

**A POUND A DAY NOT A RADICAL
REMEDY**

The Prattle of the Charlatans

Among my letters the other morning I was a little surprised to find one which charged me with being a tool of the capitalist. Few of us, I suppose, are able to probe to all the springs of our conduct, and it may be that down in the foundations of my soul there are sympathies and motives at work of which I am unaware. And among them may be a sympathy with landowners, bankers, monopolists, and gold-bugs generally. If so, I can only say it is a very furtive and elusive sympathy, and that, if I am really convicted of harbouring it, I hope the STAR will cashier me without mercy.

But the reason I refer to my correspondent's letter is that he flourishes a new gospel in my face, the main feature of which is that everybody is to have a pound a day. He is evidently quite convinced that if everybody gets a pound a day the difficulties of this puzzling world of men will vanish and we shall all be happy ever after. And it is because I don't believe anything of the sort, believe, on the contrary, that this gospel of salvation by a pound a day is a fatal delusion, that I want to say a word on the subject.

And in the first place, why a pound a day? Why not two pounds, or ten pounds? In saying this, I do not mean that a pound a day is extravagant. I mean that it has no more reality than ten pounds a day. It is not the number of pounds you get that makes you well off: it is the abundance of commodities you can command. We could buy as much food for ten shillings four years ago as we can buy to-day for a pound, and who can say what the ratio of money and things will be a year hence? . . .

But my chief objection to this pound-a-day formula, and to Mr. Bernard Shaw's £500-a-year formula, is that they put us on the wrong scent. They send us in pursuit of the shadow of money instead of the substance of things. They make us believe in fictions instead of realities. They set us looking through the wrong end of the telescope. If I control things and you only control money, you will find that I am always the top dog. You may give whatever denomination you like to your money: it will always be subservient to the fact that I hold the goods.

Let us take one or two illustrations. The greatest reality of all is the land. It is ultimately the source of all wealth, and the people who possess it hold the keys of power. It is a common heritage, as essential to us as the common air. Private property in it is no more defensible than private property in the oxygen we breathe or the rain that is falling as I write, or the sunshine that will follow, would be defensible. But private property exists, and from that fact come the evils of society—the plunder of industry, the intolerable slums,

the poverty of the peasant, the neglect of the soil, the divorce between the people and the treasure house that nature has given them. We have become a nation of lodgers, aliens on our own estate, hewers of wood and drawers of water. We have got to resume the possession of our land if we are to regain liberty and life. If that is done the mere money counters will adjust themselves to that enormous fact. . . .

We have a great task before us, and we must have radical remedies for radical evils. "A pound a day" is not a radical remedy. It is only the prattle of charlatans.—*Alpha of the Plough, in the Star (London), July 5th.*

In the death of George Stenhouse, who passed away suddenly while on holiday at Millport, July 23rd, the Glasgow Single Taxers have lost an able and a devoted advocate. Mr. Stenhouse had been closely associated with the work of the Scottish League for a number of years, where his zeal and enthusiasm knew no bounds. His interest in the work of the League was maintained to the last, though latterly he confined himself mainly to propaganda in the Maryhill district of the city. The Maryhill (Glasgow) group of land reformers have given a good account of themselves these past ten years, and George Stenhouse was recognised as the leading spirit in this well-sustained agitation. When open-air speaking was out of season he brought the taxation of land values on to the floor of local debating societies. He was the prime mover in the Maryhill Current Topics Club, where the question was one of abiding and paramount importance. At Municipal and Parliamentary elections he never failed to render good service. The restoration of the land to the people, appropriating the communal value of land for communal purposes, by way of taxation, and the untaxing of the work of men's hands, was to George Stenhouse not a question of politics but a cause having for its object the uplifting of humanity. That is not to say that he despised politics or politicians. He was no feather-brained agitator out for scalps. He could take these at the risk of his own, as a man should, while he used the political machinery at his hand to advance his main purpose. In land monopoly he saw the bottom wrong that kept men apart, and which forces upon society the heavy weight of undeserved poverty and misery. With this clear view of his case George Stenhouse knew not the word "compromise." He was out for social justice, and for a full measure of political and personal freedom, without boundary lines of race or creed. He was a good citizen, an upright, honest, sterling good fellow; his life was an open book to his friends and co-workers, and to his enemies as well. What he was given to accomplish will remain the heritage of those to whom he taught the gospel truth of just dealing and social righteousness, those who must and who will honourably carry on the work he has laid down. George Stenhouse was a true democrat: "A man's a man for a' that," was his philosophy, and to this he gave the widest possible interpretation. He was one of those unknown heroes in the fight for freedom who, in their own field of operations, make it possible for movements such as ours to develop to greater strength, and without whose labours there would be no progress to put on record in the political arena, or elsewhere. We gratefully acknowledge the full use of the talents that were his, and extend to Mrs. Stenhouse and her family our deepest sympathy in their irreparable loss.