

LAND VALUES.

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"OUR POLICY."

"We would simply take for the community what belongs to the community—the value that attaches to land by the growth of the community; leave sacred to the individual all that belongs to the individual."—Henry George.

THE NEW IMPERIALISM.

Monopoly, Protection, and Conscription at Home.

Monopoly and Slavery in our Foreign Possessions.

"WE are all Socialists now!" was the clap-trap cry of practical politicians but a few years ago. "We are all Imperialists now!" they might with much more truth proclaim to-day, though many of them may still find it advisable to cover their imperialistic tendencies under the cloak of a pseudo Liberalism. The time, however, is fast approaching when subterfuges will no longer serve them, and men desirous of playing a part in the political arena will have definitely to choose their sides. Imperialism or Democracy, Slavery or Liberty, Monopoly or Freedom, Privilege or Justice, Autocracy or Self Government, there is no half-way house, no permanent abiding place, between these two principles. Let us then divest ourselves, and force others to divest themselves, of all hypocrisy and cant, and choose which we will serve.

Of late years events have marched somewhat quickly, and the inner policy, the true inwardness, of the New Imperialism stands now revealed to the meanest understanding. Monopoly and Privilege, Protection and Conscription, at home; Monopoly and Slavery, the impoverishment, enslavement, and ex-

ploitation of weaker people in our foreign possessions abroad; such is the policy of the New Imperialism, as of the old Despotism. Freedom, Justice, and Liberty, equality of opportunities to all to produce wealth and to exchange what they have produced, to live, to labour, and to enjoy: such is the eternal and immutable policy of Democracy. Some fifty or sixty years ago, it almost seemed as if the current of political thought throughout Europe, more especially, perhaps, in Great Britain, and certainly in the United States, was definitely setting in the direction of Democracy. Reform was in the air; the more sanguine seem blindly to have believed that the rights of the many could by some means be secured without interfering with the privileges of the few. Labour was everywhere being emancipated from its most galling chains and most oppressive restrictions; and the emancipation of labour was generally recognised by the thoughtful as the first necessary step towards restoring the dignity of labour, towards the realisation of the ideals of the Brotherhood of Man, towards the elevation of our race to a higher plane of both individual and social life. The forces of reaction, of time-honoured privilege, seemed paralysed, incapable of offering further resistance, and seers prophesied and poets dreamed dreams of the near approach of the Golden Age.

Much has changed since then. It was soon realised that to maintain the privileges of the few the tide of Democracy had to be stemmed; and it has been stemmed. To-day the current of political thought throughout Europe, and even in the United States, seems steadily set in the opposite direction. The power and privileges of the few have been steadily and stealthily strengthened and extended. The sense of morality, the basis of Democracy, of social and international justice, once so vivid and manifest, and of such fair promise, has been deadened; the love of freedom for all, the desire for liberty and for justice for all, seems to have vanished, or at best left burning only in the breasts of an insignificant minority; and Materialism, which appeals only to the predatory instincts of our race, seems to have stifled the public conscience and to have regained possession of the public mind, or at least of the minds of those who still form the ruling and governing classes. Hence it is that the spirit, ambitions, aims, and policies of the old despotisms are to-day being revived under the garb of the New Imperialism; that the benign spirit of internationalism, based on common needs and common interests, which at one time promised to mould the destinies of Western Europe, and through Europe of the world, has been stifled; that to-day, as of old, the purse and blood of the nation are being utilised to promote, not the national welfare, but the sectional or class interests of the powerful privileged few; and that the masses are craftily being led to believe that "the foreigner" is necessarily their enemy

and that their interests are naturally and necessarily opposed to those of their fellows living and working in other countries. Hence it is that to-day nation is arrayed against nation, that wars and rumours of wars fill the air, that each nation feels impelled to surround itself with walls of tariffs, for the benefit of the few and to the injury of the many, and that an aggressive Imperialism tends to become the avowed policy of all the civilised nations on the face of the earth.

There is, however, no need to despair. The times of reaction are passing away, and the next swing of the pendulum will take us far in the other direction. For better or for worse, the political power in constitutionally governed countries has passed from the few to the many, from the classes to the masses; and it is to the many, to the masses, that practical politicians, reactionary and democratic, have ultimately to appeal. The promise of the New Imperialism was fair and alluring, but its fruits are bitter to the taste; and it is by its fruits that it is being judged. The classes who for centuries have enslaved and impoverished our own people, and who would now vainly use the blood and treasure of the nation to enable them to enslave and exploit other and weaker people, may rally to its support, so may the financial kings of the Stock Exchange and their parasites. But the people, those on whose labours our national existence depends, are weighing it in the balance and finding it wanting in everything that can promote the national honour and the national wellbeing. Recent events have served to convince them that the New Imperialism means, not only monopoly and slavery abroad, but monopoly, restricted trade, conscription, and poverty at home. Hence the ideals and aspirations that inspired the past victories of Democracy are again making themselves felt in the councils of the nation, ideals and aspirations vivified and strengthened by recent progress in economic and social thought. Sooner or later, therefore, the New Democracy will sweep away the New Imperialism. And the New Democracy everywhere, in Russia as in Australia, in Great Britain as in South Africa, will be based on all that is implied in the cry—The land for the people!

L. H. B.

ENGLISH NEWS AND NOTES.

[All communications respecting this column should be sent to the General Secretary, English League for the Taxation of Land Values, 376 and 377 Strand, London, W.C.]

A member of the League recently placed at the disposal of the Executive an almost complete file of Henry George's (New York) *Standard*. The missing numbers have since been supplied, and the whole bound in six volumes (Jan. 8, 1887—Dec. 31, 1890). These volumes, containing all the issues which appeared under the editorship of Henry George, are now available for reference at the League Office.

The Independent Review recently contained an article by Mr. Charles Trevelyan, M.P., on "Land Reform versus Protection." This has now been reprinted as a penny pamphlet (5s. per 100), and is on sale at the League Office. It will be found a most useful addition to the propagandist literature on the Fiscal Question.

The following meetings have been addressed since the Christmas and New Year holidays:—

- Jan. 19.—Clayton Liberal Club. F. Skirrow.
- 20.—Browning Settlement, Walworth. A. Davies.
- 22.—Walthamstow Lighthouse Literary and Debating Society. F. Verinder.
- 22.—Eccleshill Liberal Club. F. Skirrow and T. B. Lund.
- 24.—New Southgate Men's Meeting. F. Verinder.
- 24.—North Ward Labour Club. T. B. Lund and F. Skirrow.
- 25.—Hertford Town Hall. F. Verinder.
- 29.—New Liberal Club, East Bowling, Bradford. F. Skirrow.
- 31.—Hatcham Liberal Club. L. H. Berens.
- Feb. 2.—Oakenshaw Liberal Club. F. Skirrow.
- 3.—Bolton Wood Liberal Club. F. Skirrow (Councillor H. B. Priestman in chair).
- 3.—Liberal Club, Cottingham. Wm. Thomson.
- 4.—Saltaire. F. Skirrow (James Firth in chair).
- 5.—Manningham. F. Skirrow.
- 7.—Halifax, Working Men's Club. C. H. Smithson.
- 8.—Lightcliffe Liberal Club. C. H. Smithson.
- 9.—Luddenden Foot. C. H. Smithson.
- 10.—Queensbury. F. Skirrow.
- 12.—Cambridge Liberal Club. F. Verinder.
- 12.—Keighley, Reading Class. G. B. Orr.
- 13.—Keighley Master Builders' Association. F. Skirrow.
- 13.—Bradford Liberal Club. Edwin Adam.
- 16.—Clayton Heights Liberal Club. F. Skirrow.
- 17.—Cleckheaton Liberal Club. T. B. Lund and G. B. Orr.
- 17.—Bradford Moor Liberal Club. F. Skirrow.
- 19.—Debating Class, Keighley. T. B. Lund.
- 19.—Idle Liberal Club. F. Skirrow.
- 24.—Cleckheaton Liberal Club. C. H. Smithson, Everett Binns, and F. Skirrow.
- 25.—Chiswick Club. F. Verinder.

The most noteworthy feature of the above list is the remarkable activity which it reveals on the part of our friends in Yorkshire, where the tact and organising ability of our Yorkshire agent are producing excellent results. Mr. F. Skirrow, 59 Fell Lane, Keighley, will always be glad to hear from friends in Yorkshire who are willing to organise a meeting, or to obtain an opening for a lecture at any club or society. If Mr. Skirrow cannot himself speak or lecture on any given date, he can usually arrange for a competent speaker to address such a meeting.

"On the 28th January," a correspondent writes, "the lecture on Land Values, with lantern slides, entitled 'The Cat,' was given by a lady member of the League in the schoolroom of the Free Church, Queen's Road, Bayswater. The lecture as usual was as good as the weather was bad; apparently weather conditions have not the slightest dampening effect on this particular 'cat.' After the lecture a good sale of literature took place, and the audience dispersed to the tune of 'God save our native land.'"

In St. Peter's Schoolroom, Green Street, Sunderland, on 8/2/04, Mr. G. O. Wight, J.P., very effectively replied to Mr. Samuel Storey's recent speeches in favour of Protection. Mr. Wight pointed out that in 1885-86 a Commission was appointed to enquire into bad trade, and a large majority of that Commission, while making suggestions, made no suggestions in favour of protective tariffs, but there was a very suggestive addendum by Mr. Storey, who was a member of that Commission. They held that the system under which landlords had been permitted to assert sole interest in the minerals under the soil was indefensible, condemned the system of royalties as handicapping British manufacturers most seriously, and being likely to do so more as foreign competition grew keener. It was, continued Mr. Wight, the Mr. Storey of 1886 they wanted in 1904. After outlining very clearly the case for Free Trade, Mr. Wight showed that they could get rid of all taxes on food by placing a tax on land values. Such a tax was on the Statute Book, but it should be applied on the valuation of the land to-day, and it would bring in 40 millions, instead of the unearned increment going to the private individual. The latter was entitled to what he earned, but the community was entitled to what it created. (Applause.)

FRED. VERINDER, Gen. Secy., E.L.T.L.V.