

GRUNDSKYLD, the monthly journal of the Henry George Union, commenting on the results of the election in its May issue writes: "The Radical Liberals, who have consistently had Land Value Taxation and Free Trade on their programme, showed a much greater interest in the question than ever before and the greatest number of satisfactory replies to our questions came from Radical candidates. But while the Radical Press, especially in the country, has always been very favourable, and the most conspicuous Radical politicians in the country districts give us unquestioned support, we cannot disguise the fact that among the leaders there are constantly signs either of disinclination to develop the case as the rank and file wish it to be developed, or even of refusal to do so. The result has been that many of the keenest advocates of Land Value Taxation within the party have lost patience and confidence, a circumstance that has contributed very much to the withholding of many thousands of votes from the Radical Party and their transference elsewhere. The Social Democrats, the Labour Party, have reaped the benefit. It has been proved how strong is the popular demand for Land Value Taxation, particularly among the 'Housemen,' and the Social Democrats have emphatically declared for the policy. Their attitude to that question is not the least of the reasons for the extraordinary support they got in the country districts. We have now arrived at the point that a majority of the House of Commons is pledged to the Taxation of Land Values. The demand for the reform is now so vigorous and so general among the Danish people that without any doubt whatever we are face to face with a social reform of exceptional significance."

Mr. Troels Sams, Svendsbjaerg, who recently visited us here and saw for himself what had been done by the United Committee to question candidates during the recent General Election, was largely responsible for the adoption of the same methods in his own country. In a letter to our office he writes: "There has never been in Denmark an election campaign in which there has been so much agitation and instruction on the question of Land Value Taxation. Meetings were held in practically every parish. Our speakers were everywhere and we distributed leaflets by the thousands. The incursion of the Party of Justice goaded and forced the Radical Party to interest itself in our ideas much more than it has ever done and we expect it now to work in the right direction."

Another note is struck by Mr. S. Berthelsen, whose opinion always deserves the greatest respect. In the issue of GRUNDSKYLD named above he refers to the Party of Justice and to the danger of a "probably praiseworthy but confused movement which seeks to establish itself as one of the political parties in the country's constitution without having worked out a definite and practicable programme which the ordinary man can understand and have confidence in. A number of obscure headings, great enthusiasm and willing service alone will not suffice. This was well exemplified in the party's election campaign. It can be commended for its energy and force and not least for the circulation of election leaflets. In that way good propaganda has been done for Henry George's ideas that will certainly be appreciated by all Henry George people. But it was only for that reason that the party did get support, and essentially by using the words, illustrations and arguments that have been said by others for the last 25 years, sometimes better and more clearly. Where the members of the party tried to advocate their new ideas, compensation to landowners, limitation of State activities, full Single Tax all at once, etc., it was obvious that neither the means nor the intelligence were at command to explain the proposals, which in any case are not ripe for discussion at election meetings. Thereby, certain less competent members of the Party of Justice frequently gave their audiences a deplorable impression of mental confusion which reacted

unfortunately on public opinion upon the main question, the Taxation of Land Values. Thus, the cause has possibly been damaged in the estimation of the general public more than it has been benefited by the great part of the agitation. The fact is that of the 12,000 votes cast for the Party of Justice eight to ten thousand can be regarded as having been withdrawn from the best political supporters of the movement, the Radical Party, which has in that way lost at least one seat, a matter that may be of serious moment for the movement when the question comes to be handled in Parliament."

Mr. Abel Brink, in a communication to LAND & LIBERTY from which we have drawn largely for information as to the facts of the election, writes: "The attitude of the Social Democrats may be summed up thus: in favour of the Taxation of Land Values and against indirect taxes upon the necessities of life. Kr. Bording, the new Minister of Agriculture, in answer to the question 'Is the Government going to extend the Taxation of Land Values?' replies 'I think so. Taxation and rating of land values in the right measure will bring down land prices and open up to agricultural labourers of small means access to their natural occupation, the tilling of the soil on their own small holdings.'

"Mr. K. Steincke, now Minister of Justice, has for several years been an able advocate of the Taxation of Land Values."

UNITED STATES

To Eliminate Economic Causes of War

From an Address by Louis F. Post at the Economic Club of Providence, Rhode Island, 11th December, 1923.

In thinking and speaking upon this subject we should not overlook the fact that the present European situation is an aftermath of the World War. Nor should we forget, as it often seems so easy to do, that the United States was a party to the war.

The United States won that war on the battle fields of France; she lost it in her own Senate. The peace treaty which the Senate rejected was our opportunity for world service in the interest of Democracy. It embodied clauses that could have been used by the United States for effecting the high objects of the War. They could have been used also for expunging or modifying every objectionable feature of the entire treaty. By thrusting aside the opportunity which that treaty offered, the United States contributed to the present European situation.

Yet the United States is urged with reference to that situation to play the part of a spectator at a prize fight. Our sacrifice of American lives for world Democracy must go for nothing. The burden of debt upon future generations of Americans must be borne for a lost cause. Our people must isolate themselves from the rest of the world when they most need the rest of the world and the rest of the world most needs them.

Isolate ourselves! How can any intelligent American blind himself to the fact that a nation can no more isolate itself than the individual can? The day of hermit nations has gone by. Every nation is part of the world, and the world is economically interlocked.

What, then, shall the United States do, in the present European situation?

* * *

With the great influence through the League of Nations which the United States could for many reasons command, let her pursue, step by step, a policy of developing worldwide economic fairness. Let her in good faith pursue such a course, and our question would soon be answered.

I lay stress upon economic fairness because economic unfairness is the primary cause of the present European situation. Nothing that the United States can do would save the world from such situations if it falls short of loyalty to natural economic law. For economic law is as natural as the law of gravitation; the disastrous con-

sequences of its violation are as inevitable. And loyalty to natural economic law demands fair co-operation throughout social life—from villages to nations, from nations to the national sisterhood.

Probably the best example of a high degree of international loyalty to natural economic law is to be found in the history of the United States herself. Here were thirteen isolated nations about a century and a quarter ago. They acted toward one another then as the United States acts toward other nations now, to the extent, at least, that they checked interchanges of commodities across their frontiers. Then came our great experiment in loyalty to natural economic law. A friendly league was formed—an international league of those thirteen nations—and this league put a stop to arbitrary obstruction of commercial exchanges between their respective inhabitants. That great experiment and its beneficial consequences to all concerned offer an object lesson to all the nations of the world—our own included.

Until the commerce of mankind is allowed to flow across national boundaries in the natural way in which it flows across the boundaries of our States, there will be just such consequences of violated economic law as the present European situation exemplifies, but oftener and worse.

In itself, however, abolition of commercial barriers could not avert those catastrophes. Untrammelled production is as imperative under natural economic law, as untrammelled commerce. And untrammelled production cannot co-exist with monopolization of natural resources. One of the inevitable consequences of natural-resource monopoly is social confusion and disturbance. Eagerness to monopolize natural resources brought on the World War. Didn't the Kaiser set out to fight for what he called "a place in the sun"? The same ignis fatuus lured the French into the Ruhr. But for the lure of natural-resource monopoly, there would be no scramble for territorial concessions, no autocratic outreaching for "spheres of influence." Natural-resource monopoly, that war-breeding economic interest, that fundamental defiance of natural economic law, besides generating war, brings on also such social disorders as that which now agitates Europe. If the United States would pursue an effective policy with reference to this situation, she must aim at taking profits out of monopolization of natural resources and putting profits into their utilization. Carthage must be destroyed. Were it objected that no reform so extensive and elemental can be accomplished soon enough to relieve the present European situation, I should readily assent. My purpose in calling attention to the Carthage of our time which must be destroyed, is only to sound a warning that no reform less elemental can prevent future and worse situations.

NEW ZEALAND

The LIBERATOR for March reports as follows from the NEW ZEALAND HERALD of 8th March:—

A poll on a proposal to adopt the system of rating on unimproved values in the Borough of Tauranga was taken to-day. The proposal was carried by 295 votes to 282. The rating system, which has been in vogue here for some years, is that of assessment on the annual value. When a vote on the question of rating on unimproved values was taken in October, 1920, the proposal was rejected by a majority of 148 votes.

The same item of news reaches us from Mr. Mervyn J. Stewart of Bath, formerly resident in New Zealand, who sends the relevant clipping from THE BUDGET, New Plymouth, of 15th March. Mr. Stewart writes: "This success is the end of a long fight. We got rating of land values in Tauranga County in 1901. In the borough of that name two attempts had been made to take a poll but were quietly hushed by local speculators. The result of this latest poll is a great encouragement."

New Publication.

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