

a white man to squat on his land, with his family and flocks, and the right to unlimited arable land, for a rental of 20s. to 40s. per annum? Yet all these things we give to the native freely, and we are then surprised and shocked to find a community of drones amongst us. If South Africa is to progress industrially, there is no doubt whatever that the spur of economic pressure must be applied to the mass of natives. The native is the natural labouring man of the country. So long as we have him here there will be no room or scope for European workmen. If the native had not existed, there would have been no reason why South Africa should not have progressed as rapidly as Australia or Canada. We are retarded in our industrial development by the millstone of unreliable and incompetent labour. No stable or prosperous community can be built on such rotten foundations, and unless we alter our misguided policy towards the natives, South Africa will inevitably go back as an industrial factor in the world, and the mass of natives will continue to deteriorate into a community of useless wastrels.

TURN THE NATIVE OFF THE LAND!

"The remedy, so far as the evil of squatting on privately-owned land is concerned, lies largely with the European owners, and would no doubt be helped on by legislative enactment abolishing the parasitic business of Kaffir farming. As regards reserves, perhaps the remedy is not so easily found, but it should not be beyond the scope of human ingenuity to find, backed by a little determination to have our own way in a matter which so vitally affects the interests of this country. The reserves, as at present constituted, are merely harbours for the most lazy and least progressive natives. If, for various reasons, we cannot do away entirely with reserves, then let us at least endeavour to set them in order. Let us apply a progressive policy to them; insist on those natives who choose to live in them showing beneficial occupation, on the same lines that apply to our white settlers; and since the reserves are occupied on a communal basis, let local rates be levied for the construction of roads, bridges, &c., within them. In fact, change them from refuges for the idle, to progressive settlements. It is the habit of industry that must be inculcated into the native, for his salvation is in work. Let it be the policy of the Native Department to restrict the pernicious reserves, rather than endeavour to augment them, as has been done in the past, and has been the practice, even in recent times. It is not pretended that the skeleton policy outlined above would have any immediate and dramatic effect in satisfying the pressing needs of our farmers. No doubt many suggestions will be put forward on the 21st, and amongst them we shall have our old friends, increased taxation and remission of taxation, brought forward as panaceas for the trouble. As regards the latter expedient, I should like to point out some of its disadvantages. It is, to begin with, contrary to sound principles of government, for surely every person who enjoys the protection of the State should contribute towards its upkeep. Moreover, since the money to provide Government with funds has to be found, if we let one section of the community off their share of taxation, it may be depended on that the other section will have to make good the deficiency. The true solution of our labour difficulties will not be found in any such restricted expedients as the two last mentioned, but rather in some broad policy affecting the natives as a whole and going to the very foundations of their national life."

Last month (LAND VALUES, p. 142), it was the Sydney correspondent of THE TIMES who was complaining of the shortage of labour (i.e., of the abolition of involuntary unemployment) in New South Wales, where the local Taxation of Land Values has been adopted. This month, it is the AFRICAN WORLD complaining of a similar shortage in Rhodesia, where the natives in their "reserves" already enjoy the access to land "on easy terms" which it is the

object of the Taxation of Land Values to bring about. The ignorant and misguided natives, able to get a living by working for part of the year on their lands, obstinately refuse to work much harder for the whole of the year, mainly for the benefit of the strangers who have come into the country with the intention of "getting the most out of it." The moral is so obvious as to save us the necessity of comment. The talk about "progressive policy" and "industrial development" is too transparent to deceive even the most foolish of the "idle and debauched natives," whose besetting sin is evidently a disinclination to work like slaves for the increase of European and Semitic bank balances.

There is, of course, nothing new in all this. Mr. Outhwaite long ago pointed the moral and adorned the tale. We have frequently done so ourselves. But the presentation of the case by the Bulawayo economist is fresh and original, and quite engaging in its frankness. It is valuable, not only for the brutal truthfulness of its statement of the problem of black labour in South Africa, but also for its incidental disclosure of the secret of the white man's labour trouble. Was it written by a Single Taxer who, under guise of pleading the cause of the poor South African capitalist, who cannot get rich quickly unless he has plenty of landless and workless black folk to exploit, set himself to "give the whole show away?"

We wonder.

F. V.

SCOTTISH SMALL LANDHOLDERS AND RATING.

BY JAMES DUNDAS WHITE, LL.D., M.P.

The Lands Valuation (Scotland) Act, 1854, is the foundation of the Scottish Rating system, and Section 6 deals with the ascertainment of the yearly value of lands, &c. As a crofter under the Crofters Acts is not considered as being within the proviso which applies to the case of holding "upon a lease, the stipulated duration of which is more than twenty-one years from the date of entry under the same," he comes under the general provision that where "lands and heritages are bona fide let for a yearly rent conditioned as the fair annual value thereof . . . such rent shall be deemed and taken to be the yearly rent or value of such lands and heritages," and is therefore rated on his rent. In almost every case this rent has been fixed by the Crofters' Commission, in view of Section 6 (2) of the Crofters Act, which provides that the crofter shall not be rented on "any permanent or unexhausted improvements on the holding and suitable thereto which have been executed or paid for by the crofter or his predecessors in the same family," with the general result that as he is not rented on them, so he is not rated on them. Such at least has been the practice, though it has not been confirmed by any legal decision.

While this practice has continued in force, it should be remembered that the Lands Valuation (Scotland) Amendment Act, 1895, adds to Section 6 of the 1854 Act above referred to the following proviso:—

"Provided also, that where any lessee of any such lands and heritages, holding under a lease or agreement, the stipulated duration of which is twenty-one years or under from the date of the entry under the same, and in the case of minerals, thirty-one years or under from the date of such entry, has made or acquired erections or structural improvements on the subjects let, and where the actual yearly value of such erections or structural improvements cannot, under the provision of Section 6 of this Act, be entered in the valuation roll, such erections or structural improvements shall be deemed to be lands and heritages within the meaning of this Act, and such lessee shall be deemed to be proprietor thereof for the purposes of this Act, and the assessor shall ascertain the yearly value of such erections or structural improvements as a separate subject, by taking the amount of rent, if any, in addition to the rent stipulated to be paid under such lease or agreement at which, one year with another, the subjects let, and such erections or structural improvements might together, in their actual state, be reasonably expected to let from year to year, in consequence of such erections or structural improvements having been made and shall make a separate entry thereof in the valuation roll, setting

forth all the particulars relating thereto as hereinbefore provided with respect to other lands and heritages."

But this proviso shall not apply:—

- (1) To any erections or structural improvements made or acquired for agricultural purposes by the lessee of subjects wholly or mainly agricultural; nor
- (2) To any erections or structural improvements made or acquired, and used, exclusively for the purpose of working or cleaning minerals let under such lease or agreement as aforesaid, in respect of which minerals rent or lordship is stipulated to be paid; nor
- (3) To coke ovens or other structures in which coal or other minerals are treated, where the rent or lordship stipulated in such lease or agreement as aforesaid to be paid in respect of such coal or other minerals is, by the terms of such lease or agreement, calculated upon the coke or other minerals as treated in such ovens or other structures.

This does not seem to have altered the practice of rating as regards the crofter, and the question of whether it applies to the crofter turns upon whether the crofter can be considered as "holding under a lease or agreement, the stipulated duration of which is twenty-one years or under from the date of entry under the same."

That question may now be regarded as settled. At the Report Stage of the Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill in the House of Commons on Friday, 17th November, Mr. Scott Dickson, M.P., proposed to add to Clause 31 of that Bill the following words:—

"Notwithstanding anything contained in this or any other Act the expression 'lessee,' in Section 4 of the Lands Valuation (Scotland) Amendment Act, 1895, shall include a landholder in the same way and to the same effect as if a landholder was a lessee holding under a lease or agreement the stipulated duration of which is twenty-one years or under from the date of entry under the same"

and this was accepted by the Lord Advocate on behalf of the Government and agreed to.

A further amendment to these words was proposed by Mr. Dundas White, M.P., and seconded by Mr. Wedgwood, M.P., to add:—

"and the expression 'agricultural purposes' in that section shall include the purposes of cultivation specified in Section 10 of this Act."

This further amendment was opposed and negatived. Its reference was to the provision in Clause 10 of the Bill, which provides:—

"that the expression 'cultivate' in this subsection shall include the use of a holding for horticulture or for any purpose of husbandry, inclusive of the keeping or breeding of live stock, poultry, or bees, and the growth of fruit, vegetables and the like."

The general result seems to be that the small landholders and the statutory small tenants under the Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill will be rated on their rent and will be rated on their "erections and structural improvements" which are not included in that, except in so far as these "erections and structural improvements" are "for agricultural purposes." What are to be considered "agricultural purposes" seems to be a matter for the Courts to determine.

REPORT OF THE DEBATE AS REGARDS THE ABOVE.

Mr. SCOTT DICKSON: I beg to move, at the end of the Clause to insert—

(5) Notwithstanding anything contained in this or any other Act the expression "lessee," in Section 4 of The Lands Valuation (Scotland) Amendment Act, 1895, shall include a landholder in the same way and to the same effect as if a landholder was a lessee holding under a lease or agreement the stipulated duration of which is twenty-one years or under from the date of entry under the same.

Mr. URE: I propose to accept this amendment. Hon. Members will probably be aware that under the existing practice the crofter is not rated upon his improvements. It is now an open question and exceedingly doubtful. The effect of it will be to make quite clear that crofters in the proper sense of the word shall enjoy the security of tenure, and be placed in exactly the same position as the tenant farmer occupies under lease of less than twenty-one years' duration and be liberated from obligations upon improvements which they have effected on their holdings for agricultural purposes.

Mr. DUNDAS WHITE: I think this is a very important amendment, because it brings in at a very late stage of the Bill an amendment of the rating system, a matter which, I think, deserves very careful consideration. I agree with what has been said as to there being some doubt as to the absolute certainty of the practice which now exists as to the crofter being rated on improvements which he has effected. At the same time, that practice has continued for something like thirty years, and has never been seriously challenged. I doubt whether it could be effectively challenged. There is a question whether the crofter is under the 1895 Valuation Act or not, and that question is to be decided against him. There has been some talk of agricultural improvements. What are agricultural improvements? If by agricultural improvements we mean that sort of improvements which are covered by the term "cultivation" in Clause 10, I should certainly support the amendment. If, on the other hand, it is not meant to cover that form of cultivation, a very serious difficulty arises. We understand that under this measure intensive cultivation may be developed by small holders. Assume that a crofter in the neighbourhood of a town, in order to cultivate fruit and vegetables, puts up a glass-house. At present he is not rated on that. Is that an agricultural improvement? In ordinary language it would be called a horticultural, and not an agricultural improvement. It was to avoid that very difficulty that in Clause 10 the word "cultivation" was used, and it was expressly provided that "the expression 'cultivate' in this subsection shall include the use of a holding for horticulture or for any purpose of husbandry, inclusive of the keeping or breeding of live stock, poultry, or bees, and the growth of fruit, vegetables, and the like." The crofter at present is not rated on these things, and following the analogy of existing practice, which has never been challenged, I hold that he should not be rated on them after the passing of this Bill. I hope, therefore, the right hon. and learned Member will be willing to agree to an amendment which I shall subsequently move, "and the expression 'agricultural purposes' in that Section shall include the purposes of cultivation specified in Section 10 of this Act." Incidentally I may refer to a point raised by the non. Baronet opposite. This certainly seems to me a rating change. It seems to bring under the provisions of the 1895 Act people who are not there already. That is a further reason why I am sorry it was not brought forward at an earlier stage. Whether the House accepts this amendment or not should turn on the question of what is meant by agricultural purposes, and whether "agricultural purposes" is to have the same meaning as the purposes of cultivation referred to in Clause 10.

Mr. MORTON: I think we ought to be told by the Lord Advocate whether this amendment, if carried, will in any way affect existing assessments. If so, it will be very unfair that it should be sprung upon us at the last moment without our being able to consult our constituents. The object may be to increase the assessments of everybody and to get them into trouble as far as possible. If this amendment becomes law, what will be the exact position of existing crofters and future landholders?

Mr. URE made an observation which was inaudible in the Press Gallery.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. DUNDAS WHITE: I beg to move, after the words last added, to insert the words "and the expression 'agricultural purposes' in that Section shall include the purposes of cultivation specified in Section 10 of this Act." I have already given the reasons for this amendment.

Mr. WEDGWOOD: I beg to second the amendment.

Mr. URE: This amendment, if effective, would certainly alter the Valuation Law and the rating. Accordingly, it is impossible for me to accept it.

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and negatived.

THE SINGLE TAX REVIEW of 150, Nassau Street, New York City, has issued another special edition treating of the operation of the Land Value Tax in Edmonton and the North-West. It should be in the hands of every farmer and workingman in Oregon. Here, in spite of a terrible winter climate, a railroad monopoly and a few other handicaps, the farmers are prosperous because they are not fined for having live stock, houses, fences, barns, warehouses, creameries, household furniture, vehicles, machinery, implements. A city prospers because improvements are not taxed. Other cities following its example. Get the book. Learn something.—PORTLAND (Oregon) LABOR PRESS