bread upon the waters."—*Milngavie (Stirlingshire), "Herald," December 21st.*

An extensive cattle drive took place on Monday night at Moorehall, County Mayo, on a large grazing ranch belonging to Mr. George Moore, the novelist, and held under the eleven months' system by Mr. Mark Mellet, Claremorris. The stock were collected along the public roads by the police. On the same occasion Mrs. Wilson's large grazing farm, two miles from Mr. Moore's, was also cleared. The Ballinrobe Council yesterday issued an appeal to grazers to surrender lands in the interest of the public peace and for the benefit of the adjoining tenantry, who were clamouring for them both for grazing and food production purposes.—*"Morning Post," 28th November.*

The Executive Committee of the National Farmers' Union, at a meeting at the Savoy Hotel yesterday adopted the principle of a resolution which declared that the provisions of the Corn Production Act did not give the tenant farmer such security as to encourage him to increase the production so badly needed by the nation.—*The "Times," 13th December.*

It is not a case even of "roses, roses, all the way," for the poor allotment-holders. Thousands of these have come into possession of war plots only to discover that there are powerful unseen enemies in the shape of greedy rate-collectors, who demand rates in the proportion of one-half part instead of one-fourth part only of the net annual or rateable value. And most of them, alas! never dreamt of rates.—*"Common Sense," December 29th.*

At a meeting of the National Farmers' Union at Worcester yesterday, Mr. J. Woodyatt presiding, Mr. P. Phillips, a dairy farmer, said he had a letter from a Worcestershire landlord giving notice to his tenants of his intention to raise their rents, and the argument he used was extraordinary—that the higher rent a man paid the better he farmed! The farmer's reply in such a case would be that he would not farm so well.

Mr. J. Phillips said he knew a landlord who farmed his land ten times worse than his tenants. Why should not the bad landlord be turned out as well as the good farmer?

It was decided that the sub-committee should draft a protest to be sent to the National Executive.—*"Birmingham Daily Post," December 12th.*

Only a little more than half of the country's 112,000,000 acres of coal land are being mined, the committee will be told. The rest is being held for speculative purposes. It is taxed only as ordinary land is taxed. Meanwhile, the country is clamouring for coal. By taxing this unworked coal land at or near its potential coal mine value, instead of its mere land value, Congress not only could provide a great source of revenue, but might induce the working of the land.—*The "New York Commercial," November 13th.*

A Treasury White Paper containing the accounts of the United Kingdom for the last financial year was issued yesterday at 6d. On the whole there is quite sixpenny-worth of interest in it for anyone who cares to search long enough. The patient investigator will find that the heirs of the Duke of Schomberg, who fell at the Battle of the Boyne, still draw £360 a year; and that the Dowager Countess of Mayo, whose husband was murdered in the Andaman Islands in 1872, continues at the age of 91 to enjoy a pension of £1,000 a year. Lord Chaplin, it is interesting to observe, got £1,118 8s. 2d. instead of the £1,200 he might have been expected to draw as a Political Pensioner. However, what he lost on the swings he gained on the roundabouts, for the odd £81 11s. 10d. came to him in the form of his M.P.'s salary before his peerage was conferred.—*"Daily News" (London), December 11th.*

The Labour movement had brought into being associations to assist the laggard and the shirkers. In these circumstances those who believed in the Labour movement had no alternative but to come out of it. There would be great economic changes after the war. He had been a Free Trader for the greater part of his life, but since the outbreak of war he had changed his opinions.—*Mr. Stephen Walsh (Labour) Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board, at Rochdale, November 26th.*

The "Life-long Free Trader" is quite a notoriety in the Tariff Reform camp. Mr. Walsh will shake hands there with many congenial friends.

You will not secure the Taxation of Land Values by merely expressing pious opinions in favour of it. It is no use just wishing for it. If you want it, you must work, and work hard, for it.—*Joseph Fels.*

Undoubtedly a revolution is spreading, and spreading rapidly, replied Mr. Anderson. But it is a mental revolution, a revolution in outlook. Whether it takes a more serious form will depend upon those who are hostile to our aspirations. Revolutions, in the usual sense of the word, are made less by reformers than by reactionaries. Revolutions come when changes which are seen to be just and necessary are obstructed by the "interests" with great possessions, which are more concerned about profit than about human liberty and happiness.—*W. C. Anderson, M.P.—Interview in "Common Sense," November 24th.*

A Transvaal correspondent writes: "Your Land Values Conferences appear to have been great successes. I notice that speakers point to the South African natives as an instance of a people having a great freedom from capitalism owing to their having the option of working for themselves. Funny, but when I point to the same thing out here I am asked if 'I would have them live like niggers'!"

On Tuesday, November 20th, the House of Commons adopted the principle of plural voting for large boroughs by a vote of 163 to 142. The undernoted Liberal and

Labour members voted with the majority, in fact, their votes gave the Government its majority:—

Christopher Addison, A. Cecil Beck, Wm. Brace, Sir Joseph Compton-Rickett, Sir Edwin A. Cornwall, Wm. S. Glyn-Jones, James W. Greig, Cecil B. Harmsworth, John Hodge, Albert H. Illingworth, J. Towyn Jones, F. G. Kellaway, J. Herbert Lewis, J. I. Macpherson, Sir Alfred Mond, James Parker, John W. Pratt, George H. Roberts, T. W. Russell, A. MacCallum Scott, W. Dudley Ward, Sir Richard Winfrey.

A member of the House of Commons—we do not say he is a west country M.P.—has received from a correspondent familiar with landed property a letter which supplies remarkable testimony to the effect of the Corn Production Bill in appreciating the value of landed property. He says: I have been asked by certain people with money to spend, to make some preliminary investigation into the purchase of an estate of between 5,000 and 6,000 acres, for the purpose of settling soldiers and sailors thereon. I am everywhere met by the same remark from agents and owners—that there are more inquiries for land now than there are estates to offer. The speculator and the financier have gone into the agricultural land market and estates are being bought and sold in speculation. One of 8,000 acres which I was investigating the other day was bought by a financier who knew nothing about land values, and who had no survey made. . . . I understand that he has already made a large profit. One estate I saw changed hands twice in a month, each time at a substantial profit. And this, we understand, is happening all over the country.—*"Somerset County Gazette," September 1st, 1917.*

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