

programme no movement should stand in the way of the positive social philosophy which is necessary for the rebuilding of the city and of which the doctrine that land values are created by society and belong to it plays an important part. For unless that fact is taken into consideration no system of replanning the city is possible nor will it be possible for the city to escape from the dangers which at present are attacking it on all sides."

Another speaker, Stuart Chase, said the city of the present is planned for real estate speculation and human welfare is only a by-product, and there is therefore a very great possibility of catastrophe. The increasing congestion which gives us a growing accident rate, deafening noise, the dome of dust over the city, will finally make the city uninhabitable or lead to a technical breakdown. Three factors have made possible the tremendous growth of the city—the elevator, which makes possible the skyscraper; the development of rapid transit and the extension system for the water supply that is indispensable. The great obstacle to rebuilding the city is inflated land values, which demands more than a king's ransom for a city lot. The technical knowledge is available to remedy the situation but it has not the opportunity to get to work.

The rent of land must come out of production. After we have paid this enormous sum to the non-producers of this land we still have the government expense to settle. A mentality test in use in some institutions is to allow a faucet to overflow; patients are equipped with pails and cloths and sent to the room; the feeble-minded mop patiently at the endless task, but those with a glimmer of reason left shut off the faucet.

WINIFRED B. COSSETTE in Quincy, (Mass.) *Patriot Ledger*.

## What the Great Scotsman Saw

THE great Adam Smith, who may properly be styled a precursor of Henry George, points out in his monumental book, usually styled "The Wealth of Nations," that the one great defect in the land tax which had been enacted in England in 1693, is "the constancy of the valuation." Accordingly he maintains that an Act ordaining the valuation of land, the landlord being indemnified for his expenditure, should be "a perpetual and unalterable regulation or fundamental law of the commonwealth." Clearly what the great Scotsman meant was the separate valuation of land and improvements and the exemption of the latter from taxation. True, he does not appear to have realized that what he terms "the ordinary rent of land" when referring to country land, is one and the same thing with what he terms "the ground-rent of houses" when he refers to urban land. Bearing in mind that he was the first in the field of political economy, however, we must realize that Smith missed very little, inasmuch as he maintains that no tax could be more just or equitable than a tax upon ground-rent. Readers may think that I

have a lawyer's liking for precedents, but in my opinion one of the most effective arguments in support of our cause may be drawn from the armory of history, and accordingly it seems to me that we do not make sufficient use of the historical fact that a land tax was imposed in England as long ago as 1693, that it was intended to placate the popular disaffection aroused by the abolition of the so-called feudal burdens in 1645, and that the principle of taxing the rent of land, excluding improvements, was advocated by Adam Smith, the founder of political economy, who demanded also that a statute providing for the separate valuation of land and improvements should be a fundamental law. As Henry George once said, "truth is never new," and it will be remembered that he knew the value of history, and so fortified his argument by a chapter in "Progress and Poverty" entitled "Private Property in Land Historically Considered."

HON. P. J. O'REGAN in Auckland, N. Z. *Liberator*.

## A Tribute to E. N. Vallindingham

EDWARD NOBLE VALLANDINGHAM, who died Monday in Seville, Spain, was a charming combination of the old and the new South, and the old and new worlds. In the days when "scholar and gentleman" meant intellectual quality, and all that goes with inherited and acquired culture, he would have been classified as both. He impressed one at the first glance and the first meeting, and was just as impressive after years of acquaintance and intimacy. In other days, when the late George F. Babbitt was in his prime, and the late Frank E. Chase participated actively in social affairs, Mr. Vallindingham was at his best, and the three would have held their own with Thackeray and Maginn and their set.

Mr. Vallandigham wrote extremely well. He had a leisurely style which gave grace to any subject which he discussed. There was something in all his essays, as in his human relations, of that North Shore of Maryland which he loved so dearly. He was a close student of history and politics. Where some persons saw merely a series of haphazard unrelated events, he detected the working out of the principles of government. He knew not only things, but the philosophy of things. He wrote many editorials for *The Herald*, and a number of special articles, and had arranged to send us his observations on the foreign trip which has ended so abruptly and so sadly.

A Southerner, he was deeply attached to Boston, proud of its past, and a contributor to the telling of its story. The accelerated tempo of the age did not distress him in the least. He had taken his manners and his educations from the old school, and retained them. He had genuine admiration for the man who worked with his hands. An aristocrat, he had the most scrupulous regard for the social rights of everybody. He lived a simple and satisfying

home life, and, axe on shoulder, swinging at a tree, he was a familiar sight to his Chestnut Hill neighbors. The North End of Boston appealed to him particularly. Roaming among the little shops, he had the courtly deference of his ancestors, and the Italian shopkeepers were always hugely pleased when he entered their little places and instinctively doffed his hat to them. He was a splendid representative of the genuine gentlemen who are unfortunately much less numerous now than a few decades ago.

Editorial *Boston Herald*.

## The Riddle of the Sphinx

ROBINSON CRUSOE may have been monarch of all he surveyed, but he was pitiably poor in the necessities and comforts of life because, working alone, he could produce so little. Now, in the midst of Twentieth Century industrial civilization, where the subdivision, specialization and coordination of labor, together with the use of power and machinery, have carried production to the *n*th degree of efficiency, we are offered the preposterous theory that men are poor and out of work because of the abundance of their productions!

Who shall properly diagnose our economic ailment and prescribe an adequate remedy? Recognized economists long since tacitly dropped the subject of economics in its larger aspects to pursue a specialized branch thereof. The "economics" they profess is really business administration. They have substituted an art for what is really a science. Instead of conducting an investigation into what civilization has done that deprives men of the opportunity of making a living unless they are fortunate enough to find a master to hire them, they merely study out ways and means to make the best of an admittedly bad situation. It is not pleasant to charge them with obscurantism, but we cannot otherwise explain their discarding the science for an art.—STEPHEN BELL in *Commerce and Finance*.

LET us not continue living in a fool's paradise. Let us honestly face the fact. We are enmeshed in a vast system of land parasitism. Shrieks of agony will arise at any attempts to eradicate the parasitic growth. But the task of rooting out this cancer must be undertaken or it will destroy, as it has done in past times, the civilization it feeds upon.—*Progress*, Melbourne, Aus.

GOD, by giving to man wants, and making his recourse to work necessary to supply them, has made the right to work the property of every man, and this property is the first, the most sacred, the most imprescriptible of all.—TURGOT.

IF Christianity was understood and taught conformably to the spirit of its founder, the existing social organism could not last a day.

—EMILE DE LAVELAYE, Belgian Economist.

## The Underlying Cause of Poverty

IT were idle to question the intelligence and ability of those who so vainly seek to solve the great question of increasing crime and persisting poverty.

Their utter failure is due to their neglect to diagnose the disease, before suggesting a remedy, and a correct diagnosis is as essential for the cure of social disease as for individuals.

What then is the underlying cause of world wide poverty and its manifestations in crime which flourishes everywhere in the shadow of schools and churches, poverty in the midst of plenty, famine amid full granaries?

First, may we agree that some Great Cause has enacted the laws which hold the worlds fixed in their whirling orbits? That we have proof that these laws are unchanging and beneficent? That the universe everywhere attests both the wisdom and the beneficence of this First Great Cause? That it is not conceivable that this Cause would show less intelligence in launching the Good Ship Earth into space than that shown in provisioning and equipping the "Leviathan?"

That, therefore the earth when launched carried ample equipment and provisions for all for the full duration of her voyage?

If then, the cabin passengers are surfeited while those in the steerage starve, this must be due to some action by man which ignores and defies natural law.

Since the effect is world wide, since poverty, starvation and crime flourish in Australia, Africa and Asia as well as in Europe and America, this defiance of natural law which is the cause must be equally wide spread.

In launching the Earth, air, water, land and sunshine were given as the common property of all generations, but the results of man's individual labor exerted on these became his individual property.

The more thoroughly we study the evils of today the more certain is it that their roots are in our treatment of this common property as if it were the fruits of individual effort and therein human law defies natural law.

This enables those to reap who have not sown, and not merely deprives the laborer of his earnings but enables the absentee holder to forbid the use by idle men of idle land to satisfy their hunger.

We have seen recently in Wales and Pennsylvania men shivering with cold above unmined coal, men vainly asking permission to sow crops on untilled land, labor idle because human law forbids men to satisfy their needs as natural law commands.

The only way to really benefit mankind is to teach men how to break down this artificial barrier which alone prevents the use of earth's bounties so that there will everywhere be work for all, food for all, comfort for all, leisure for all.—WILL ATKINSON.