

followed by "Some Typical Instances of Liverpool Land Values" from a large number assembled by Mr E. J. McManus, the President of the Liverpool League and a member of the United Committee.

LIVERPOOL'S TOLL TO LAND MONOPOLY

At different times, complaints are made in the City Council as to the high prices paid for land. Yet a comprehensive grasp of the cause which results in enormous sums being wrung, year after year, from the citizens of Liverpool to effect public improvements would enable the ratepayers to take the action necessary for ending a great public evil. As the City grows, the greater becomes the toll which has to be paid for permission to use the land of Liverpool for wealth producing and public purposes. Judged from the valuations of the land, apart from improvements, which have been made in other cities and towns, the capital value of the land on which Liverpool stands may well exceed 100 million pounds.

In the year 1635, the Manor and Lordship of Liverpool was sold by the Corporation of London, to Richard, Lord Molyneux, for the sum of £450, and a ground rent of £14 6s. 8d., which was subsequently commuted. Some idea of the great increase of Liverpool land values during the last 300 years will be gained from the typical instances shown hereunder. When Liverpool was a small village of a few thousand inhabitants (5,714 in the year 1700) land could be bought for a few pounds per acre. Now that it has grown to a large, commercial city of 800,000 people, more than one million pounds per acre can be obtained for land in the central parts of the City. The value of land keeps increasing with increase of population, for it is the presence, activities and public expenditure of the people that give land its value. The huge annual municipal expenditure on public utilities, services and amenities makes Liverpool a suitable place in which to live and produce wealth. The system that gives ground landlords the power to take the values created by the community, and to withhold land from use, throws an intolerable burden on the ratepayers.

The rates about the year 1700 were a few pence in the £; to-day (1927-8) they are 14s. 9d. in the £. A just system of rating is urgently necessary. It can be secured by the Rating of Land Values and the Unrating of Improvements. The Rating of Land Values will relieve those who now bear the burden, and secure for public expenditure the land values they create. It will also remove the incentive to withhold land from use, which withholding now hinders wealth-producing activities in every direction and causes unemployment—unemployment and low wages being necessary consequences of restricting the use of land.

The Liverpool City Council is requested to associate itself with the Councils of Glasgow, Cardiff, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Sheffield, etc., to obtain from Parliament the powers possessed by Sydney and hundreds of other municipal bodies in Canada, New Zealand, Australia and South Africa, to levy rates on the value of all land (whether used or not) and to stop taxing improvements.

The ratepayers have had to pay about two million pounds* for land for public purposes, e.g., £826,319 has been paid for land for parks and recreation grounds; £441,000 for housing sites; £144,401 for market sites; £104,360 for hospital land; £98,257 for land for public buildings and £39,159 for land for public baths.

[We hope to publish next month the further statement on typical instances of Liverpool land values—EDITOR, *Land & Liberty*.]

* This sum does not include the large amount which has had to be paid for land to effect street improvements.

AN APPEAL AND THE ANSWER

By Lewis H. Berens

"There is but one thing needed for the world; but that one is indispensable. Justice, Justice, in the name of Heaven; give us Justice, and we live; give us only counterfeits of it, or succedanea for it, and we die."—*Thomas Carlyle*.

Blind Judge of the World, O Justice divine!
Hide not Thy face from us; turn not away.
Unveil Thyself. Reveal to us the Law
By which we live, ignoring which we die
In hopeless ignorance and misery.

Sole Judge of Right and Wrong, be Thou our Guide
To free the world from evil, sin and strife,
Which now beset us, moulding all our lives
To their foul image. One brief glimpse of Thee
Would break their fatal spell and set us free.

Children of Sin are we, ignoring Thee,
Children of Poverty, which should not be,
Though Children of Justice we fain would be.
What can redeem us? This, pray, unfold,
That through Thy servants the world may be told.

Aid us and help us, O Justice divine!
Without Thy law our customs rule supreme.
Without Thy light our life is but a dream,
And that a sad one. Aid us! Help us, then,
That we may face the Truth and live as men.

Answer us. Teach us Thy precepts and Law,
To help us re-shape our customs anew.
Slaves are not we to them. They are what we
Have made them. One command from Thee,
And they shall pass away, whate'er they be.

Sole Judge of Right and Wrong, Justice Divine!
Answer us. Teach us Thy servants to be.
Unveil Thyself. Reveal to us the Law
By which we live, ignoring which we die
In hopeless ignorance and misery.

THE ANSWER

"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His Justice,
and all else shall be added unto you."

A stern voice rang across the cheerless void:—
"Your words I've heard. What need to answer ye?
My Law and precepts were reveal'd ye of old;
But your vision is dim'd by lust of mere gold.
Thou shalt not steal! Thou shalt not slay!
These remain true for ever and aye;
These are my precepts you still disobey.
Fair Mother Earth to all has been given,
That all might share the bounties of Heaven.
But what are your customs, your laws? Need I say?
By them do you steal; by them do you slay;
By them do you daily my Law disobey.
Crushing your Brother, unheeding his pain;
Gambling to share the iniquitous gain.
Such is your daily life, ignoring me;
Such the sordid cause of your misery.
Something for nothing, is your heart's desire,
Excusing which you law and custom plead.
Service for service, is my Law of Life,
By which, in truth, you live, blind to it die
In helpless ignorance and misery.
What shall ye do? Have I not answered ye?
Restore the Earth to all. Set Nature free.
To others do as ye would others do to ye.
This is the Law of Love; this the royal road
To Justice, Brotherhood and Liberty."