

LAND VALUES.

Established June 1894, and published till May 1902, as "The Single Tax."

Published the beginning of each month at 13 Dundas Street, Glasgow; and 376-377 Strand, London, W.C.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

By Post in Great Britain and Ireland, 1/6 per annum; Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, 2/- per annum; Canada, United States, and South America, 50 cents. Payable in advance.

All Communications to be addressed to THE EDITOR,
13 Dundas Street, Glasgow.
CORPORATION TELEPHONE, No. 1146.

CONTENTS.

JANUARY, 1904.

General News.	
The Alternative to Protection.	
English News and Notes.	Scottish Notes and News.
The Liberal Leader on the Alternative Policy.	
The Land Question in the United States.	
The Death of Herbert Spencer.	
Our Fiscal Policy.	Taxless Towns.
News of the Movement.	
Land Reform—A Question for Clergymen.	
Signs of the Times.	
A Timely and Necessary Warning.	
Beyond the Sunset.	How to Rate Minerals.
&c., &c.	

"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.

OUR FISCAL POLICY.

THE CRUX OF THE WHOLE DISCUSSION.

"For my part, I imagine that if the inhabitants of Mars would be good enough to dump down upon our planet every year a few hundred millions worth of bales of cotton, bushels of wheat, hogsheads of sugar, cheap cutlery, clocks, watches, hats, boots, ready-made clothes, and other useful articles, we should be extremely grateful to them."—From a letter by "Historicus," in a recent number of the *Standard*.

In the above words a well-known correspondent of the *Standard*, "Historicus," summarises an argument which may to-day be heard from every orthodox Free Trade platform, and one which is evidently regarded by those who venture to use it as entirely conclusive. So conclusive did it seem to the editor of the *London Daily News* that he thought it worthy to be reproduced in the "Free Trade Diary" which that great organ of progressive Liberal thought is now publishing daily. To the proverbial man in the street, indeed, if he happens to be a "Free Trader," it would seem as if there could be no possible dissent from this conclusion. But, unless much of our past labour has been spent in vain, we feel that every constant reader of our paper, every one who has any knowledge of the arguments by which our constant demand for a fiscal policy based upon the taxation of land values is defended, any real insight into the fundamental principles upon which it is founded, will at once realise its insufficiency, its hollowness, and its fallacy.

We will at once admit that *all* the inhabitants of this planet *ought* to have every reason "to be extremely grateful" to the inhabitants of Mars if they were to act in the very generous manner as above described. But we doubt very much whether under the peculiar social laws and institutions to-day prevailing in our midst the majority of us would have any real reason to be so. In fact, we are strongly of the opinion that under such assumed circumstances the majority of us would find our position materially changed for the worse, and have every reason to be extremely angry with, instead of "extremely grateful to" them for their probably well-meaning but extremely mischievous beneficent activity.

Ignorant of our laws, thinking, perhaps, that British Isles really meant the Isles of the British, these generous inhabitants of Mars might "dump down" such portion of their gifts as they intended for the use and enjoyment of the people of these islands, not on land specially devoted by Act of Parliament to the use and enjoyment of the public at large, but on some privately owned portion of our native country. Then, manifestly, the sole use and enjoyment of these commodities would accrue to the fortunate legalised owner of this specially favoured portion of Great Britain.

Or even if we imagine these commodities "dumped down" more or less equally over every part of our island, we cannot see that the vast majority of us would in any way be benefited thereby. For the sole right to collect them, like the sole right to take advantage of the natural bounties already showered down upon us, would accrue solely and entirely to the fortunate few to whom the use, ownership, and control of the land of our country have been legally secured. These would be able to appropriate to themselves all the good and useful things the kind inhabitants of Mars "dumped down" for the use and enjoyment of all. The annual unimproved, or site value of what they call "their property" would be increased proportionately to the value of the commodities thus "dumped down" upon it, and their rent rolls would proportionately increase. But the rest of the inhabitants of these islands, the landless, would have no right to any of these things, and, as to-day, would have to pay the landlords either in commodities or in services, menial and otherwise, for any such portions as they might require to keep body and soul together. Thus it is difficult to see how the majority of our fellow-countrymen, the landless masses of our country, would in any way be advantaged by the generous gifts of the generous inhabitants of Mars.

Nay, obviously their position would be materially worsened. Of course, if the landlords were too lazy, or let us say too busy framing laws and fiscal policies for the due protection of their own vested interests in the Martian gifts, to do the necessary work themselves, some few of the landless might find a more or less precarious employment in collecting for these noble gentry all the good things thus "dumped down" upon this fortunate country. Obviously, however, these would be as nothing compared with the many millions to-day employed in growing wheat, etc., and in making "cutlery, clocks, watches, hats, boots, clothes, and other useful articles." And all of these would, of course, find their services no longer required, and, unless fortunate enough to find work in making *useless* articles, as so many already do to-day, they would soon find themselves compelled to swell the army of beggars, paupers, and unemployed. Thus poverty would increase in

the midst of plenty; men would curse, women would weep, and little children starve despite the rich stores Nature has so lavishly placed at the disposal of all the children of men—we mean, of course, despite the great stores of commodities so lavishly “dumped down” upon us, until the landless masses might well come to curse the Martians and all their works.

Under such circumstances our readers can well imagine the sort of consolation and advice they would receive from “the wise men” interested in maintaining the established order of things. “Blind leaders of the blind,” enjoying their due share of the Martian gifts, would exhort them to patience, and preach to them of the rich reward they would reap in some other world, if only they will rest content with the position to which “a Divine Providence has been pleased to call them in this.” Pseudo philosophers, also well fed and prosperous, would talk profoundly of over population and over production, and discreetly hint at the necessity of limiting the birth rate, or of ceasing to collect some of “the useful *manufactured* articles” the Martians “dumped down” upon us. Prime ministers and other practical politicians would make speeches and write pamphlets on the necessity of “retaliation” as the only means of saving our native industries and giving work to the people. They would advocate the building, not under the circumstances of a *wall*, but of a *roof* of “Protection,” so as to keep out the good things the Martian showered down upon us, and so on.

Some few “impractical visionaries,” as they would doubtless be called, would insist, in season and out of season, that “there is but one way to remove an evil—and that is, to remove its cause.” They would boldly proclaim the self-evident truth that “Poverty deepens as wealth increases, and wages are forced down while productive power grows, because land, which is the source of all wealth and the field of all labour, is monopolised.” We mean, of course, under the assumed circumstances, they would insist that poverty deepens despite the abundant stores of wealth the Martians shower down, we mean “dump down” upon us, because the only place upon which they can “dump down” the gifts they intend for all, the land, is monopolised by some, who are thus enabled to appropriate to themselves what the good Martians intended for all. And hence that “to extirpate poverty,” to secure to all their fair share of the good things annually showered down upon us, “we must substitute for the individual ownership of land,” upon which such things can alone be dumped, “a common ownership.” Despite the vigorous outcries of orthodox economists, pseudo-philosophers, etc., they would boldly proclaim that “Nothing else will go to the cause of the evil—in nothing else is there the slightest hope.” And as a practical remedy, and as a step in this direction, they would advocate that each landholder should contribute towards a fund to be expended for the common benefit of all in exact proportion to the value given to his holding by such Martian gifts—in other words they would advocate, as we advocate to-day, that the prevailing fiscal system should be based, not upon the taxation of commodities, whether home-made or imported, or gifts from the inhabitants of Mars, but upon the value of land.

The real question at issue to-day is, in truth, not how to secure an increased supply or production of wealth, but how to secure a more equitable distribution of the wealth we can

to-day produce in abundance sufficient to satisfy the rational desires of all, and the increased production of which is already well within our reach if only the present artificial obstacles to further production were once swept away. This is the lesson which all who desire to take part in the present struggle on the side of progress, of labour, of humanity, must lay to heart.

L. H. B.

TAXLESS TOWNS.

Eight years’ experience of the experiment made at Fairhope, Alabama, on the lines of Henry George’s Single Tax proposals, have abundantly justified the assertions of all the believers in the taxation of land values. And that is not all. The results are proving singularly attractive to manufacturers.

As readers know, George taught that not only manufacturing establishments but every other kind of personal property—all production and exchange of wealth—should be entirely free of all taxation. In lieu of this he advocated that Government should derive its revenue entirely from a tax laid upon land values; in other words, the taking by Government of the annual rental or utility value of all land; each holder of land thus paying for that which is held by him its annual rental value exclusive of improvements.

George claimed that this would stimulate the production of wealth—would prevent such production being restricted by the holding of land out of use for speculative purposes; would promote profitable employment for both capital and labour, and that it would work to the advantage, not only of those who labour with their hands, but of all who perform useful service of any kind, including, of course, those who carry on the manufacture of useful articles.

Fairhope was founded on the Eastern shore of Mobile Bay, to test this.

Its authorities offer to manufacturers not only exemption from taxes for a time, but permanently, and not only from municipal taxes, but from all taxes of every kind. Not only this, but no land has to be purchased; it can be leased for ninety-nine years at an annual rental to be determined yearly and based entirely upon the competition for the use of bare unimproved land similarly situated in that community.

Matters are managed thus:—

The leases of Fairhope property contain a clause under which the Fairhope Industrial Association binds itself to refund to the lessee an amount equal to whatever taxes may be levied by the county or State authorities, and thus the arrangement completely frees him from all taxes of every kind. In the case of one general store at Fairhope, the Association actually pays its proprietor a considerable sum over and above the rental value of the land he occupies. This the Association pays to him because the taxes levied by the county and State upon his goods and personal property amount to more than the rental value of the land he uses, and the Association reimburses him for all such taxes.

We are told that the Association stands ready to do the same for any manufacturing enterprise that may locate there, and points out that though the town has no railroads it has excellent water communication, and is only sixteen miles from Mobile, where railroads and steamers are in direct communication with New York and other great business centres.

The present rents for land at Fairhope range from 10d. to £6 an acre, according to situation and availability for use. The Association owns 1400 acres, and is purchasing more. The money paid to the settlers comes, of course, out of the “unearned increment” caused by the rise in land values, which in the ordinary way would go into the speculator’s pocket.—*The Weekly Times and Echo*.