

## EMIGRATION.

### THE WHIP AND SCOURGE OF LANDLORDISM.

Unless we can improve the opportunities of employment at home and reform the conditions of land tenure, Scotland will be impoverished in sound population to a point that will hazard her national prosperity. The dominions overseas want our best, not out worst; they want those we can ill spare, and would not have those whom we would willingly see shipped in large numbers from our shores.

This is from the GLASGOW HERALD of April 9th. From the same paper we learn that 3,500 emigrants left the Clyde on Saturday, March 26th; that 3,000 left on Saturday, April 2nd, "the majority of the emigrants appearing to belong to the respectable working class section of the population, including artisans, agricultural workers, miners, and others." On April 9th it stated that another "1,800 emigrants will leave the Clyde for Canada and America, while a fortnight hence the bookings will account for an estimated number of 4,300 people. During the present month," it continues, "over 20,000 Scottish emigrants will have set out for Canada, while it is calculated that during the season no fewer than 100,000 new settlers, chiefly agriculturalists, will have departed from this country."

No wonder the HERALD is alarmed. Emigration agents and those having shares in the steamship companies may view these facts with joy, so, too, may the shareholders of Canadian Land Companies. Purlblind philanthropists may share these feelings, though probably to a lesser degree. But they will not be shared by those having any spark of patriotism, any regard for the future of our country. There, as here, they will find land monopoly and unjust taxation, enriching the already rich, crushing and degrading the poor, benefiting the idler but burdening the industrious, placing palaces and all the pleasures and refinements of life at the disposal of the privileged few, making the lives of the "middle sort of men" one long struggle for existence, and condemning an ever increasing majority to slum life, poverty and all the evils it entails. Despite all reports to the contrary, unemployment, or disemployment, is by no means unheard of in Canada, and soup kitchens and charity organisations find ample scope for their palliative activities.

In view, however, of the economic conditions prevailing at home in the "dear Mother Country," we cannot wonder that so many of the more energetic of our people, despairing of the future if they remain here, should seek to escape "the ills they know, and fly to others that they know not of." The reasons why they are going, the causes at work impelling so many of the best of our people to break up their homes and fly the country as if it were plague-stricken, are well known to all who want to know, as are also the simple and yet effective means, to-day well within the field of practical politics, by which such a drain of our best national resources might at once be stayed. Landlordism with its high rents is scourging the farmers and labourers off the land. The time may come, and that in the near future, when we may sorely need the men we are to-day driving from our midst. We can only hope to retain them by making the conditions of their life more endurable, and this is only permanently possible by drastic change in our systems of land tenure and of taxation.

Far from ideal though the emigrants will find the conditions under which they will have to live and work in Canada, yet, considering the economic conditions prevailing in Great Britain, we can well understand that "free land," or at all events comparatively cheap land, may attract the pick of our agricultural population. As they do not for the most part read the financial papers, they may have yet to learn that in Canada, as elsewhere, forestalling always precedes settlement, that the forestaller or the engrosser, under different names, is always ahead of the settler, and that in Canada, as in Great Britain, these gentry are the most articulate and, politically and socially, the most powerful class in the community. Still they will be able to obtain the use of land, or the freehold of their holdings, on terms and conditions very different from those demanded by the privileged landholders of Great Britain. To purchase any land upon which by hard and continuous toil a decent living may be gained, they may have to sacrifice much of their savings and mortgage much of the fruits of their future industry, still they will enjoy security of tenure, so long as they can pay the mortgage interest, and enjoy full rights of property in the improvements their labours call into existence. Hence, doubtless, some of the more shrewd, the more fortunate, or the more hardy of the emigrants will do well, and establish themselves as free yeomen in the new country,

and they will be held up as examples to be followed, as proofs that all could do equally well if they tried. Others, probably the majority, will find their position but little improved, or may even "go under," to use an expressive colonialism, and of these we shall hear little or nothing more, at all events not in the average newspaper or in emigration circulars. Still their emigration will benefit somebody; nay, the very prospect of their going has already benefited somebody, as the reports of every Canadian Land Company testify.

No, all the emigrants will not get rich, but their presence and industry will make other people rich, for the most part people who have never been in Canada, who have no desire to go and live there, but who, to use a euphemism "have invested their money in Canadian land." Two typical cases will illustrate. In October, 1906, the Hudson Bay £10 shares touched £100. They are now over £106. The London DAILY EXPRESS of October 17th, 1906, had the following comment on this phenomenon:—

"For the first time on record the £10 shares of the Hudson Bay Company touched 100 yesterday, closing, after much selling and buying, at 101½. This gives a valuation of the company's capital, which stands at £1,000,000, of £10,000,000. The company's prosperity is entirely owing to the large grants of land it has obtained in Western Canada owing to the bargain it made with the Government thirty-six years ago. Under that bargain it has received a total of 5,365,006 acres of land in the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta. Of this total it has sold over a million and a half acres, but there is still nearly a million pounds of the purchase money to come to the coffers of the company. The remainder of the land is yet unsold, and every year adds to its value in view of the marvellous progress the provinces are making. For the year ending March 31 last, the company paid a dividend equal to £4 per share."

Again, the affairs of the Western Canada Land Company, established in 1906, have been very prominent in the financial columns of our newspapers during the past month. According to the MORNING POST of April 9th, the chairman of this company, Major-General Sir R. B. Lane, when moving the adoption of the Annual Report, explained the position of the company as follows:—

"The movement of population into the Canadian West from the States of America was on a very big scale, and immigration also revived from the Eastern States of Canada and from Europe. Satisfactory as these results had been, they gave a sure indication of what might be expected in the immediate future in Western Canada. Having explained what had been the policy of the board, the decision to hold on to their land, and its justification, he went on to say that the directors had disposed of a large block, amounting to 200,000 acres, at prices which would average a profit of about 60 per cent. per acre, the price being £1 12s. net, that was to say, free from all commissions of any sort or kind, and exclusive of mineral rights which might be of value. They had made, as he had said, a profit of nearly 60 per cent. on the cost of the lands, and by their sales to date, the greater part of their original capital was assured to the shareholders, still leaving the company with its big holding of 230,000 acres."

In view of the above facts, it is not surprising that the seconder of the resolution, Mr. A. M. Grenfell, expressed himself forcibly in favour of State-aided Emigration.

"He saw, he said, a Government to-day spending an enormous sum of money trying to grapple with the question of unemployment, but their measures were mere palliatives. If the Socialists in this country were really sincere in their cry of "back to the land," if they really believed unemployment could be mitigated by setting people on the land, and that land hunger existed in this country, surely it would be cheaper for the Government and better for the individuals if the Government by State-aided emigration assisted people to virgin lands in other British Dominions—lands which could be acquired, no doubt, free of cost from the Dominion or Provincial Governments, without having to go through a tedious and upsetting process of taxing holders of land in this country out of existence."

Commenting on the sale of the 200,000 acres referred to by the chairman of this very prosperous company, a correspondent of the TIMES on March 22nd writes as follows:—

"The purchasers are represented by two Canadians, one being a native of this country, and their object is to sell the land retail to settlers, who are flocking into the prairie

provinces faster than ever. This retailing of the land, however, is precisely what the company itself aimed at doing. Presumably the directors think that the new proprietors, being on the spot, are more likely than a London company's local agents to succeed in effecting sales. At any rate, the price offered has convinced them that the 'deal' will benefit their shareholders. It is a serious step to part with two-fifths of your estate in a lump; but when you are offered for the two-fifths as much as you gave a few years ago for the whole property, the temptation is hard to resist. That is the case here. The price has not been officially disclosed; but I have reason to believe that when it is paid the shareholders will find that the whole of their capital has been returned to them, while they will remain in possession of 300,000 acres—equal to the whole landed estate of, say, the Marquisate of Breadalbane—the proceeds of which, as it is sold, they can regard as clear profit."

Yes, the emigration to Canada, however disastrous it may prove to many of the emigrants, however injurious to the Mother Country, is benefiting somebody. Neither in Canada nor in Great Britain will it make the workers rich, but it will help to make some rich without working. Landlordism is the enemy of the masses of the people wherever established, and unfortunately for them the emigrants from the Clyde will find it confronting them when they arrive on the other side of the Atlantic.

L. H. B.

### IMPRESSIONS OF TWO MEETINGS.

LOUIS NEIL.

I was at a public meeting about the middle of last month (April) held in a working-class district of London in support of the Veto Resolutions of the Government. The next morning I found myself pondering over the impression the principal speaker had created in my mind, and my thoughts wandered back to a meeting in the same hall in July last, a short time before the Hyde Park Land Demonstration. I fell to comparing the two meetings.

The first meeting was held in support of the land clauses of the Budget. The principal speaker was a private member of Parliament and comparatively obscure. He spoke in support of Land Values Taxation. I remember how keenly the audience listened to his exposition of the land question, how they followed an able speech from point to point, and gave vent to impassioned cheers as particular points appealed to them. The speaker attacked our present systems of land tenure and taxation, bringing argument after argument and illustration after illustration to bear against the evils of land monopoly. He showed positively how landlordism appropriated the fruits of industry. He thoroughly held his audience and reached a brilliant climax, when, after repeated cries of "shame" to his indictment of landlordism, he forced home to them in a few terse sentences that the remedy lay in their hands and the land clauses of the Budget were the commencement of a campaign getting to the root of the evil. The roars of approval and enthusiasm were such as I had never heard before, and I shall carry the memory of that thrilling shout for many years.

The later meeting was in support of the Veto Resolutions of the Government. When I arrived the hall was packed to overflowing. The time prior to the speaking was occupied by the audience singing political songs, the most popular of which seemed to be the famous "Land Song." After the Chairman's opening remarks, the principal speaker, a leading member of the Government, had a fine reception. He started off by pointing out the inequalities of lot among the people of the nation, the tremendous contrast between vast riches and deep poverty. He said every man was appalled at the hardness of life of some and the prosperity of others who had done nothing to deserve it. He said we wondered if nothing could be done to rectify these things, that we believed that although all men were not born equal, they should have equal advantages and equal opportunities. He went on to say that some of us wondered if Parliament had been merely marking time with the Veto Question, but the Veto Resolutions meant they were working at the machinery of the Government—were only dealing with the means towards the end. We were told that he would show us to what work they would put the reconstructed machine. Money was wanted to attack poverty. Where was it to come from? Then we had an explanation of the Budget. The Budget was for Social Reform, and to develop the natural resources of the country. We were told that the land and other taxes were the means of making those pay who were best able, and that

the Peers rejected the Budget because it touched their pockets. Then we heard of the alternative to the Budget—Tariff Reform. As a cure for unemployment Tariff Reform was pulled to pieces.

Although the speech was received with enthusiasm, there was something lacking. We were all satisfied about the necessity of abolishing the Lords' Veto, but no definite or tangible reason was pointed out to us. We were not enlightened as to where we were to gain. We were told that every man should have equal advantages and equal opportunities, but we were not shown how the abolition of the Veto was to get us this.

The result of the comparison I made between the two meetings in my meditations was that the audience in the earlier meeting was shown that it had a real interest in the fight against privilege; something that followed up, would lighten their hard fight against adversity. They appreciated this, and were heart and soul in the fight. At the later meeting they were told they had something to gain and several times they were led to a point where they expected positive explanation, but instead were offered something indefinite and elusive—such as Social Reform or the development of national resources. It was like whetting their appetites with a promise of something good and then leaving them a piece of dry crust. A plain, blunt man advocating the Taxation of Land Values as a remedy for poverty is more effective than a brilliant orator advocating anything else.

### HERE AND THERE.

The new valuation lists for Essex show that the total valuation of the county is £5,106,804—£470,448 for land and £4,636,656 for buildings.

The demand for land (in Lincolnshire) this spring has been greater than ever previously known by many of the leading estate agents.—MARK LANE EXPRESS, April 4th.

City rents are still on the up grade, as is shown by the fact that the City Corporation, in renewing the lease of a refreshment depot in Paternoster Row, has increased the rent from £700 to £750 per annum.—ESTATES GAZETTE, April 9th.

The Communal Council of Veytaux, in Switzerland, has under consideration a proposal for the purchase of a mountain in the neighbourhood. The mountain is valued at 275,000 francs (£11,000).—WESTMINSTER GAZETTE, April 4th.

In Lincolnshire owners of land themselves farm 158,309 acres, while no less than 1,363,284 acres are farmed by tenants who have to pay rent to someone else. There are 1,705,293 acres in the county.—MARK LANE EXPRESS, March 28th.

Mr. James Hope of Eastbarns, Dunbar, was recently entertained to dinner by a number of Scottish farmers. It was mentioned that Mr. Hope had for a full lease of 19 years paid a rent of £5 per acre for 1,000 acres. The land is chiefly devoted to the growing of potatoes.

Mr. John D. Watson, M. Inst. C.E., read a paper recently on "Birmingham Sewage Disposal Works" before the Institution of Civil Engineers. Loans to the amount of £1,407,519 had been sanctioned by Parliament and the Local Government Board, and of this sum £956,492 had been spent on works and £451,027 on freehold land.

To make room for the new office in Queen Anne's Gate of the Anglo-American Oil Company—a great white building of splendid exterior and luxurious interior—two old mansions have been demolished. . . . It may be added that land values in this exclusive neighbourhood run from £10 to £15 a foot.—ESTATES GAZETTE, April 9th.

Do not be put on the defensive. (Cheers.) It is not your business; it is not the natural position which you should occupy. We are the great reformers. (Cheers.) It is we who have the great Imperial and domestic ideal which requires most insistently to be dealt with. Do not let your attention be diverted from it, from all those questions which roughly we call questions connected with Tariff Reform.—MR. BALFOUR to the United Club, April 13th.