

EARTH HUNGER

By Wm. A. Black

Bolton Hall has graphically pictured man's earth hunger:—

"Suppose a great giant should grasp the planet in his right hand and with the fingers of his left hand scrape off its inhabitants into his palm—just suppose.

"Standing there with all the people in one hand, the whole round earth in the other, the giant would say to the wriggling, squirming mass in his left palm:—

"Now, what do you want—home rule in taxation, prohibition, free speech, the "revolutionary movement"?"

"What would you want if you were that mass?"

"You'd want the earth first, for how could you practise any of your systems without the earth?"

"This giant supposition is quite to the point. A giant AIMLESSNESS, IGNORANCE and GREED has scraped the people off the earth, not into a closed palm, but into a number of wriggling, huddled masses called cities, widely separated by immense stretches of idle land.

"And millions of the huddled ones don't know that they want the earth. What would I do with land? they ask.

"Where do you sleep? Suspended in the air? Where do you eat, toil or wander about in search of a job? On the sea?"

"Every moment of your life you are paying toll to some one for the privilege of standing, sleeping or working on the bare earth. All your food and clothing first paid tribute to the landlord before it passed to the manufacturer and the storekeeper."

We boast of living in the most scientific era of the world's history. We have delved into the inmost secrets of nature. We have analyzed and catalogued the facts of the physical world until we sometimes wonder how much there is left to be discovered. In the midst of all this research we persistently ignore the one vital thing for man's peace and happiness. He is a land animal and cannot exist without it. The child born to-day has as much right to the use of land as the first child born to primitive man. We can settle this question and settle it right if we bring to it the same unprejudiced intelligence that we have applied to our research into physical laws. It is merely a question of honest endeavour.

The Malta JOHN BULL, 27th March reproduces with acknowledgments the statement by Professor Gunnison Brown on Land Purchase and Vested Rights appearing in the March issue of LAND & LIBERTY. This able piece of writing is taken from Professor Brown's THE TAXATION OF UNEARNED INCOMES and is to be found in a separate publication, in pamphlet form, comprising several enlightening chapters of that book. This pamphlet, price 6d., is available at our offices.

WHO OWNS THE LAND?

Correspondence on Mineral Royalties between Mr. Andrew MacLaren, M.P., and the Duke of Northumberland, and Report of Mr. MacLaren's speech in the Queen's Hall, London, 16th February, 1926.

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NOTES AND NEWS

The Sixteenth Annual Meeting of the Land Union will be held at the Surveyors' Institution, Great George Street, Westminster, Tuesday, 22nd June, at 3 p.m. At 7.45 p.m. the Annual Dinner of the Union will take place at the Trocadero Restaurant, price of ticket (not including wine), 13s. 6d. Captain Pretyma will preside and the Marquess of Salisbury (Lord Privy Seal) will be the principal guest. It is understood that Denmark's new Land Value legislation will not be under discussion, though some people are of the opinion that said legislation will be the ghost at this feast. It was Lord Hugh Cecil, a brother of the "principal guest" at this pro-landlord banquet, who took the 1909 Budget to be a rehearsal of the Day of Judgment. The Danish Land Value measure is the real thing; but in this case discretion (silence) is the better part of valour—perhaps!

The Danish Land Union (the landlords' organization) must be busy enough these days counting the cost of their foolish opposition to a measure that takes nothing from them, except the power to fleece the industry of the country, and keep it from its legitimate right to seek out the way to higher happiness.

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Our cleverest men are employed in ingeniously cutting here and adding there among the numberless taxes which everywhere shackle industry and exchange, so as to secure the greatest revenue with the least protest; while, by a single, gradually-introduced tax on land values, not only would industry be relieved of this burden but land, the source of all wealth and field of all man's activities, would be made freely accessible, and the unnatural, one-sided competition of workers for an artificially limited number of jobs would be ended.—"Fesole" in the KEIGHLEY NEWS, 1st May.

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Mr. Upton Sinclair is running as Socialist candidate for the Governorship of California. He is strong for a State Bank and a heavy tax on Land Values.—THE FORWARD, Glasgow, 10th April.

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LOSSES ON SMALL HOLDINGS SCHEMES.—Under the Land Settlement (Facilities) Act, 1919, the Ministry of Agriculture has up to the present repaid to local authorities sums amounting to £3,979,924, being the loss incurred by those authorities up to 31st March, 1925, in respect of small holdings whether acquired under the Act of 1908 or the Act of 1919.—Mr. Guinness, 8th February, in the House of Commons.

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LOSSES ON FARM SETTLEMENTS.—The total of the losses shown in the accounts of the Ministry of Agriculture's Farm Settlements up to 31st March, 1925, amounted to £434,705.—Mr. Guinness, 18th February.

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DECLINE IN SMALL HOLDINGS.—The number of agricultural holdings above one acre and not exceeding 50 acres are recorded in the Agricultural Returns for each year. In 1912 there were 292,720 such holdings in England and Wales; in 1925, 264,787.—Brig.-Gen. Brooke, 8th February.

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SMALL HOLDINGS IN SCOTLAND.—In 1913 there were 51,614 holdings not exceeding 50 acres in size. Since 1913 (in twelve years) 2,530 new holdings have been constituted and the outstanding applications at the present moment number 6,838.—Sir J. Gilmour, 2nd March. On the 8th March, Sir J. Gilmour gave figures to show that in spite of new holdings created since 1913, the total number of holdings in Scotland not exceeding 50 acres has declined. In 1925 it was 50,536.