

we are not asking immunity for those who hold titles to smaller shares in the natural resources of the country.

DANGER OF SUCH EXEMPTIONS IN PRACTICE

Another objection to it is this. Such exemptions defeat themselves, as is proven by the experience of New Zealand. There is nothing to prevent a division of estates among members of a family, or ten thousand dollars in land value being held by innumerable "dummies." We think the Denver War Veterans are ill advised, and that the exemption will subject the bill to attack as vulnerable.

Yet it is a step in the right direction. Better th's than nothing. Colorado ex-service men will get their bonus out of the land rent of Colorado. The land values of the State belong to the people of that State. If it be good policy to pay our defenders a bonus—as we think it is—and at the same time relieve the unemployment situation to the degree that such a tax will tend to force idle lands into use—at least that much is gained, despite what we consider a grave defect in the bill.

PUTTING MONEY INTO THE TREASURY BEFORE TAKING

It is now up to the ex-service men of every State to improve on this measure. Let them take the necessary steps to secure appropriate legislation; let them discuss it at their meetings, formulate such discussion in resolutions, sound the legislators, and take such methods of publicity as will make their demands irresistible.

To the Soldiers of the World War, we address this earnest plea. What you ask for in this way can be subject to no evil criticism. You will have buttressed this demand for the Bonus with the implacable logic that is vulnerable at no single point. You are not asking for something out of the public treasury; you are suggesting a method of filling that treasury and enabling government to pay easily and without trenching upon present resources, the suggested compensation which the voters of one State—New York—voted for overwhelmingly after hearing the arguments from all sides.

SOCIAL JUSTICE REINFORCES THE DEMAND

Any other method of raising the money needed means an addition to an already over-taxed people, as we have shown; any other method will meet with instant and plausible opposition from people who are weary of tax burdens, and who, though not opposed to the Bonus, think the tax scales are already weighted to the limit.

You will begin your agitation with an immeasurable advantage on your side. No issues of new bonds; no new or further taxation. You are asking for a share of the social increment—a pitifully small share in view of your sacrifices made or offered. The justice of your demand is reinforced by the demands of social justice.

JOSEPH DANA MILLER.

The Single Tax In New South Wales

THE anniversary of Henry George's birth has again come round, and brought with it the usual reunion of friends and sympathisers from all over the State. We met in the Highland Society's Hall, near the centre of the city, which used to be the German Club, but which since the war has been taken possession of by the Highlanders, and now instead of seeing the portraits of the ex-Kaiser and the rest of that unholy crew frown down on the spectators we see Burns, Sir Walter Scott, General Gordon, and the picturesque scenery around Edinburgh and the Lochs.

Years ago our principal enemy in Sydney was a Wesleyan minister—the Rev. Mr. Clutsam, the Secretary of the Wesleyan Conference, if I remember rightly. Today the President of that Conference (Rev. W. H. Howard) delivered the Anniversary address, while the President of the Free Trade and Land Values League, who occupied the chair, was the Rev. W. H. Beale, ex-President of the Wesleyan Conference, a venerable and lovable figure, with the soul of a poet and luminous eyes in which truth and justice and a power of expressing them are visibly enshrined. It was he who made that splendid declaration that "Democracy is the expression of Christianity," and who more than anyone was responsible for the framing of the elaborate resolutions adopted by the Wesleyan Conference last year for "the Christianizing of social relations," which concluded with the memorable pronouncement that "in the sphere of economics we aim at the Christianizing of industrial relations—the interpretation in economic terms of the Brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God."

CAPITAL A FRIEND, LAND MONOPOLY THE ENEMY

The Commemoration address, delivered by the Rev. W. H. Howard, was a fine exposition of the principles taught by Henry George. The following paragraph is worth quoting as it deals with the position from an Australian point of view. "Our Socialist friends," said the speaker, "are ever girding at the capitalist. The capitalist cannot hurt the worker apart from land monopoly. If there were no land monopoly all the capital of the country would be engaged in utilizing its resources. This continued denunciation of capitalism by the trades unions and labor leaders showed that the workers did not understand who was their real enemy. It was not Capital apart from landlordism, but the private ownership of land. The speaker quoted John Stuart Mill to the effect that land value was something to which no one could lay moral claim, but which should be taken and used for communal purposes. This was the object of the reform for which they were working today. This question vitally affected us in Australia. Cut off from land the people were restless and discontented. Individuals were allowed to own large areas without any obligation to put them to effective use. Even the present

tax on land values, which was intended to force land into use, was so unequal and unjust in its incidence that it failed to accomplish the good which it would otherwise have done.

The difficulty of getting land was great, but the difficulty of making both ends meet when you were on the land was greater still, and he pitied the man who would take up land under Sir Joseph Carruthers' scheme with conditions existing as at present. The present system of taxation, the heavy freights and fares, and the growing interference by Government with the working of the land, all helped to drive people off instead of attracting them to the land. The more difficult they made access to land the more we might expect trouble and worry of every kind. If, on the other hand, the Government would only take the unimproved value of land, which rightly belonged to the community, and apply it for the satisfaction of communal wants, it would serve the double purpose of "opening up the land and enable the Government to reduce freights and fares and get rid of some of the taxation which so heavily oppressed the workers today."

OUR CHAMPION LETTER WRITER

Few people either here or elsewhere have any idea of the great work that is being done by the Free Trade and Land Values League, and especially by Mr. A. G. Huie, who must surely be the original "able and energetic Secretary" of whom we hear so much about. He has marked ability, especially for seeing the weak points in an enemy's argument, while his energy is boundless. He is tall, spare, and wiry, he has been married for about fifteen years—to the Single Tax, and his children are now rather numerous—all the members of the Single Tax League, as it used to be called, although its present name is that given above.

If he had any other wife than the League he could never have accomplished a tithe of the work he has been able to perform. For years he acted as Secretary to the League without any pay; how he did it I never could make out, and even when we did manage to give him a salary it was a mere trifle compared with what he could have earned if he had attached himself to some business concern. He was aptly described a little while ago by a member of the League as "Our Champion Letter Writer," and as such his name has probably more publicity than that of anyone in the State. Letter writing in the press is a very important feature of our propaganda work.

Two examples of current date will suffice to show what he is doing in this particular line. Last month the Secretary of the Australian Industries Protection League had a letter in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on "Protection and Farm Implements," in which he gave figures to prove that "agricultural implements were dearer in New Zealand and the Argentine where they were admitted free of duty than in Australia after payment of a 25 per cent. and 30 per cent. duty." To which "Our Champion Letter Writer" promptly replied, quoting from current prices of machinery supplied to the House of Representatives by a Member of

Parliament showing that in every case the price charged in New Zealand was less than in Australia, while in Canada in some instances it was less than half the Australian price. Then followed the Protection Secretary with another letter in which he repeated a Ministerial statement to the effect that "for every 7 bushels of wheat harvested in the Commonwealth the duty on the harvesting machine would represent a penny, which would scarcely be called 'a crushing burden upon the primary producers.'"

This provoked a retort from Mr. Huie showing that the actual amount of the tax was often a very small proportion of the extra cost to the public, the extra cost of goods to the consumer in the United States on account of the tariff having been declared by an American writer to be seven times what the revenue received. On this point, Senator Thomas made some very interesting remarks in the Senate during the recent debate on the tariff. "A duty on pig iron," said the Senator, "makes pig iron dearer. That makes galvanized iron dearer, and that in its turn makes the building of a house more costly. Because the house is dearer the tenant must pay more rent. Because the tenant pays more rent the wages paid him in the production of pig iron must be raised; and because his wages are raised the cost of producing pig iron is increased; and so there must be a still higher duty on pig iron. So the thing goes round. I am opposed to these duties," concluded the Senator, "because, in my view, protective duties make things dearer in Australia."

A LAND VERSUS A GOLD RUSH

The second instance of the work done by our Secretary in the letter writing line is that in which he drew a very apt illustration between the rush for gold, which populated California and afterwards Victoria and New South Wales, and the rush for land. "Land is not scarce in the natural sense," he wrote, "like gold. But it is very hard to get. The account of the desperate land rush at Errowanbang in the Carcoar district should make us stop and think. Here is a case where 392 applications were lodged for 13 blocks of land. After a close examination 362 were allowed to ballot in a sort of land lottery with 13 prizes. But how about 349 who want land? When are they to have another chance?" Then he gave figures to show that the Central Tablelands Division of New South Wales—including within its area such important centres of population as Bathurst, Katoomba, Lithgow, Mudgee, and Orange—contained an area of nearly nine million acres, the expense of opening up of which by railways had been very heavy, some of the lines being run at a very heavy loss.

Out of 6,035,465 acres contained in holdings varying from 1 acre to over 10,000 acres only 225,549 acres, or less than 4 per cent., were cultivated. He suggested that the State should insist that land which it opens up by the railway should be properly used, and that the interest on the cost of railway construction should be charged to unimproved land values, which were enhanced by such facilities, and not to traffic as at present, and that there should

be at the same time a drastic reduction in railway charges for the benefit of the ordinary producer. The letter was dictated to the typist who worked off 100 copies on the duplicator which were sent to all the leading papers throughout the State. An immense amount of work is done in that way, letter writing to the country press forming quite a feature of the campaign.

WATER AND SEWERAGE RATES

One of the most important activities conducted by the League recently has been in favor of levying water and sewerage rates on land values apart from improvements instead of mainly on improvements, as is now the case in the Sydney and Newcastle districts. The history of land value taxation in the Municipal sphere in Australia may be summed up in a few words. Queensland led the way nearly 30 years ago, making the application of the principle compulsory throughout the Municipal and Shire areas of the northern State. In 1906 New South Wales followed suit to the extent that rating on land values in municipalities and Shires was made compulsory for a penny in the £ and voluntary afterwards, excepting only for the City of Sydney, which was brought into the system after a long and arduous fight about two years ago. The principle proved so beneficial that today nearly every municipality throughout New South Wales levies the whole of its rates on land values apart from improvements.

Outside the Sydney and Newcastle districts the water rates can also be levied from the same source, and municipalities and Shires do so. The fight now is to enable these two important districts to do the same. About 26 meetings have been held in the Sydney suburbs during the past year in advocacy of the principle, mostly convened by requisition of a goodly number of rate payers and almost invariably presided over by the Mayor whether he sympathised with the principle or not. All these meetings were held at the instigation of the League, as also a conference of Municipal delegates at the Highland Society's Hall, at which Mr. Huie delivered an exhaustive address on the subject, quoting all sorts of interesting and up-to-date statistics in support of his case. He delivered a similar address at most of the suburban meetings, at 19 of which resolutions in favor of the proposed change in the incidence of rating were unanimously adopted. The Minister has now promised to bring in a Bill during the present session in favor of the principle, which would probably be carried now that the Legislative Council has been strengthened (or rather weakened:) by the addition of a whole squad of Laborites put in for the express purpose of carrying through Labor measures including the abolition of the Chamber itself. Hitherto the Council has quashed several Bills which the Legislative Assembly had sent up in favor of rating for water and sewerage purposes on land values. Whether the present Labor Ministry will live long enough to pass such a Bill it is difficult to say, but the agitation in favor of it is steadily growing, as a result of Mr. Huie's work, and should the Nationalist Party get into power it would probably have to take the matter up.

One of Mr. Huie's most enthusiastic helpers in this campaign has been Alderman Brown, Chairman of the St. George's County Council, who has just issued a circular convening a public meeting to be held in Sydney next Thursday, September 22, for the purpose of forming a separate body, apart altogether from the Free Trade and Land Values League, to promote this system of rating for both water and sewerage purposes. "My main reason for this," he states in the circular, "is the fact that the Water Board's present system is not equitable and is restricting building operations. It is not a party question. It is recognized by all political parties that rating on unimproved values does tend to promote building, and better use of land generally. In that way a natural increase in values must follow, benefiting the municipality and the State.

When presiding at one of these meetings in my own municipality the other day I took the opportunity of pointing out that at the back of the principle of rating on unimproved land values was the theory that land values are directly created solely by the presence and needs of the community, and therefore belong by right to the community, and not to the private individuals who are now allowed by law to appropriate them; furthermore, that no body—Municipal, Federal or State—has a right to touch a penny of the improvement value until the whole of the communal value has been absorbed.

A FAR-SEEING VISION

About six weeks ago a great scheme was launched by Sir Joseph Carruthers "for the development of Australia by settling a million farmers on a million farms." Since then he has elaborated this scheme in almost daily addresses, interviews, articles, letters, and replies to numerous critics who either vigorously attacked the scheme or damned it with faint praise. Summed up in brief the scheme amounts to this—that Australia, larger than the United States, yet has only five and a half millions people as compared with a hundred million, that many of the so-called arid deserts in America have since turned out to be capable of supporting an immense population, and that the Australian interior should be capable of doing the same; that there are a thousand million acres in Australia upon which scarcely a single white man can be found that are just as capable of supporting population as Port Jackson, Botany Bay, or Hobson's Bay when first discovered. While our indebtedness aggregates £800,000,000, less than one per cent. of the total acreage of land available is cultivated, while barely 10 per cent. of it is carrying what can be termed "settlement." According to Sir Joseph Carruthers there are 850,000,000 acres of absolutely unoccupied land in Australia, including large areas quite as good as the best of the leased areas, and this unoccupied land is five times as great in area as the whole of the alienated land.

The alienated lands, he points out, are served by 18,000 miles of railways which cost £208,000,000 to construct and equip, and his suggestion is that we should construct another 18,000 miles of railway to benefit the unoccupied

land at a cost of, say, £250,000,000, a rather staggering sum to be sure, but Sir Joseph is one of our far-sighted seers who think nothing of obstacles except as difficulties to be overcome. He has little doubt that the offer of a concession of one-fifth of the unoccupied area would induce the much-abused capitalists of the world, probably America, to make offers which would settle the problem right away. He further suggests getting an initial loan of £30,000,000 from Britain and Australia jointly for the accomplishment of so great and desirable an object as settling Australia with the right kind of population, and thus providing the most efficient defence against alien attacks.

THE SCHEME CRITICISED

The stupendous scheme outlined above has attracted a considerable amount of public attention. It has been favorably received by all those, and they are very many, who believe in manufacturing prosperity by an orgie of loans. It has, on the other hand, been criticised by the few who have profited by the advice of the immortal William:

“Neither a borrower nor a lender be,
For a loan oft loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.”

Personally I look upon it as a grand opportunity for placing the Single Tax method of peopling Australia before the country, which Sir Joseph's eloquence has made keenly alive to the importance of the problem from many different points of view. What we want to show is that before embarking on a huge money-borrowing scheme to induce people to settle on our unalienated lands a vigorous attempt should be made to reduce the burdens and disabilities already placed on those who are here. In the first place, the Federal policy of exempting the owners of land valued at £5,000 and under from land value taxation and at the same time doubling and quadrupling the taxation on the owners of large estates, whether they be individuals or companies, has had the effect of preventing access to an immense portion of alienated land, and of sending up the price of land generally; the excessive freights and fares have made it much more expensive than formerly for settlers to get their products and everything they require to and from the coast; while the heavy taxation on agricultural and mining implements and machinery has considerably handicapped the producers—whether farmers or miners—and rendered it extremely difficult for them to make a decent living off the land. We are therefore asking Sir Joseph, before finally launching his great borrowing scheme to help those who are endeavoring, (1) to do away with, the exception and graduation clauses in the present Act; (2) to have the land of the Commonwealth properly valued at the earliest possible moment with a view to (3) imposing a flat rate of, say 3d, in the £ on all land throughout the Commonwealth without exemptions and without graduations; (4) to charge the interest on the cost of railway construction to land values instead of to traffic with the view of effecting a corresponding reduction in freights and

fares; (5) to let agricultural and mining implements and machinery in free; (6) to abolish the income tax with its inquisitorial provisions, its hampering regulations, and its farcical returns; and (7) to gradually substitute land value appropriation for the purpose of replacing the revenue now obtained by an old-fashioned system of taxation which is costly in collection, embarrassing to traders, and restrictive to trade.

It is not likely that Sir Joseph will move in any of the ways indicated above. He has staked his reputation on his scheme, and will probably push on with it notwithstanding all the objections that can be urged. But an immense amount of good could be done by this League in contrasting the Single Tax method of peopling Australia with this huge borrowing scheme. If we had the money we would at once organize a series of well-organized meetings in Sydney and throughout the country which would be largely attended, would be reported in the press, and would enable us to show how the present intolerable system of taxing incomes and commodities could be easily replaced by the fairest and most equitable system that the skill of man can devise, and which would have the certain effect of making Australia one of the most populous and most contented nations under the face of the sun.

PERCY R. MEGGY

NOT A “SALES” BUT A PURCHASER'S TAX

A committee representing 100,000 manufacturers, headed by John A. Edgerton, president of the National Association of Manufacturers, called on the president at the White house recently and told him that they unanimously favored the Smoot sales tax plan. That means that it is a fraud to call it a “sales tax”—as meaning that the seller is the real payer of the tax, but that while dubbed a “Manufacturer's Sales Tax” the manufacturers know that they, under it will only be tax collectors for the government, passing the tax itself on to the ultimate consumers of their products and that substituted for the excess profits or high income taxes now resting on them, it will to that extent relieve them from taxation. Can the people be fooled by this propaganda? Fairhope (Ala.) *Courier*.

“It may by and by be perceived that equity utters dictates to which we have not yet listened, and men may learn that to deprive others of their rights to the use of the earth is to commit a crime only inferior in wickedness to the crime of taking away their lives or personal liberties.”

—HERBERT SPENCER.

In her recent novel, “Mr. Waddington of Wyck,” May Sinclair ridicules the English country squire or landlord without any mercy whatever. He is pictured as idle, vain, silly, reactionary and tyrannical. What her economic views are is not disclosed, but she's evidently against the existing order.—H. M. H., in *Cleveland Citizen*.

Six days shalt thou labor, on the seventh turn over the proceeds to the landlord.—H. M. H.