

The Earth Is Ours

Air *My Maryland*
Words by *Grace Isabel Colbron*

In faith united here we stand
Comrades all, from far and near,
To claim our birthright to the land
Now to raise our message clear.

The Earth is *Ours*, not yours or mine,
But right of all by law divine,
When shall the sun of Freedom shine?
Clouds and darkness disappear?

The Landless cry in bitter need,
Sound the word that brings them cheer.
They shall no more in anguish plead,
Lift the hopeful message clear!

The truth that in our hearts we feel,
The vision of the commonweal,
Tis Liberty's own tocsin peal,
Justice that shall banish fear!

From many distant lands we come,
Comrades now, at Freedom's call.
But in one faith we find our home,
In our creed, the Earth for All!

The Earth is *Ours*, not yours or mine,
The right of all by law divine
When shall the sun of Freedom shine?
Lift the cry . . . "the Earth for All!"

Written by Grace Isabel Colbron for Third International Conference
Copenhagen, Denmark, July, 1926.

Single Tax For the Federal Capital of Australia

THE Australian parliament will meet next year in the new federal capital of Canberra, where work has been in progress since 1909. Hotels and houses are being finished as well as public buildings. The government will retain ownership of all land in the federal territory, which comprises 900 square miles. Ninety-nine year ground leases are sold, with a re-appraisal at the expiration of twenty years and thereafter every ten years.

Two forms of slavery this cruel world has planned—
One form exploits the man, and one the land.—

TOM painted his house white; B, his town red,
And both got fined! Tom's was a tax he said.—

WHILE empty lots draw profits—and dead cats!
Why should one risk a tax for building flats?—HORATIO.

SOME RECENT PAMPHLETS

Mr. Percy Werner is a well-known Single Taxer of St. Louis. He is also a prominent member of the St. Louis bar and a contributor to the *St. Louis Law Review* and the *American Law Review*. We have had occasion in these columns to comment on Mr. Werner's contributions to the discussion of the importance of the lawyer's profession in society which he places highly, though no higher we believe, than it deserves.

In the pamphlet before us, "The Functions of the Lawyer," an address delivered at the Washington University Law School as an introductory lecture to a course on Legal Ethics, Mr. Werner returns to his subject with more than his wonted enthusiasm. He emphasizes his contention that the lawyer is "An officer in the Judicial branch of our Government" and he adds, "Upon us lawyer-citizens, more than on any other class of people in our country, rests the responsibility of seeing that society is well organized and built upon justice, and that the laws are what they should be for the highest welfare of the people." He does not argue from this that lawyers should become legislators, for "such an arrangement would defeat the very aim of our government, which is that the people should be self-governed, should make their own laws, should promote their common interests."

The remainder of the pamphlet is a dignified and reasoned appeal for a recognition of the office and importance of the lawyer in society. How immeasurably would the ideal to which Mr. Werner appeals raise the conception of the true function of the lawyer in society as well as among the members of the profession for which he advances so high yet so just a claim.

J. D. M.

A PAMPHLET BY JAMES DUNDAS WHITE

We frequently have cause to commend our English Single Taxers for their thoroughness of treatment. They waste few words; they have learned the secret of exact and comprehensive statement; their propaganda pamphlets are admirable examples of how the thing should be taught.

For some years now, James Dundas White, L.L.D., an ex-member of Parliament, has been among the foremost of our English pamphleteers. The present little work of fifty pages in stiff covers is entitled "Our Land and How to Make It So." On the fly leaf is the following which may serve as a text and which will show that the work is written on right lines:

"God made the Land for the People and those who hold it should pay the People a Rent for it."

A National Land Rent Bill occupies nearly twenty pages, and is, so far as we know, the first attempt made by any English disciple of Henry George to formulate the draft for an inclusive Parliamentary measure that shall embody our demands in legislation. It shows thought and care in its consideration and the author invites suggestions for improvement.

The arguments of Mr. White are the familiar ones which cannot however be too often repeated. What is not so familiar is the emphasis laid on the distinction that should be observed by advocates of our cause between the real objects of our movement and its purely incidental fiscal advantages, which is conveyed in the phrase, "Taxation of Land Values." This distinction has been strongly contended for by LAND AND FREEDOM. It has been the policy of that admirable little weekly published in London, the *Commonweal*, with its brilliant galaxy of contributors, Messrs Pease, Grant, Pearson and Outhwaite. We are glad that this policy is now reinforced by the written word of a man high in the councils of our movement in Great Britain almost from the beginning, and there are few names that will carry more weight than that of James Dundas White. Here is what he has to say on this most important point:

"The word 'Tax' also gives a wrong impression of the policy as a whole. We are not Taxers, but Untaxers. Our object, as Mr.

Outhwaite has said, is "to collect the King's rent and abolish the King's taxes." The introduction and development of a National Land-Rent should be accompanied by the progressive abolition of the taxes that now press on the making of improvements and on other processes and products of industry. These two reforms are bound up together. The requirements of a National Land-Rent would make the natural opportunities of the country available for use on fair terms, whilst the untaxing of industry would promote their development.

"The name "National Land-Rent" explains itself so simply that a child can understand it. The name "Taxation of Land Values," on the other hand, needs to be explained; it is used by different politicians to mean different things; and it is generally associated with Land-Value Taxes of 1909-10—the Increment Value Duty, the Reversion Duty, and the others—which were sham substitutes for the real reform. If we propose to secure the common right to the land by making those who hold it pay rent for it to the community, we ought to say so in the plainest possible way. Whatever may have been the grounds for using the name "Taxation of Land Values" in the last century, both principle and expediency point to the use of the more accurate name now."

This valuable little pamphlet should have a wide circulation in Great Britain, and it will be of interest as well to American readers. It is published by C. W. Daniel Company, Graham House, Tudor Street, London, at sixpence net.

J. D. M.

LAND RENT AS A FUNCTION OF POPULATION GROWTH.

This is a reprint from the *Journal of Political Economy*. It is an article by Prof. Harry Gunnison Brown, and like all his contributions to economic discussion is a thoughtful consideration of the subject. His method is to state as strongly as it can be stated the objections of our opponents, and then proceed to demolish them each in turn. There is a deftness and cleverness in the process that makes it easy and agreeable reading. Besides, unlike so much of the discussion that appears in the economic quarterlies, there is no difficulty in understanding what he means. By easy and simple gradations that are conservatively stated the reader is led finally to a full accord with the principle for which he is contending. He charms and convinces at the same time. There is no more useful friend of the movement at this juncture than Prof. Harry Gunnison Brown.

J. D. M.

LAND VALUES AND FARM MARKETS

This pamphlet is an address delivered before the meeting of the National Marketing Officials at Chicago, in December, 1925, by Hon. Edward Nordman, Commissioner of Markets for the state of Wisconsin.

Mr. Nordman points out that the problem instead of being one of over-production is really one of under consumption. He shows that if the city workers could increase their effective demand the farmers could raise less of the staple crops and more of the diversified and expensive products, such as fruits and poultry, etc. He states that the real heart of the farm problem is excessive cost of production and low prices for produce.

In conclusion he suggests that the farmer's market should be improved by "improving general conditions, first, by removing taxes from the products and processes of labor so that the farmer may purchase these products more cheaply; second, by removing taxes from farm products and from the farmer's capital used in production, thus reducing his overhead expense, and enabling him to sell at fair prices, and in larger quantity and at greater profit, to the workers; and third, by letting the taxes so removed fall upon land values, thus absorbing for the community a larger part of the billions of dollars of unearned income now going into private pockets, especially in the larger cities, at the expense of both farmers and workers. This will destroy the

incentive to monopolize natural resources, which, in its turn, will tend to equalize opportunity, increase the purchasing power of the masses and improve the markets for the products of farm and factory."

J. D. M.

CORRESPONDENCE

ORIGIN OF THE WORD REALTOR

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

I see some one is trying to spoof your readers on the word "realtor." This word, I feel certain, comes from the Spanish "real," meaning grand, magnificent, pertaining to the king, and toro, bull, which easily becomes a most magnificent buller. Obviously "bull" cannot be genuine.

San Francisco, Cal.

CARLOS P. GRIFFIN.

J. R. HERMANN WILL CHIP IN.

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Ed. Boeck is a man after my own heart. I am poorer than Friend Boeck, but I will pledge \$25 and he may have the choice of any state he chooses to start a campaign for an initiative Single Tax measure. My pledge is conditioned upon his securing a sufficient number of pledges to put the measure on the ballot in any state in the Union.

Portland, Oregon.

J. R. HERMANN.

A WELCOME COMMENDATION

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

I wish to congratulate you on the latest issue of LAND AND FREEDOM, which I think is one of the best. The Danish articles are particularly timely.

New York City.

CHARLES O'CONNOR HENNESSY.

LAND VALUE IN FAIRHOPE

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

The department "At the Sign of the Cat and Fiddle" in your March-April number, contains quite a little matter apropos of the effect of the land boom that is taking place around us here at Fairhope but entirely omits the most important factor.

I have lived in Fairhope twenty-seven years, practically all my adult life, am the daughter of one of its founders and feel that I have inside information.

I shall make no comment as to the advantages of beginning at the bottom and grading upward or beginning at the top and grading downward. The people understand perfectly that all the rent money is expended for the benefit of the community after the state, county and municipal taxes on our lands, and the improvements of our lessees and the small administrative cost have been paid, but we have at least ten times as many lessees who are not members of the Colony as we have those who are members, some of whom feel that if unimpeded they might fleece the balance of the lessees out of more than their share of the mutual benefit amounts to. There are also many residents of the community who are not even lessees, being tenants of our lessees or members of their families. We feel that we have done well to build the second town, in point of population, in the county by application of our land policy, especially as we have welcomed people of all shades of opinion to our community.

For some years I believe our rents did lag far behind the economic rent but for the past several years it has been raised rather sharply and in the past year we have had for local use, after applying the state county and municipal taxes on our land and on the improvements of our lessees, half as much as we had paid in state, county and municipal taxes on the improvements and personal property of our lessees. This for community use after the state, county and town had received their money. Perhaps we are not negligent after all.

The presence of the people causes the rental value of the land of the community to advance. In the past year our population was