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# George, Chamberlain and the Land Tax:

## *A Chapter in British Party Politics*

By ELWOOD P. LAWRENCE

THE PUBLIC REACTION to Henry George's personal land reform agitation in Great Britain during the Eighteen Eighties<sup>1</sup> as well as the enormous circulation of the cheap editions of *Progress and Poverty*, are ample proof that the American crusader aroused the British social and political conscience as no else in this period. Testimonials by Bernard Shaw, the Webbs, H. G. Wells, and a score of socialists and labor leaders acknowledge this fact and explicitly credit George with being the most potent single instrument in the conversion of both individuals and of the working class itself to trades unionism and socialism.

Most of those who were influenced by George seem to have regarded his cure for the ills of society—the single tax—as an impractical panacea; but they agreed enthusiastically with his catalogue of social injustices and their own spirits caught the fire of George's messianic fervor. The solution they adopted, increasingly through the agitation of trades unions, the Liberal Party after 1889, and the growing Labour Party, was "practical" piecemeal reform leading toward Statism—not at all the Georgian free trade utopia based entirely on the land tax. In his immediate influence, then, on British social, economic, and political affairs George was a catalyst, not the architect of the future state.

If this were the extent of Henry George's influence in Great Britain, the story could be brought to a close in 1889, the year of his last extended speaking tour there. But luck, and the pertinacity of the English single taxers themselves, arranged that George's influence was to be felt in a more direct and practical way. Both the Liberal and the Labour parties adopted George's taxation of land values theory and attempted to write it into the law of the land, although neither party adopted the principle that the single tax would eventually supersede all other taxes. The history of this aspect of George's influence in Great Britain is an interesting chapter in the adjustment of British political parties to the more democratic conditions of a broader franchise. George had made the land tax a popular issue, and therefore it was a potential vote catcher.

<sup>1</sup> For an account of this reaction see the following articles by E. P. Lawrence in the *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*: "George's Remedies for Britain's Land Problems," July, 1951; "Henry George and British Socialism," October, 1951; and "Henry George's Analysis of British Social Conditions," April, 1953.

The Labour party from the very beginning was conditioned to accept George's proposal for a tax on land values, since the party's leaders regarded it as a form of land nationalization, and nationalization was an article of belief in the party. The story of how the Liberals came to adopt the land tax as a basic plank in their platform goes back to Joseph Chamberlain's heyday as a Radical leader. He was influenced by *Progress and Poverty* and by George's agitation, and he it was who initiated the pattern of Radical reform which began to unroll in 1906 and which culminated in Lloyd George's 1909 land tax.

When Chamberlain entered Parliament in 1876 he brought with him a reputation for accomplishing fundamental social reforms and a menacing attitude toward monopoly and privilege which made the Whig leaders blanch with fear. During the term of his mayoralty in Birmingham (1873-5), he had conceived the subversive principle that "All monopolies which are sustained in any way by the State ought to be in the hands of the representatives of the people, by whom they should be administered, and to whom their profits should go."<sup>2</sup> Acting on this view, Chamberlain persuaded the town council to take over and operate the municipal gas and water systems, and to engage in a vast slum clearance and rebuilding operation.

#### Chamberlain's Challenge to the Middle Class

SUCH AN ENTERPRISING EXAMPLE in municipal reform was in itself a horrid shock to urban vested interests throughout England, but worse was to follow. Chamberlain determined to apply his local principles on a national scale by introducing them into the program of the Liberal Party. With characteristic boldness he announced this intention in two articles in the *Fortnightly Review* for September 1873 and October 1874. The first of these, "The Liberal Party and its Leaders," charged that Gladstone and Gladstone's colleagues were destroying the Liberal Party by refusing to recognize that the social question must dominate British politics in the immediate future. The second article renewed this accusation, drew a shocking picture in Henry George's style of the "condition of the people," and in effect warned the representatives of big business and industry that they must reform or perish.

Chamberlain stated his threat bluntly: "If our middle class, and the press which panders to their prejudices, cannot reconcile themselves to the altered situation and devise some better means of settling trades dis-

<sup>2</sup> J. L. Garvin, *The Life of Joseph Chamberlain*, London, Macmillan, 1932, Vol. I, p. 188.

putes than the rough arbitrament of strikes and lock-outs, they may wake some day to find their terrors realized, and themselves in face of an organization whose numbers will be irresistible and whose settled principles will be hostility to capital and distrust of the middle class."<sup>3</sup>

Finally, before he entered Parliament Chamberlain had come out unmistakably for land reform. In the spring of 1872 Joseph Arch founded his Agricultural Union, an almost spontaneous protest by agricultural laborers against wages and the system of land tenure. Chamberlain seized the opportunity to dramatize this revolt with a speech ten days later in Birmingham, in which the slogan "Free Land" played a prominent part.<sup>4</sup> Thus, when Chamberlain entered national politics, he bore the same kind of reputation that George was to acquire in the next decade, that of a subversive influence with respect to vested interests and property.

From 1876 until 1886, when he bolted the party over the Home Rule issue, Chamberlain pursued his aggressive policy with such effect that he was not only the recognized leader of the Radical faction, but the crown prince of the Liberal Party. It was thought that his accession to the throne waited only on the bowing out of Gladstone. In 1884 the young Lloyd George wrote in his diary: "Mr. Chamberlain is unquestionably the future leader of the people,"<sup>5</sup> a sentiment which Labourchere echoed a year later. On October 1, 1885, the latter wrote in *Truth*: "Mr. Chamberlain's advent to power may be regarded as certain."

Thus when Henry George and *Progress and Poverty* came to Great Britain, Joseph Chamberlain was the only politician with a national following and reputation who could compete with the American for top billing on the reform circuit. It was therefore important for the political future of George's land tax that he was able to influence Chamberlain in two important respects. One was to stimulate enormously Chamberlain's social consciousness. Chamberlain read *Progress and Poverty* sometime before the end of 1882 and was "potently" moved by George's "eloquent pictures of the contemporary contrasts . . . between the wealth of the few and the distress of the many."<sup>6</sup> This aroused sense of social suffering may account for the increased tempo of his attacks on wealth and privilege in his speeches from 1883 to 1886.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 219-20.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 149.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, II, p. 124.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 385.

But George exerted a second influence on Chamberlain that was even more important in the political future of the land tax scheme. *Progress and Poverty* convinced Chamberlain that the land question might be "the great thing" in British politics in the immediate future.<sup>7</sup> This conviction accounts for the emphasis in Chamberlain's Radical program on a variety of land reform schemes for creating small holdings, breaking up big estates, slum clearance, and the taxation of the unearned increment from urban property, where the increase of value had been created by social factors and not by the labor of the individual owner. As the leader of the Radicals, Chamberlain grafted onto their program the scion of land reform and thus paved the way for the later affinity between the Radicals and the taxation of land values as advocated by the British Georgists.

Chamberlain's conversion to the view that land reform must occupy a high place in the program of the Liberal Party also furthered the eventual alliance between George and the Radicals because it widened the breach between him and Gladstone and the Whig Liberals. Emulating George, Chamberlain preached his views on land reform in Glasgow and the Scottish highlands, where they were received with immense enthusiasm.<sup>8</sup> Gladstone was utterly contemptuous of Henry George's land views; on the occasion of the first Liberal motion made in the House of Commons to tax land values he intervened with the remark: "There are persons who view the proposals of Mr. George as proposals of a very enlightened character, and who very much resent the use of hard words respecting them . . . I will say that, as far as my examination or knowledge of his proposals goes, I find it extremely difficult, and indeed for myself, altogether impossible, to exclude them or extricate them, from the category of those plans to which hard words are no doubt commonly applied."<sup>9</sup>

When, therefore, he saw Chamberlain flying what seemed very like the Georgian banner, Gladstone fought this heresy shoulder to shoulder with Hartington and the Whigs. Chamberlain regarded his leader's attitude as "a slap in the face" to the Radicals,<sup>10</sup> and on September 21, 1885 he told Morley that he would "sit below the gangway" if Gladstone did not accept his views on the compulsory acquisition of land for social purposes.<sup>11</sup> It seems reasonable to conclude that the influence of Henry George was partly responsible for the cleavage between Whigs and

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 386.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, II, p. 95.

<sup>9</sup> *Times* (London), Feb. 28, 1891.

<sup>10</sup> Garvin, II, p. 94.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 96.

Radicals; in turn this fundamental disagreement made the Radicals much more determined to press for a land tax when the opportunity arrived.

#### The Union of Georgism and Constitutional Radicalism

CHAMBERLAIN EARLY in the Eighteen Eighties embarked on a vigorous reform campaign which alienated the more conservative members of his party, but the campaign had important results for George's views. It created in the popular mind the belief that Chamberlain and the radicals had indeed been caught up in the tail of George's comet, a belief not too far out of line with the facts, for according to R. H. Gretton, George's theories "coloured the whole of the Radical programme" in 1884.<sup>12</sup> And Garvin admits that "Scottish Radicalism, especially in Glasgow and its region, was profoundly influenced by Henry George and the Irish agrarian movement."<sup>13</sup> Garvin also credits Chamberlain with originating the main ideas in the program of the future Labour Party, whereas a host of socialists pay George the same compliment.

Both these claims are true; up to 1886 the influence of George and of Chamberlain ran along gradually converging lines. These lines met when the Radicals engaged George to speak from their platforms in 1889, and when the National Liberal Federation adopted A. C. Fyffe's resolution on December 5, 1889, which declared that "in any reform of the land laws, a just and equitable taxation of land values is an essential condition."<sup>14</sup> How this union was brought about can be understood by an examination of Chamberlain's views on the land and social questions, and the reputation he acquired as the result of these views.

Chamberlain's agitation to force the Liberals to adopt his Radical program extended over a period of three years, from January 1883 through 1885. The basis of his crusade was a series of articles which appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* during 1883 and 1884, written by various hands under Chamberlain's direction. In 1885 these articles were published in book form as *The Radical Programme* with an introduction by Joseph Chamberlain. The volume makes it clear that Chamberlain was anxious to dissociate himself from the taint of land nationalization, for it expressly repudiates George's proposal, because it is too "drastic" and "alarming" and argues: "That the masses have not benefited, as it might be hoped they would, by the extraordinary prosperity of the last half century is true enough; but that the whole of the increase of wealth during

<sup>12</sup> *A Modern History of the English People, 1880-1922.* London, Secker, 1930, p. 143.

<sup>13</sup> Garvin, II, p. 66.

<sup>14</sup> *Manchester Guardian*, Dec. 5, 1889.

this period has gone into the pockets of the land owners is conspicuously false."<sup>15</sup> But Liberals and Conservatives alike found this a very faint damning indeed of George's views, for they saw that if one part of George's proposition regarding the unfair distribution of wealth were conceded, the remainder would be accepted in course of time.

Nor did specific statements regarding land and land taxation contain any grounds for reassurance, for they had a socialistic and therefore a Georgian ring. *The Radical Programme* announced that measures must be put through to bring the land "into the best use for the nation." Heretofore, it was charged, the agricultural laborer had been regarded by political economists as a mere machine, "an instrument to be used for the creation of wealth, deposited in the hands of a few; not as a human being whose comfort, health and home are to be considered, and who has a claim to such benefits as were conferred by the Factory Acts upon the labourers in towns." Measures to improve the welfare of the agricultural laborer might require the taxation of property; they would certainly "sound the death-knell of the laissez-faire system."<sup>16</sup>

Chamberlain's glance in the direction of urban property was equally rapacious. He warned the owners of vacant land in towns that it must bear taxation on its full value, not as at present on its value for agricultural purposes.<sup>17</sup> As for slum clearance, he was prepared to go into the pockets of the landowners to defray the cost of this social reform. It was to be the Birmingham story on a national scale: "the expense of making towns habitable for the toilers who dwell in them must be thrown on the land which their toil makes valuable, without any effort on the part of its owners."<sup>18</sup>

Even if the expression of Radical views on social conditions in Great Britain and on land and land taxation had been confined to the pages of the *Fortnightly Review* and *The Radical Programme* they would have courted comparison to those of Henry George. But Chamberlain was a man of the hustings as well, and he knew that an aroused electorate was a more potent argument than political manifestoes in printed form. Like George he therefore carried his agitation to the voters; what he said about social conditions and the land made it even more apparent that the new radicalism was conceived in the spirit if not in the letter of *Progress and Poverty*.

<sup>15</sup> *The Radical Programme*, with a preface by the Right Hon. J. Chamberlain, London, Chapman & Hall, 1885, p. 68.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 15-6.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 108-9.

Like George, Chamberlain maintained that poverty was the cause, not the result of the social ills and shortcomings so prevalent among the poor. He told a Hull audience on August 6, 1885, that "Ignorance, intemperance, immorality, and disease—these things are all interdependent and closely connected, and although they are often the cause of poverty, they are still more frequently the consequence of destitution."<sup>19</sup>

In speech after speech he aroused the spirit of class consciousness by hammering away at the contrast in Great Britain between wealth and poverty. England, he declared, has been called "the paradise of the rich," and he urged the cheering crowd "no longer to allow it to be the purgatory of the poor."<sup>20</sup> He underlined the meaning of his reference to the "death-knell of the laissez-faire system" by attacks, strikingly like those of Henry George, on orthodox economists and what he called "the convenient cant of selfish wealth."

He refused to attribute to a natural cause a "system under which the labourer is content to work for ten or twelve hours a day for ten shillings a week, and with no hope, no prospect, for the termination of his career except a death in the hospital or the poor house."<sup>21</sup> Instead he thought the "great problem of our civilization" was "to grapple with the mass of misery and destitution in our midst, coexistent as it is with the evidence of abundant wealth and teeming prosperity."<sup>22</sup> To do this Chamberlain insisted that the British must abandon as outworn their belief in the immutability of "eternal" laws of supply and demand, freedom of contract, and the rights of private property. This was indeed laying violent hands on the ark! Like George, Chamberlain dramatized British social conditions, and like George again he proclaimed that in social affairs there was a higher law than that of property ownership and unrestricted profits.

#### Chamberlain's Attacks on the Landlords

LIKE GEORGE ALSO Chamberlain in his speeches attacked the landlords with righteous indignation. Chamberlain's views on the land-owning aristocracy of Great Britain had from the beginning been colored by a strong infusion of republican red; and now, in urging the land reform plank of the Radical program, he gave full rein to the expression of these feelings. Their correspondence to the views of George is remarkable. Before a Birmingham audience on March 30, 1883, he held up Lord Salisbury as a horrible example of the sins of landlords. This gentleman,

<sup>19</sup> Garvin, II, p. 61.

<sup>20</sup> H. H. Asquith, *Fifty Years of Parliament*, Boston, Little, Brown, Vol. I, p. 93.

<sup>21</sup> Garvin, I, p. 555.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, II, p. 63.



he said, "constitutes himself the spokesman of a class—the class to which he himself belongs, who toil not neither do they spin, whose fortunes, as in his case, have originated in grants made in times gone by for the services which courtiers rendered kings, and have since grown and increased while they have slept by levying an increased share on all that other men have done by toil and labour to add to the general wealth and prosperity of the country."<sup>23</sup> This general indictment contains two points most frequently stressed by George, that large estates had been acquired as gifts and not created by labor, and that landlords were rich because for centuries they had been pocketing socially-created wealth.

Chamberlain did not, like George, include all landlords in the category of expendables; only "indolent and inefficient" landlords. These "must be taught that their ownership is a trust . . . limited by the supreme necessities of the nation, and they must give place to others who will do full justice to the capabilities of the land."<sup>24</sup> Moreover, landlords could not be trusted to reform themselves. When a Royal Commission, packed with landowners, was sent into Scotland in 1883 to investigate the complaints of the crofters, Henry George remarked that this was like setting a wolf to guard the sheep. Chamberlain echoed this taunt at Hull on August 6, 1885, when he said that to return landlords to Parliament in the expectation that they would protect the interests of the farmer was like "setting the cat to guard the cream."<sup>25</sup>

Like George, Chamberlain carried his land crusade into the north of Scotland, for here was an area of extreme disaffection. Garvin's survey of the topics he discoursed on reads like a digest of George's speeches; he "dwelt on seizures, clearances, exactions, evictions, deer-forests, and the effect of agrarian depopulation in creating the coagulated poverty in the towns."<sup>26</sup> He told the Highlands that their landlords practiced "extortion and exaction," referred to a belief in the virtues of private property in land as "this fetish," and deplored the fact that two-thirds of the land of Scotland was held by 330 proprietors. His speech at Inverness on September 18, 1885 was studded with generalizations which seemed to have been straight out of *Progress and Poverty*, in spirit if not in letter, like: "I have sometimes speculated upon what would have happened in this country if it had been possible to establish private property in air," or, in reference to the original source of titles to large estates, his belief

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 392.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 556.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, II, p. 61.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

that "theft" should not "be condoned because it escapes detection at the time."<sup>27</sup>

Goaded into a reply by constant references to him as the archetype of British landlords, Lord Salisbury held Chamberlain up to ridicule as an "inveterate cockney" who was attempting to lead an agricultural crusade. Chamberlain, with the confidence of a man who knows he has already won the argument, replied soberly with a statement of the ideal which he had in view for the British farm worker. He said that he simply wanted to "restore them [agricultural laborers] to the land." Only this would "gratify that heaven-implanted craving in every labourer's heart to have some closer and more direct connection with the land which his labour has made productive."<sup>28</sup>

Naturally enough Chamberlain's views on British social conditions, land, and landlords met with furious attacks from the Conservative opposition group and sadly embarrassed the Liberal government. Henry George was an alien and in 1885 his following was politically negligible. But Chamberlain was a political force in the country, and thousands of those brought into the electorate by the new Franchise Bill might be expected to vote for a radical reform of the land laws and advanced social reforms. But the one expression used by Chamberlain which sent a thrill of horror through the ranks of the landlords, and which did more than anything else to persuade Britons that Chamberlain and George were blood brothers, was the word "Ransom."

He used this expression in a speech given at a working-men's demonstration in Birmingham Town Hall on January 5, 1885. The two revolutionary claims he made in this speech set most of the Liberal and all the Conservative press by the ears, for they were exactly what George had been saying. First he argued for natural rights, claiming that every Englishman was born into the world "with a right to share in the great inheritance of the community, with a right to a part in the land of his birth." But, he pointed out, the institution of private property had replaced the more communal social organization of the distant past, and he admitted that it was virtually impossible to turn back the clock. Then came the devastating question, which opened up all sorts of dreadful prospects for the wealthy: "But then I ask what ransom will property pay for the security which it enjoys?"<sup>29</sup> The consternation caused by this speech can be paralleled only by the horror aroused by George's denuncia-

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73-4.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 549.

tions. His opponents seldom either realized or acknowledged that behind all these revolutionary statements was a relatively modest objective. In contrast to the single tax and land nationalization, Chamberlain wanted peasant proprietorship which would produce "a new race of yeomen."<sup>30</sup> Or, as he put it to A. J. Balfour after his radical campaign had collapsed and he had left the Liberal Party: "My viewpoint about land has always been to municipalize it—a barbarous word, which, however, expresses my substitute for absurd schemes of land nationalization. I caused my municipality to purchase no less than £1,400,000 worth of land, and that is the system I wish to see extended."<sup>31</sup>

In addition to his views on social conditions, land, and landlords, Chamberlain exhibited one further striking similarity to Henry George in his marked anti-aristocratic point of view. On the occasion of John Bright's jubilee celebration in Birmingham (June 13, 1883), Chamberlain made what was considered to be a very Republican reference to royalty. He told the excited audience: "Your demonstrations on Monday (cheers) lacked nearly all the elements which constituted the great pageant of the Russian coronation. (Hear, hear.) The pomp and the circumstance were wanting. No public money was expended. (Hear, hear.) No military display (Hear, hear.) accompanied Mr. Bright. (Cheers.) The brilliant uniforms, the crowds of high officials, the representatives of Royalty—they were absent (loud laughter and cheers)—and nobody missed them." (renewed laughter and cheering.)<sup>32</sup> The Queen immediately took offense and informed Gladstone of her displeasure. Lord Salisbury labeled Chamberlain's statement "the Jacobin theory pure and simple," and he was quick to draw the parallel with Henry George: "It is a new, a most sinister, a most terrible feature in our constitutional history. There is no reason so far as difference of opinion is concerned, why the present Ministry should not receive into its sympathetic bosom Mr. Parnell and Mr. George."<sup>33</sup>

Moreover, Chamberlain was determined that the legislative power of the House of Lords be strictly subservient to the will of the people; this decision foreshadowed the action taken twenty-five years later by Lloyd George when the Upper Chamber killed the budget because it contained a Georgian land tax provision. When Lord Salisbury threatened a dissolution over the Franchise Bill, Chamberlain declared himself delighted with

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, II, p. 79.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 191.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, I, pp. 394-5.

<sup>33</sup> *Times* (London), June 28, 1883.

the prospect, for "then the issue will be between the Peers and the People, between the privileges of the few and the rights of the many."<sup>34</sup> When the threat materialized in 1884 and Chamberlain and his fellow Radicals carried the fight for franchise to the people, they rallied the democratic forces of the country with the slogan "Mend them or end them." Only a compromise whereby redistribution and franchise were passed at the same time averted a head-on clash with the Lords.

#### A Tribute to George's Influence

IN THE HISTORY of political ideas the popular conception of what a man or a group stands for is often a more potent influence on the immediate course of events than the sober truth. This was certainly true of the reputation of Chamberlain and the Radicals in 1884 and 1885. Both conservatives and center and right wing Liberals smeared Chamberlain with the same derogatory epithets which were applied to Henry George, accused Chamberlain of hiring the American to make propaganda for the Radical cause, and tried to prove by insinuation and example that the land and social items in the Radical program had been lifted from George's philosophy. In whatever way one reads this evidence, it is a clear compliment to the author of *Progress and Poverty*: either the Radicals had in fact adopted George's views, or George had become such a potent influence that his name could be used to discredit left-wing reform measures.

According to Garvin, Chamberlain was "the most reviled of public men" in England.<sup>35</sup> He was a Jack Cade; he advocated blackmail, confiscation, plunder, communism. A vote for Chamberlain was a vote for revolution, thought Lord Salisbury, and he thought that England in 1884, governed as it was by Liberals, was "on an inclined plane leading from the position of Lord Hartington to that of Mr. Chamberlain and so on to the depths over which Mr. George reigns supreme."<sup>36</sup> For advocating slum improvements at the expense of property owners he was called a State Socialist. In a *Punch* cartoon for February 14, 1885 Chamberlain appeared as the Joey of pantomime, about to prod an elderly and conservative citizen with a red hot poker labeled "Socialism." So pervasive were the socialistic implications of Chamberlain's campaign that the *Christian Socialist* used the Birmingham and Ipswich speeches of January 1885 as

<sup>34</sup> Garvin, I, p. 402.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 275.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 462.

a pretty accurate gauge of the advance which Socialism has made in this country."<sup>37</sup>

Although the *Times*, with its customary form of wishful thinking on matters of social reform, opined that "Mr. Chamberlain's excerpts from the economic gospel of Henry George have produced no more than a passing excitement,"<sup>38</sup> a representative garland of comments in the British press linking George with Chamberlain and the Radicals tells a different story. Nor does Henry George Jr.'s statement that the name of his father was coupled with Chamberlain's in 1885 as a result of the latter's speeches in behalf of the Radical program give the full truth.

George and Chamberlain figured in news items as a team as early as January, 1884, during George's first extended speaking tour of Great Britain at the beginning of the year. The *Aberdeen Journal*, which attacked Henry George at every opportunity, developed the theory that George's extravagance was frightening even Chamberlain and the Radicals, "who might have been expected to support him most strongly," and "who were so fond of quoting his book." They were now holding aloof because of the roughness of George's doctrines.<sup>39</sup> The paper assured its readers that the really dangerous men were not the Bradlaughs and the Georges but the Dilkes and the Chamberlains, educated men who had been taken in by the ideas in *Progress and Poverty*; George was therefore a blessing in disguise, since during his present campaign he had succeeded in alarming the Radicals.<sup>40</sup> And less than a week later the paper hailed what it considered to be an about face on the part of the Radicals, alleging, without due regard for literary accuracy, that "In Mr. George they have raised their Frankenstein, and they are frightened. They see in him the Red Spectre with an intensity of colour greater than that of the French Revolution of 1792."<sup>41</sup>

The same paper also carried the account of a meeting on February 11, 1884 of the United Trades Council of Aberdeen, which was addressed by the Rev. C. L. Macdonald on plans for improving the dwellings of artisans and laborers. The speaker ". . . gave as the best remedy he knew, Mr. Chamberlain's maxim—that the expense of making the towns habitable for the toilers who dwelt in them must be placed on the land which their toil makes valuable, and that without any effort on the part of the

<sup>37</sup> February, 1885.

<sup>38</sup> Jan. 10, 1885.

<sup>39</sup> Jan. 18, 1885.

<sup>40</sup> Feb. 8, 1884.

<sup>41</sup> Feb. 13, 1884.

owners. That was how Mr. Chamberlain proposed to settle the matter, and he (Mr. Macdonald) thought the choice lay between Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Henry George."<sup>42</sup> Such comments bracket Chamberlain and George in the clearest possible way, by suggesting how at the time the wildness of their views from the conservative standpoint recommended them to the working class.

The idea that Chamberlain and George were somehow associated lurked in other quarters as well. The *Weekly Times* reported that the Cobden Club, the citadel of free traders, was shocked by Chamberlain's doubts as to the efficacy of free trade in land, so much so that the Club's stalwart, Thorold Rogers, feared "that the Georgian economics are finding their way into high quarters."<sup>43</sup> Following Henry George's speech in Edinburgh on February 27, 1884, the *Edinburgh Courier* charged editorially that George was both a Radical and a poacher.<sup>44</sup> In the same month the *Manchester Courier* lumped Chamberlain and George as representing those who wished to break up large estates, gave statistics purporting to prove that such a measure would increase rent, and commented ironically: "In all probability facts like these will render the work Messrs. Chamberlain and Henry George have set themselves, far more difficult of accomplishment than they appear to imagine."<sup>45</sup> And on George's return to America the Philadelphia *Telegraph* reprinted a comment from the London *Saturday Review* which linked George, Chamberlain, and the forthcoming Franchise Bill. The charge was that Henry George "appeals to the same multitude which is about to be invested by Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Chamberlain with supreme and irresponsible power."<sup>46</sup> Of course Chamberlain and George both believed, as it turned out over-optimistically, that the passage of the Franchise Bill would give control of Parliament to the Radicals and clear the decks for their land and social reforms.

<sup>42</sup> Feb. 12, 1884.

<sup>43</sup> Feb. 1, 1884.

<sup>44</sup> Feb. 28, 1884.

<sup>45</sup> Feb. 9, 1884.

<sup>46</sup> April 25, 1884.

(Continued)