

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.*

TRADES' UNION CONGRESS AND LAND MONOPOLY.

THE Thirtieth Annual Trades' Union Congress, held this year at Hanley, was ushered in by the holding of a public meeting at Hanley, Saturday, 2nd September, on the housing question, when the principal speakers were Mr. James Sexton, President of the Congress this year, and Mr. George Cadbury. Mr. Sexton went to the root of the matter, urging the necessity of the destruction of land monopoly before any satisfactory scheme for the housing of the people could be arrived at. In the course of an interesting speech he pointed to the experiments in housing of Mr. Cadbury at Bournville, and while praising the experiment, drew the attention to the fact that one result had been to increase the values of land in the neighbourhood.

The speech of Mr. Cadbury was a vigorous denunciation of present housing conditions as the main cause of drunkenness and disease. He also affirmed that land monopoly lay at the root of the whole difficulty of housing. Thereafter Mr. Geo. Cadbury moved a resolution drawing the attention of members

of Parliament, candidates and Local Authorities to the great need of activity in regard to the sweeping away of slum areas and the provision of proper housing accommodation for toilers in the field, workshop, mine and factory. The resolution further urged the workmen to protest against the erection of block dwellings, or dreary or monotonous rows in gardenless streets, and to use every effort to secure that all new housing areas should be planned on garden village lines, in order to provide space for sunshine and air around the homes of the people.

The ineptitude of this resolution is only to be equalled, we think, by the famous passage in Mills' "Political Economy" where he declares "that the land of every country belongs to the people of that country," but goes on to add, that "the individuals called landowners have no right in morality or justice to anything but the rent, or compensation for its saleable value."

If land monopoly lies at the root of the housing evil, why not deal with land monopoly? Has the sweeping away of slum areas anywhere had any effect on the housing problem other than the obvious one of driving the inhabitants of slum areas into model or common lodging-houses or into other districts nearly as bad, from a housing point of view, as the districts they have been driven out of? Over and over again this has been demonstrated, yet men stand up and talk radical sentiment as to land monopoly and move and pass such useless faltering resolutions!

Take again the second part of the Hanley resolution in which the workmen "are urged to protest against the erection of block dwellings or dreary and monotonous rows in gardenless streets, &c." Have not workmen been protesting all their lives against such houses? But what avails the protest of the workmen when land is private property, until by their votes they can secure equal opportunities to the use of land by the concentration of Taxation on the values of land.

A Cadbury may have the means to buy a piece of land and build decent houses for a district, but he cannot buy all the land and give all men equal opportunities. Indeed, what does he do but create a relatively privileged class and make more difficult the chances of creating such general conditions. It is not to be supposed that we do not admire Mr. Cadbury and such men for what they are doing. We admire them for the acts which speak of noble hearts, but if the head would follow the heart instead of increasing such experiments, we should have an increased agitation against land monopoly and a general attack all along the line on slumdom and poverty.

It is something also gained to our cause to have the vigorous expressions of radical opinion by such men as Mr. Sexton and Mr. Cadbury even when it is followed by resolutions such as we have cited, for we are certain that others will not halt, will not fail to see

the logic of the question. The President of the Trades' Union Congress in his address as president again took the opportunity of expressing his conviction that land monopoly was the greatest of all evils, such expressions of opinion are valuable as showing that if action is not all our way thought is and action will come. The determination of organised labour to have nothing to do with protection was manifested by the magnificent vote of 50 to 1. We congratulate the Trades Unions of the country on such a vote. It speaks volumes for the parliament of labour that despite the more or less protectionism of Trade Unions of the continent, of the United States, and of the Colonies, they will have none of it. But after all these file leaders of Trades Union labour have many of them visited other lands where protection is rife, and there have found that where the workers was better off as for the most part in New Zealand, Australia, and America, it was in spite of protection and owing to the enormous resources not as yet completely monopolised; but in France and Germany and the Continent generally where monopoly reigns, the condition of the protected workers is, on the whole, inferior to that of his British brother. The social democracy of Germany is at open war with the taxers of bread, the Brotwücher (bread-users) as they call them, despite the fact that Karl Marx, Ferdinand Lassalle and the fathers of the movement spoke of the Free Trade question as a middle-class question. Protectionists promise employment to the workers. The leaders of the workmen know and can point to the want of employment in continental protected countries, and to the growth of an unemployed class in the New Countries of America, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, &c., as a proof that the problem of unemployed labour is not a question of tariffs.

These are things that no amount of "Thus saith Mr. Chamberlain" can get over.

We could have wished that the Trades' Union Congress could have seen their way as many members undoubtedly could, to declare for Free Production as well as for Free Trade, for the sweeping away of a revenue tariff as well as a protective tariff, and the taxing out of the land monopolist. Such a policy, foreshadowed by the able address of their president may come—aye, must come, if the labourer is to be free from want, and the fear of want. To Free Trade we must add Free Land, that is, land free from all speculation, and open to men on payment to the community of its value, where it has a value and where it has no value—free in every sense of the term. With that we are Free men, without it we are but disguised chattel slaves, free to think, speak, and vote, but not free to live save on the terms of others.

WM. CASSELS.

Mr. C. B. Fillebrown, president of the Massachusetts Single Tax League, says:—"I take a pride in showing *Land Values* to my friends as a model of common sense propaganda." Fifty cents. by post to the United States.

PUBLISHER'S NOTES.

In view of the November Municipal Elections, and the coming winter's speaking campaign, extra supplies of "*Land Values*," extending to several thousand copies, will be printed for special circulation. We hope our friends everywhere will send for parcels, for free distribution at suitable meetings, and for particular interested friends who ought to be on our Subscriber's List.

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