

at such sacrifice. So there falls upon the labour and industry of the people a double burden. We pay twice and in the process we give land speculation full rein to carry us with it to perdition.

This meeting of the Buckinghamshire County Council (24th November) was the first to be attended by Mr Rupert East since his election. He had much to say about these land purchases but did not succeed in

catching the chairman's eye. He and some others voted against the proposals. The *Bucks Advertiser* in a complimentary reference to him as President of the English League and wondering how he "managed to keep silent," urged the principle for which the League stands. The following week (9th December) published a long and informing article by Mr Rupert East, which will prepare his fellow County Councillors to give the taxation of land values their better attention in future.

## EDUCATION OF A BUSINESS MAN

By Laurie J. Quinby

WILLIAM FALES BAXTER, whose recent passing was indeed a loss to the Georgeist movement, became interested in the single tax in a most unusual way. At the time of the incident related below he was Secretary of Thomas Kilpatrick & Co., an Omaha department store.

A devoted friend had been telling him about the theories of Henry George. He was always tolerant, unconvinced. One day his friend said: "It is a proven fact that as ground rent rises, wages, interest and the profits of business decline."

Mr Baxter's quick come-back was, "Now, any business man knows that statement to be untrue. Take my business. You will admit that what is true of this would be a fair example of all business. And you will admit, I think, that land values in this location have at least quadrupled during the last ten years. I can assure you that our payroll, in proportion to our business, as well as our profits, have enormously increased during that decade."

That statement seemed to be a squelcher, but his friend was engaged in spreading the idea of cost-finding systems, as well as preaching Henry George. The friend said:

"I believe your company owns this building and the land on which it rests?"

"Yes."

"Do you maintain a cost-finding system, and do you charge against your merchandising business a rental for the premises you occupy?"

"Yes," said Mr Baxter.

"Well, then, during the past ten years, while rents in this locality have advanced, as you say, four times, how many times have you revised the 'rent item' cost in your cost-finding system?"

Mr Baxter caught his breath. They had not revised it.

"Well, then," said his friend, "when you have time, will you study over that question, bring your rent item up to date, then tell me if your payroll and your dividends, in proportion to the volume of your business as merchants, have really advanced as you say?" He promised.

Several days later, as his friend entered the store, Mr Baxter met him with a smile. "I am having lots of fun with my partners," said he. "I am proving to them that we are losing money."

"So you found," said his friend, "that you have been profiting not as merchants, but as landlords?"

"Yes," he answered, "and I am certain that thousands of other business men are being deceived by the same fact."

From that time on, Mr Baxter became an ardent student and champion of Henry George.—(From *The Freeman*, New York, October, 1938.)

## TOWARDS A CHRISTIAN ECONOMIC

"CAN THE Christian Church ignore or passively accept the economic situation in the world to-day?" Mr Artingstall says: No. "Religion is concerned with the whole man. . . . The spiritual nature of man is not divorced from his physical nature. . . . If man is deprived of necessities or opportunities on the physical plane, how can he even begin to be spiritual?"

This book\* attempts two things, "first, a critical examination of the various economic systems offered to us, and second, a series of constructive suggestions towards a Christian economic." The critical examination is of "capitalism," social credit or "capitalism modified," as Mr Artingstall calls it, and "socialism." We have no space to comment upon the discussion, except to say that these "isms" are all words of vague and indefinite meaning and it would require a larger book than this to properly unravel all the ambiguities and misconceptions with which they are surrounded.

The constructive suggestions in the second part are mainly the taxation of land values and co-operation. The chapter on the former is well done and makes ample use of material published by the United Committee and the Henry George Foundation. (It may be mentioned that the chapter on Social Credit in the first part embodies some of the arguments used by Mr Lester in "The True National Dividend.")

This book is evidently intended not merely for individual reading but for use in study groups, and each chapter has appended to it a series of questions for study. It deserves a wide circulation and the author is to be congratulated on a stimulating and interesting work.

## "STATE OF WAR PERMANENT UNLESS—"

MR LOUIS WALLIS's latest book† embodies the material used in his *Safeguard Productive Capital*, but with a long and new introduction in which he points to the economic discords which, existing inside all countries, tend to foster discontent and the state of mind which makes war possible. It is quite up to date, and among other matter contains references to the action of the London County Council and other local authorities in Great Britain in favour of tax reform, as well as illustrations of the practical working of land value rating in various British Dominions.

This book is a forceful and concise presentation of the case for untaxing buildings and improvements and taxing land values. Although we have some reservations as to detail (which were stated in our review of "Safeguard Productive Capital" in our issue of December, 1935, and which need not be repeated), the case is well stated, and this book deserves the attention of readers on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

\* *Towards a Christian Economic*. By the Rev Leslie Artingstall. Published by the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Price 2s. 6d.

† *State of War Permanent Unless—*. By Louis Wallis. Doubleday, Doran & Co., New York. Price \$1.