

these other men the fruits of their own exertion. Now let us apply this to our present land system. The landlord is not producing wealth, and if you say he has a right to claim in the value of land, wealth which other men have created, then you deny to those others the fruits of their labour. You agree that one man has a right to appropriate the fruits of another's exertion, that is to say, you are prepared to legalise theft.

The justice of our proposal is undoubted. We deny the right of the landlord to appropriate any part of the result of the industry and activity of the community.

In conclusion, let me point out that the Socialist who with us deplores the fact that men are exiled from the land, in his scheme of nationalising the land isolates the right of individual ownership, while we, in the Taxation of Land Values, hold as sacred the right of every man to the fruits of his own exertions.

THE DEPOPULATION OF SCOTLAND.

The Scottish Census Returns for 1911, revealing as they do the steady depopulation of Scotland, are making the most apathetic and reactionary pay some attention to existing industrial and economic conditions. According to THE GLASGOW HERALD (May 13th, 1911):—

"A detailed analysis of the figures of the Scottish Census of 1911, as far as they are available, brings out the important point that emigration during the past ten years has by no means been confined to the rural districts. The net loss due to emigration (excess of emigrants over immigrants) between 1901 and 1911 was 255,193, of which 80,980 came from the rural areas, while more than twice as many, 174,213, left the urban and industrial areas. Of course, in proportion to population the rural exodus was the more serious, seeing that it left the rural areas with an actual reduction in their population of 22,111, or 2·5 per cent., while the urban and industrial population increased in volume by 309,529, or 8·5 per cent. Part of the rural emigration was, no doubt, a transfer from the country to the towns, which means that the industrial migration out of Scotland altogether must have been greater than the figures disclose."

Though it admits that "the prospect of a further decline in our rural population is not to be viewed without concern," THE GLASGOW HERALD attempts to be optimistic about the future. It points out that as far as tradesmen and artisans are concerned, the Dominion of Canada "cannot absorb very many at a time"; that already there are signs of disappointment in the case of some at least of those who have gone out; and that in any case "Scottish industries are not likely to suffer seriously for want of labour just yet." A somewhat cynical view, which seems to us rather far from the really important national question at issue.

The enterprising London DAILY CHRONICLE attempted to gather the opinions of leading Scotsmen "on the causes of the continued exodus," asking them also "what policy they consider the Government should adopt to check the steady migration from the country districts to the towns and British Overseas Dominions." The following answers will interest our readers, and reveal a steadily growing knowledge of the fundamental importance of the Land Question, and of the realisation that "the tenure of land is the fundamental fact which must ultimately determine the conditions of industrial, social and political life."

MR. DUNCAN McTAVISH (Inverness-shire).

Despairing thousands of Scotland's best manhood are emigrating weekly; trade is stagnating. The cause is the land monopoly, and the want of opportunity for a man to earn his livelihood in his own country. Fulfilment of the promise of a Government Land Bill has been too long delayed. It is imperative that the Bill should be passed immediately when the Parliament Bill is out of the way, if Scotland's death-wound is to be stopped.

SIR HENRY BALLANTYNE (Peebles and Selkirk).

I view the Census Returns for Scotland with serious alarm, as no nation can prosper under such conditions as they reveal. If Lord Pentland's Bill had not been rejected by the House of Lords, something would have to be done to check this fatal decline in our rural population; and I am strongly of opinion that one of the most urgent duties of the Government is to pass—at the earliest possible moment—a measure on the lines of that Bill, fixing fair rents by an impartial Land Court, giving security of tenure, and, if possible, increasing the size of the holdings and giving larger grants from the Treasury.

BAILIE BROWN (Buteshire).

There is a perfect craze here for Canada, the inducement being cheap land. Many are leaving weekly in the hope of securing holdings of their own. This, I believe, will continue until Parliament passes a Small Landholders' Bill for Scotland, and the earlier that is done the better.

MR. GEORGE HARVEY (Moray and Nairn).

Existence for the mass of the rural population is hard and precarious, with little hope of amelioration. The root of the evil is, I think, land monopoly. A drastic reform of the land laws is urgent. The Small Landholders' Bill, if passed, would give some amelioration.

MR. ANDREW LINDSAY (Sutherlandshire).

The Highland people emigrate because they are shut out from the land, sport counting for more than men. Education, too, has made them more enterprising. Lord Pentland's Bill, liberally financed and with drastic provisions against deer-forestry, cannot become law too soon.

MR. JAMES SCOTT (East Fifeshire).

The rural depopulation is caused by the want of small holdings, the absence of fixity of tenure, and of compensation for all improvements. The Scottish Small Holdings Bill should be adopted in its entirety, homes should be made for the poor, and the sport of the rich proprietors should be curtailed.

MR. ALEXANDER LYAL (Berwickshire).

The difficulty of securing land at a fair rent has caused many to emigrate. Holdings of from 50 to 200 acres should be created all over the country, and let at fair rents, with fixity of tenure, or on terms of easy purchase. Co-operation should be encouraged wherever possible.

MR. MARK TURNBULL (Roxburghshire).

The causes of the rural depopulation are bad land laws and the existence of landlords who are thoughtless about the welfare of the people. The Government must pass Lord Pentland's Bill. There must be fixity of tenure for all holdings up to 100 acres, or holdings rented up to £100. We must make landlords merely stipendiaries, as was done in France. We do not want a Purchase Bill.

MR. WILLIAM MILROY (Wigtownshire).

Depopulation is caused by the land being devoted to game, the amalgamating of small holdings into large farms, and the rooting out of the crofting population. The remedy is the increase of small holdings, with fixity of tenure at fair rents.

MR. ROBERT MURRAY (West Lothian).

I consider the principal cause of the depopulation of rural Scotland to be the want of land to cultivate. The Government should at once promise to give facilities to pass Lord Pentland's Bill this Session, and so give the rural population a promise of hope for the future; I believe this would check the exodus.

MR. ALEXANDER SKENE (W. Aberdeenshire).

I think the depopulation in rural Scotland is caused by the increasing scarcity of crofts and the want of prospects for capable young men and women. Canada has more attractive inducements at present. Fixity of tenure, or assisted ownerships, better agricultural education, and co-operation among crofters might help.

MR. ALEXANDER RAE (Wick Burghs).

The cause is chiefly attributable to want of proper land legislation, which compels people to go abroad, where they and their families can live and work in profit. It is also partly due to young people migrating to our large cities, and to the decline of the fishing population, through trawling by capitalist fishing companies.

The Government should immediately pass a comprehensive land measure, providing small holdings and the necessary capital where required for stocking and buildings, with fair rents and fixity of tenure for holdings not included in the Crofters Act.

MR. J. S. AINSWORTH, M.P. (L. Argyll).

Everybody has known for a long time past that the rural population of Scotland has been decreasing at an alarming rate, especially in the Highlands, and this is confirmed by the Census returns. And the best are going away; those who have got their heads on, and who want to make something of their lives naturally leave home to push their way in the Lowlands or the Colonies.

No one wants to prevent a man from doing the best he can for himself; but what we do want to prevent is that he should be driven away by the difficulty of getting an opportunity of settling on the land when he wants to stop. What we have to do is to keep the nursery of the people going. We must not let a single home go down when it can be avoided, and we must make as many more homes as we can, so as to preserve a place for the coming generation to be raised upon, and so provide for the future of the race.

SIR THOMAS BORTHWICK (Chairman of the Midlothian Liberal Association).

(Sir Thomas Borthwick is a well-known agriculturist in Midlothian. He farms a thousand acres of his own, and consequently he speaks with authority on all matters connected with the land. Yet, large holder as he is, he is an enthusiastic supporter of the policy of the provision of small holdings by the State as a cure for the drain on rural Scotland.)

What we want is such an authority as was proposed in Lord Pentland's Bill, which will have power to take land and let it to small holders with fixity of tenure and fair rents.

I am opposed altogether to purchase. What is the sense in overburdening a man with the necessity of finding a large sum, even as a deposit, when he requires all his capital to develop his holding?

Something ought to be done at once. We have in the Lothians the very finest peasantry in the world. Other countries are finding this out, and are holding out every inducement to these men to emigrate. Why should we not make it worth their while to stay in their own country?

"Sacrifice to the mob, O poet! Sacrifice to that unfortunate disinherited, despairing mob, if it must be, and when it must be, thy repose, thy fortune, thy joy, thy liberty, thy life. The mob is the human race in misery. The mob is the mournful beginning of the people. The mob is the great victim of darkness. Sacrifice to it thy gold, and thy blood, which is more than thy gold, and thy thought, which is more than thy blood, and thy love, which is more than thy thought; sacrifice everything except justice. Give it thy ear, thy hand, thy arm, thy heart. Do everything for it except evil. Alas! it suffers so much, and it knows nothing. Correct it, warn it, instruct it, guide it, train it; put it to the school of honesty; make it spell truth; show it the alphabet of reason; teach it to read virtue, probity, generosity, mercy, hold thy book wide open. Be there attentive, vigilant, kind, faithful, humble. For it is beautiful on this sombre earth, during this dark life, brief passage to something beyond. It is beautiful that force should have right for master; that progress should have courage as a leader; that intelligence should have honour as a sovereign; that conscience should have duty as a despot; that civilisation should have liberty as a queen, and that the servant of ignorance should be the light."—VICTOR HUGO.

THE DESERTED HIGHLAND GLENS.

Land reformers north and south must feel indebted to Mr. Outhwaite for his enlightening articles in the DAILY NEWS of last month in the case for land reform in the Highlands of Scotland. The writer gives us a vivid look at a country bleeding to death by the selfishness, ignorance, and caprice of landlordism. In graphic language he referred to Mackenzie's "History of the Highland Clearances," and quoted the despairing words of the author: "The smoke no longer rose from the hearths, but from homes in flames."

These are words, it may be said, from a Radical partisan writer, and as such will doubtless be duly discounted by upholders of the existing land system.

But other Scotsmen of a more conservative turn of mind have spoken in similar terms of the base treatment meted out to a brave people passionately devoted to their native land.

No one will accuse the famous Norman McLeod of partisanship, and these are his words on the case, in his well-known "Reminiscences of a Highland Parish." Describing his own experience, he says:—

"I remember a group of men, tenants in a large glen, which now 'has not a smoke in it,' as the Highlanders say, throughout its length of twenty miles. They had the custom of entertaining in rotation every traveler who cast himself upon their hospitality. The host on the occasion was bound to summon his neighbours to the homely feast. It was my good fortune to be the guest when they received the present minister of 'the parish,' while *en route* to visit some of his flock. We had a most sumptuous feast—oat-cake, crisp and fresh from the firs; cream, rich and thick, and more beautiful than nectar, whatever that may be; blue Highland cheese, finer than Stilton; fat hens, slowly cooked on the fire in a pot of potatoes, without their skins, and with fresh butter—'stoved hens' as the superb dish was called; and, though last but not least, tender kid, roasted as nicely as Charles Lamb's cracklin pig. All was served up with the utmost propriety on a table covered with a pure white cloth, and with all the requisites for a comfortable dinner, including the champagne of elastic, buoyant, and exciting mountain air. The manners and conversation of those men would have pleased the best-bred gentleman. Everything was so simple, modest, un-assuming, un-affected, yet so frank and cordial. The conversation was such as might have been heard at the table of any intelligent man. Alas! there is not a vestige remaining of their homes. I know not whither they are gone, but they have left no representatives behind. The land in the glen is divided between sheep, shepherds, and the shadows of the clouds."

This is the indictment of landlordism in the Highlands of Scotland by one of Scotland's most revered sons. The Scottish Land Values Bill, the Scottish Smallholders' Bill, and the 1909-10 Budget providing for the valuation of the land, came to the men of the bleeding straths and glens of the north like beacon-lights in the gathering darkness. The clansmen were once the partners of their chiefs in the disposition of the soil. Their descendants know full well the facts and the history of the bondage of modern landlordism, and they know full well the former comfort, the peace of mind, and the rough plenty their forbears enjoyed so truly depicted by Norman McLeod. They are out in deadly earnest to have the cause of their long and patiently endured misery removed.

Perhaps the saddest words ever penned in the history of any country were those by Sir Walter Scott in 1816, at once a lament and a prophecy worth recording. He says:—

"In many instances, Highland proprietors have laboured with laudable and humane precaution to render the change introduced by a new mode of cultivation gentle and gradual, and to provide, as far as possible, employment and protection for those families who were thereby dispossessed of their ancient habitations. But in other, and in but too many instances, the glens of the Highlands have been drained, not of their superfluity of population, but of the whole mass of the inhabitants, dispossessed by an unrelenting avarice, which will be one day found to have been as short-sighted as it is unjust and selfish. Meanwhile, the Highlands may become the fairy ground for romance and poetry, or subject of experiment for the professors of speculation, political and economical. But if the hour of need should come, and it may not, perhaps, be far distant, the pibroch may sound through the deserted region, but the summons will remain unanswered. The children who have left her will re-echo from a distant shore the sounds with which they took leave of their own—Ha til, ha til, ha til, mi tulidh!—'We return—we return—we return—we return—no more.'"

The Highlands will always remain "the fairy ground of romance and poetry," but it can best remain so if the people of the Highlands are permitted their due and natural share of its bounties and its beauties. The Highland people have remained true to Liberalism, but how long they will remain steadfast and true depends on the attitude of the Government and the Scottish Liberal Members of Parliament. Sir Walter Scott's words to the landlords of his day can be applied to the Liberal politicians of our day: "The hour of need may come and the summons remain unanswered."

J. P.

'USTLER JOE.

"There is an old man named Fels,
Who skips the world over and tells
All the good folk he meets
On the highways and streets,
That "Rent's like the Game of the Shells."

He's a dandy old chap, is this Joe,
He's the friend of "The Man with the Hoe,"
And unlike all the rest,
He is doing his best
To abolish the cause of most woe.

He's a chap who is "flush" with the "change,"
And he spends it in manner quite strange.
He pursued Henry George,
Now he wants to disgorge,
And the business of life rearrange.

"Tax naught save Land Values," says he;
"Twill abolish all Mon-op-o-ly,
And the sadness of earth
Will give way to sweet mirth,"
Says "The Old Man from over the Sea."

Joe's not canny like wee Andy C.
Joe's not "oily" like saintly John D.
He is "only a Jew,"
But he's white through and through,
And a lover of "real liberty."

So off with your "lids," boys, to Fels,
From Yukon to the old Dardanelles,
Give three cheers and a smile,
From the Lakes to the Nile,
And make the earth ring with your yells.

ROYD EASTWOOD MORRISON.

A recent Reuter message from Winnipeg states that the Hudson's Bay Company has increased the prices of land throughout the West by from three to five dollars an acre.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INTERESTS.

The Mall Approach Compensation Claim.

The hearing of the claim of the Commercial Union Assurance Company (Limited) against the London County Council for £84,272 compensation in respect of the acquisition by the Council of the freehold premises, 55, Charing Cross, was concluded on 12th April, before Mr. Howard Chatfield Clarke, F.R.I.B.A., the sole arbitrator. At the hearing the experts for the claimants supported the claim for £84,272. For the County Council expert evidence supported a valuation of £38,514.

According to the ESTATES GAZETTE of 6th May, Mr. Chatfield Clarke awarded a sum of £50,930.

"Form Eight" declared invalid.

On May 9th, Mr. Justice Warrington, in the Chancery Division, delivered judgment in an action brought, at the instance of the Land Union, by Mr. G. H. Burghes, against the Attorney-General to test the validity of Form VIII. of the Land Tax portion of the 1909-10 Finance Act.

The plaintiff asked for a declaration that Form VIII., which required information with respect to the persons to whom rent was paid or from whom rent was received, and particulars of the land with regard to which such rent was paid or received, was null and void on the ground that it exceeded the intentions of the statute, and that all the Inland Revenue authorities were entitled to was information with respect to a particular piece of land which must be specified in the interrogatory.

After hearing evidence, during which some minor points were raised, his Lordship granted a declaration that the form or notice was unauthorised and that the plaintiff was not under any obligation to comply with the requisition contained therein, or any of them.

Additional Small Holdings Commissioners.

The following appointments as additional Commissioners under the Small Holdings Act were announced in the House of Commons on 15th May:—

Northumberland, Cumberland, Durham, Westmorland, Lancashire, and Yorkshire.—Mr. A. Allsebrook.

Lincolnshire and Isle of Ely.—Mr. J. H. Diggle.

Cheshire, Derbyshire, Notts, Leicestershire, Rutland, Northampton, Warwick, Stafford, Soke of Peterborough, Salop, Worcester, and Hereford.—Mr. E. O. Fordham.

Somerset, Dorset, Devon, and Cornwall.—Mr. Sydney Mager.

Wales and Monmouth.—Mr. John Owen.

Wilts, Gloucester, Oxford, Berks, Hants, and Isle of Wight.—

Mr. F. E. N. Rogers.

Bucks, Bedford, Herts, Essex, Middlesex, Surrey, Sussex, and Kent.—Mr. M. T. Baines.

Norfolk, Hunts, Cambs, and Suffolk.—Mr. E. J. Cheney.

High-priced Land for Market Gardeners.

According to the TIMES, high prices were realised, on 15th May, at Wrexham for detached portions of the Gredington Estate belonging to Lord Kenyon. The property, which is at Holt, about five miles from Wrexham, consists chiefly of holdings used as market gardens. Every lot offered was sold, and the average price realised was just under £160 per acre. For a market garden containing two acres £490 was paid, and three market gardens comprising eight acres were sold for £1,625.

High Values in West London.

According to the TIMES of 5th May, two land sales of exceptional magnitude have just been effected by Messrs. Densham, Berry, and Lambert, land agents, of 26, Savile Row, W.

A freehold site in High Holborn, within a few doors of Kingsway, with an area of nearly one and a half acre, and a long frontage to Holborn in the front and to Whetstone Park in the rear, has been sold for approximately £300,000.

The Pearl Life Assurance Company have acquired the site, and will erect a building for their head offices. The main frontage is 300 ft.

Messrs. Densham, Berry, and Lambert have also sold the freehold of the West End restaurant, The Globe, Coventry Street, and the four adjoining buildings in Rupert Street. It is intended to build an electric theatre, the whole transaction costing the purchasers well over £100,000. These two sales represent close upon half-a-million sterling, and the area of land is just under 1½ acre, a price equivalent to a quarter-of-a-million an acre.