

the hearing-hearers that the accused was of a new and different variety. He anticipated attack, he welcomed it, he ran to meet it with every weapon of fact, of humour, of legitimate pride."

Every friend of Louis Post is delighted to hear it and will congratulate him. In acting as he did and now in telling his story to the world he has not only confounded the ignorant critics who, in times of great national excitement, abound in all countries, but he has done a great service to all of us, which will not be forgotten. The extraordinary chapter in history here related will shake the faith of many of us in the ways of Governments. We can be grateful to Mr. Post for this telling exposure.

W. R. LESTER.

### ROBERT C. ORR

We deeply regret to announce the passing away of Robert C. Orr, who died at Woking on 11th May in his 52nd year. He had been troubled with some internal disorder but, unfortunately, did not allow it to worry him until it suddenly became so serious that an immediate operation had to be undergone, alas, without success. He must have suffered for some time previously, but the end came peacefully and without complaint.

In his going we have lost one who has been a devoted adherent of the movement for many years, from the time when as a young man he interested himself in the work of the Scottish League. He came in a spirit ready to give all the service he could and his enthusiasm never flagged. Business took him to London when the land campaign following the 1909 Budget was at its height, and later, for a brief period, he joined the staff of the United Committee, rendering valuable assistance that required just the talents he possessed to gain the willing co-operation of workers belonging to the rank and file of the political Parties. As an advance agent of the Committee he took part in organizing conferences, demonstrations and propaganda work at Parliamentary and Municipal Elections. A keen politician himself, he delighted in helping in the distribution of the Committee's leaflets on a grand scale. It was no light task for Mr. Orr and his colleagues, and the achievement is on record. The success attending a good part of that effort was due in great measure to his quiet perseverance and to his tactful handling of the voluntary helpers who had to be enrolled in every district. In the result, 50,000,000 leaflets made up into 2,200,000 books were distributed from house to house in 234 Parliamentary constituencies.

Then came the six months' strenuous campaign in all the divisions of Wiltshire, the feature of which was the securing of 12,000 signatures to a petition to Parliament urging the Taxation of Land Values in the interests of the farmer and the agricultural labourer. What was done in these months makes a long and interesting story, in which Mr. Orr played an important part, busy all the time on cycle or on foot canvassing every corner of the countryside and organizing the meetings addressed by his co-workers and himself.

Mr. Orr was trained in farming and found an opportunity to return to that occupation before the war by renting a farm at Hitchin, and only recently he moved to Woking. In these latter years his visits to the office were less frequent, but we have still fresh recollections of his comradeship when the work of the movement engaged his special attention at Tothill Street. It was a pleasure to see him at the International Conference in Oxford last year where he rejoiced to be among the hosts of co-workers whom he had not met for a long period. With a lovable disposition he had an obliging and homely nature whose peculiar faculty is to have no acquaintances except friends. We convey our sincere condolences to his sister, Mrs. John Paul, to his brothers and to the family circle in their sad bereavement.

A. W. M.

## ABOLISH RATES AND POVERTY!

By T. ATHOLL ROBERTSON, M.P.

(From an article in JOHN BULL, 17th May. The Editor in a foreword says: "The reorganization of the Land Valuation Department, announced in the Budget, foreshadows the reopening of the vital principle of Taxation of Land Values. This reform would, in the opinion of the writer, relieve unemployment, reduce rates and taxation and solve the housing problem.")

Land value, or economic rent, is an expression in terms of money, of the natural differences existing, or which are socially produced between one bit of land and another. The difference in fertility between an acre of light, sandy land in Norfolk, and an acre of heavy clay land which grows magnificent wheat crops in the case of Gowrie is a difference due to Nature. Each represents what may be called a "natural opportunity," but they are of different values for purposes of cultivation.

Slate quarries in North Wales and deposits of earth for brick-making around Peterborough are useless for cultivation, but they have an ascertainable value all the time. These and many others are Nature's gifts to mankind, and there is no semblance of justice upon which we can justify their monopoly by some, to the exclusion of all.

We cannot all live in a double-fronted house facing Hampstead Heath, or secure business premises in Bond Street, or plough the best loam in Hampshire, so "economic rent" comes into play as an equalist, operating by means of competition, and fixing the price to be paid by those who enjoy the greatest advantage.

A large percentage of the total land value of Scotland is situated on the foreshore of the River Clyde, a value contributed to by the whole of the people of Scotland. It is the same with the values of the City of London. A Colonial merchant rents an office in the City to market the produce of the wheat lands of the Far West of Canada. A Yorkshire or Lancashire spinner seeks a warehouse to handle the output of piece goods from his Northern looms. The china-clay merchant from Cornwall looks for a counting house.

The City of London is the hub of the commercial world. Every town and shire contributes something to its value. The miner, the engineer, the ploughman, the workers by hand and brain in all sorts of remote parts of the country, have made the value of the City. What a competition for room and for the opportunity to use land!

A grass park bordering a large city is let to a local butcher for a few pounds per annum as accommodation land, while a huge board announces the fact that this land is to let, or sell for building purposes.

If this land was rated and taxed on its true economic value, what would happen? The landlord would not go on paying rates indefinitely on something that did not yield a proper return; he would be compelled to let or sell the land to someone who would put it to its best use, or use it so himself. This would mean employment, houses and factories would spring up, roads, drainage and lighting must be done, there would be jobs for men.

The value created by this development on the undeveloped land around would accrue to the people themselves. The tax on wages would go, and the attraction of 160 acres of land in Canada would be small compared with the attraction of developing our own resources in the old country in the interests of us all.

The monopoly value of land would be squeezed out, and instead of sites being held up, and users begging the landlords for the opportunity to use land, the landlords would be searching round for users.

The gold-mine we want to work is on the surface of these islands. It is the thousands of undeveloped and underdeveloped acres of this old country of ours.

Under a uniform and universal tax on land values, the