

PEERS AND LANDLORDS ON THE PLATFORM.

LORD KESTIVEN AT WELLINGBOROUGH ON
DECEMBER 8TH.

"We are threatened with danger from within by Socialism and from without by Germany. (Laughter and applause.) You won't believe it till they are here, driving their bayonets into your stomachs, and then you will. As to the Budget, it is a defunct Budget. (Uproar.) If that Budget would not make you sick nothing else will."

A VOICE: How much work have you ever done?"

His LORDSHIP: "More than you will ever do in your lifetime, my lad. I am prepared to stand here and defend myself anyway. I have had the honour of fighting for my country and I am prepared to do it again. I have lost one eye in South Africa and am prepared to stand up against any man and do a good day's work as far as my disabilities will allow me. I have used a pick and shovel in trenches with men in South Africa, and when a man says: 'How much work you have ever done?' I pity his beastly ignorance." (Loud cheers.)

LORD DUNMORE AT BARKING, DECEMBER 9TH.

Lord DUNMORE on rising was received with loud cries of "Down with the Peers." He attempted to quote from a speech of Mr. Lloyd George.

A VOICE: "Three cheers for Lloyd George." (Loud cheers were given.)

Lord DUNMORE: "In rejecting the Budget the House of Lords asked the people to give their decision on it."

A VOICE: "And so we will."

Lord DUNMORE: "I object to the Budget also because it includes the principles of the Licensing Bill, and I believe we were justified in throwing that out. ('No, no!') A Unionist Government would not have brought in such a Bill."

A VOICE: "No, for it wouldn't suit them, and you are in the same boat. Who is to rule, that is the question, the Peers or the people?"

Lord DUNMORE: "Do you want a Second Chamber?"

A VOICE: "Yes, but elected by the people."

Lord DUNMORE: "Have that if you like, but let it have the power of appeal from the House of Commons to you."

A VOICE: "Who is to rule?"

Lord DUNMORE: "For God's sake, let me speak."

The VOICE: "We want to—"

Lord DUNMORE: "Oh, damn him. Come on, I'll answer any questions you like. Do you want me to deal with Tariff Reform?"

A VOICE: "No that is not the question; it is 'Peers or People.'"

Mr. G. H. WILLIAMSON, the candidate, said that the only question was Tariff Reform—

VOICES: "No, the House of Lords; read Lord Landsowne's amendment."

LORD PEMBROKE AND SIR GEORGE LUCK AT
LANDFORD, DECEMBER 8TH.

Lord PEMBROKE said that this year was, so far as politics were concerned, one of the most important and critical times there had ever been in the political history of this country. (Hear, hear.) It was so important that every single man who was entitled to vote—(A VOICE: "Will vote for the Budget," and applause)—would weigh very carefully, and without any prejudice—

A VOICE: "Why didn't the House of Lords do that?" ('Hear hear,' and applause.)

Lord PEMBROKE: "There are a great many people who think that, and I don't say they are the best of our people, who think that the best thing to do in giving a vote one way or the other is to vote for the party, or for the man who is likely to give him most benefit—(Hear, hear, and 'That is the one we want,' and applause.) 'Mr. Lloyd George—'"

The audience broke out into cheers at the mention of the Chancellor's name, and sang, "For he's a jolly good fellow," with the greatest enthusiasm. They repeated the song over and over again, and

General Sir GEORGE LUCK, rising angrily, called for silence. "Look here," he said, "you will please to keep quiet, or you will get chucked out deuced soon, I can tell you."

A VOICE: "All right."

Sir GEORGE LUCK (shaking his fist excitedly): "I am not the sort of person to stand any damned nonsense (sensation). I'll let you know that."

A VOICE: "Drop that bad language. That is enough of it."

LAND CLUB LEAGUE.

The Land Club League has issued a pamphlet containing its programme, which we quoted in our last issue, and giving the following reasons for supporting the taxation of land values:—

The League supports the proposal for the valuation of all land, because land should be taxed and rated in accordance with its capital value, and also because, whilst there is no official valuation of the land, owners can, and constantly do, ask extravagant prices for any land that is required by any public authority for cottages, small holdings, allotments, or any other public purpose. The valuation to be made under the Budget of 1909 will show what is the worth of the land itself, apart from the buildings and improvements of all kinds upon it. It is this value that has to a large extent escaped contributing its share to public expenditure. When we have found by valuation what the worth of land is, we shall be able to charge on it an important part of our national revenue and local rates. This is fair, because the value arises from the presence, the growth and the enterprise of the surrounding community, and not from any action of the landowners themselves, who, as such, have done nothing to create it. Moreover, the taxation of land now put to its proper use will bring it into full use, and if this tax is extended, it will in time break the power of the land monopoly which has driven millions of people from the country into the towns and abroad.

Our present system of rating and taxing is unjust. Every improvement made by labour or by expenditure of capital on a cottage or land means that the owner has to pay more rates. On the other hand a landlord has only to prevent the land being used, keeping it idle for sport or speculation, and he will escape most or even all the rates. Under the present system those who make full use of their land have not only to pay their own shares of the national and local expenses, but also the shares of those who escape by not putting their land to the best use. This injustice will be put an end to by valuing the land and rating and taxing it on this value.

In addition to this statement, the League sends out "Questions for Candidates for Parliament," of which the first three are:—

1. Will you vote for a complete valuation of the land of the country as provided in the Budget of 1909?
2. Will you support any proposals for levying (A) Rates, (B) Taxes, on the capital value of the land?
3. Do you consider that power should be given to local authorities to acquire land needed for public purposes at a price based on the public valuation?

POLITICAL SPEECHES AND WRITINGS.

MR. CHURCHILL IN MANCHESTER.

The following is part of Mr. Winston Churchill's speech delivered in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, on December 6th.

I was just mentioning the Suez Canal, and, while I am on the subject of canals will you let me come with a long hop to the Manchester Ship Canal? You could not find a better objection either for the defence of free trade or for the justification of land reform (cheers) than the Manchester Ship Canal. What is the Manchester Ship Canal? It is a channel to enable foreign goods to be imported cheaply into this country, it is a tube to bring dumping into the very heart of our national life; and you have built it, you have built this canal yourselves, you have built it at a great cost, you have dragged the Trojan horse within your own walls yourself, and you have thrived upon it. (Laughter and cheers.) You have actually thrived in the process of committing this extraordinary folly. The Manchester Ship Canal has been an enormous stimulus to the trade and prosperity of Manchester and Lancashire, and nobody denies, nobody can

deny it. What kind of fools are those who come to us and say that, when we have spent so much money in building a canal and making foreign goods cheap in the Manchester market, we should spend more money on Custom House officers and Custom House buildings in order to make them dear again? (Laughter and cheers.) These arguments are not only against reason and logic, they are against nature. The free waterway of the canal is vital to Manchester. (Hear, hear.) You might as well throttle the air pipe of a submarine diver in order to protect him from the draught (loud laughter) as choke your Ship Canal with a protectionist tariff. It is worth while, that those who are interested in the canal should observe that Mr. Wyndham ("Oh!") in Liverpool proposed to tax timber, and Mr. Chaplin here in Manchester (groans)—don't let us hoot them—they have got a lot of trouble before them (laughter)—and Mr. Chaplin in Manchester declared that he intended to tax grain; and Mr. Balfour—of course, Mr. Balfour is a leader, he does whatever his followers tell him (loud laughter), only when he knows his followers are wrong he does it half-heartedly. Well, timber is almost as important an item in the freights of the canal as cotton, and grain is more than twice as important in the freights of the canal as cotton—both cotton and grain are to be struck at by the tariff reformer, and I say, let all concerned in the prosperity of the canal take due notice—let the shareholders who have not had too much out of it, let them take notice; let the Manchester Corporation and the rate-payers of Manchester take notice, and let the dockers, let the men who unload the ships at the wharves, let them take notice of the amiable project which is in contemplation in their interest, in the traffic and activity of the Ship Canal. (Hear, hear.)

THE EXEMPTION OF COTTON.

Mr. Balfour has told us that he is going to exempt cotton. (Laughter.) We must be thankful for small mercies, and I want to ask a question. Why are you exempting cotton? On what grounds? Surely highly scientific taxation is not going to descend to electioneering. If the foreigner will pay the duty on timber and grain, why will he not make a good job of it and pay it on cotton? (Laughter.) If these articles have the faculty of not going up in the British market when they are taxed, why cannot cotton be made to come in, on the same basis? Why should not the cotton growers of the United States be made to pay a toll for bringing their cotton to our markets? If cotton is to be exempted on the ground that it is a raw material of manufacture, why is not grain to be exempted on the ground that it is the raw material of human life? (Cheers.) What difference will it make to the cotton trade, if the ultimate cost of production is increased, whether it is increased by a tax on the cotton that the workers spin or a tax on the corn that they eat? The trade, as a whole, will have to bear the loss, and they will have to fight it out between them—the different sections of the trade—as to who is to take the principal share. There I foresee the avenue of disastrous consequences from which any one who loves this great and famous country will desire to save it. All these questions arise from the consideration of that splendid work of British skill and enterprise which has brought the sea to Manchester. (Cheers.)

THE CANAL AND THE LAND QUESTION.

Now let the Manchester Ship Canal tell its tale about the land. (Cheers.) It has got a story to tell which is just as simple and just as pregnant as its story about free trade. (Renewed cheers.) When it was resolved to build the canal the first thing to do was to buy land. Before the resolution to build the canal was taken the land on which the canal flows—I do not know whether I ought to say flows (laughter)—I will say the land on which it goes—was in the main agricultural land, paying rates on an assessment of from 30s. to £2 an acre. I am told that 4,495 acres of land purchased out of something like 5,000 I think, immediately after the decision to buy—4,495 acres were sold for £770,000 sterling, or an average of £172 an acre; that is to say, seven times the value of the agricultural land and the value on which it had been rated for public purposes. What had the landowner done for the community; what enterprise had he shown? What service had he rendered? What capital had he risked in order that he should gain this enormous multiplication of the value of his property? I will tell you in one word what he had done. (Cries of "Nowt.") Can you guess it? (Renewed cries of "Yes," and "Nowt.") Yes—nothing. But it was not only the land that was needed for making the canal the owners of which were automatically enriched, but all the

surrounding land—large areas in particular places, land having frontages to the canal or access to the canal—rose and rose rapidly and splendidly in value, by the stroke of a fairy wand, without toil, without risk, without even a half-hour's thought. The landowners of Salford, Eccles, Stretford, Irlam, Warrington, Runcorn, &c., found themselves in possession of property which had doubled, trebled, quintupled in value. Now, I am not attacking those individual landlords. I think they were quite right to make the best bargain they could for themselves under the law. I do not blame them; I blame the law. I am not attacking the individual, I am attacking the system. It is not the individuals we wish to injure; it is the system we intend to change. (Cheers.) But more than that, apart from these high prices which were paid, there was a heavy bill for compensation for severance, disturbance, and injurious affection where no land was taken—(laughter)—injurious affection where no land was taxed—namely, raising the value of the land where it was not taken at many times its value. All these, added to the dead-weight of construction, to all those burdens on those whose skill, enterprise, and foresight enabled them to do this work. Much of this land today is rated at ordinary agricultural value, and in order to make certain that no injustice is done, that those landowners are not injured by our system of government, half the rates, under the Agricultural Rates Act, are paid back to them, and the balance is paid by you. The land is still rising in value, and with every day's work which every man in this hall does, and with every addition to the prosperity of Manchester, the improvement of this great city and of the vast community which dwells around it, the land is enhanced in value. I have told you what happened to the landowners. Let us see what happened to the shareholders and the rate payers who found that money. The ordinary shareholders, who subscribed eight millions, have had no dividend yet. The Corporation loan of five millions, interest on which is borne by the rates each year, has had no return upon its capital. Yet I think a return will come in time, but none has come yet. These are the men who did the work. These are the men who put up the money. Well now, I want to ask you a question. Do you think that it would be very unfair if the owners of all this automatically created land value, due to the growth of the city, due to the enterprise of the Corporation, due to the sacrifices made by the shareholders, had been made to pay a proportion at any rate of the unearned increment which they secured (cries of "No") back to the Corporation and to the City, and to the community, whose presence, whose exertions, and whose enterprise had so greatly increased the value of their property? I should have thought that it would have been an extremely reasonable and fair proposition, especially as we do not touch anything that has happened in the past. Give them all that they have got up to the present, and only look forward to new accretions of value in the future. Well, that is communism, that is pillage, that is anarchy, that is a social revolution, that is the downfall of civilised society, the end of faith, family, Empire, monarchy, all.

THE TAXATION OF LAND VALUES.

There was a time not long ago when less violent language was used about the taxation of land values. A Tory House of Commons twice passed a bill, affirming that principle in a more drastic measure than our legislation now proposes. All the great municipal corporations throughout the land, the most Conservative as well as the most Liberal, have petitioned Parliament in favour of the taxation of land values. (Cheers.) Royal Commissioners presided over by the most able and most prominent persons in the country have explored the whole subject and pronounced in favour of the taxation of land values. Fifty years ago John Stuart Mill wrote in favour of it (cheers), and 100 years ago Adam Smith wrote in favour of it, and let me read you what they wrote. John Stuart Mill, in his "Principles of Political Economy," says:—

"Suppose there was a kind of increment which constantly tends to increase without any exertion or sacrifice on the part of the owner. . . . Consistently with complete possession on the part of the owner in such a case, it will be no violation of the principles on which private property is grounded if the State should appropriate this increase of wealth or a great part of it as it arose. This would not properly be taking anything from anybody, but would simply be applying an accession of wealth created by circumstances to the benefit of society instead of allowing it to become the unearned appendage to the rights of a particular class."

Adam Smith said more than 100 years ago in the "Wealth of Nations":—

"Ground rents are a still more proper subject of taxation than the rent of houses. . . . Both ground rents and the ordinary rent of land are a species of revenue which the owner in many cases enjoys without any care or attention of his own. Though a part of this revenue should be taken from him in order to defray the expenses of the State no discouragement will thereby be given to any sort of industry. . . . Ground rents and the ordinary rent of land are, therefore, perhaps the species of revenue which can best bear to have a peculiar tax imposed upon them."

These are the words of great economists and thinkers generally, but when a Prime Minister like Mr. Asquith (cheers), when a Chancellor of the Exchequer like Mr. Lloyd George (renewed cheers), have the courage to come forward and make definite proposals they are assailed with a storm of abuse and insult, with howlings and ululations; then Parliaments are broken up and Constitutions are violated, and then we all have to take a hand in the game. (Cheers.) I am not at all disturbed. We none of us are the least discomposed by the clamours which have been raised. We have put the land taxes into the Budget (cheers). When the Budget is carried, as carried it will be (prolonged cheers), the land taxes, unaltered, unmodified, will be there. (Cheers.) Very important issues are at stake in the next few weeks in Britain. Do not underrate the importance of this land question. Every nation has its own way of doing things; every nation has its own successes and its own failures in particular lines. All over Europe you have a system of land tenure far superior, socially, economically, politically, to ours. But the benefits of these superior land systems are largely, if not entirely, taken away by grinding tariffs on food and the necessities of life. Here in England we have long enjoyed the blessings of free trade and of untaxed bread and meat; but, on the other hand, we had to set against these inestimable boons a vicious and unreformed system of land tenure. In no great country in the civilized world, in no great country in the New or in the Old World, have the working classes yet secured the advantages both of free trade and of free land (cheers), by which I mean a commercial system and a land system from which, so far as possible, the element of monopoly is rigorously excluded. (Cheers.) Sixty years ago our system of national taxation was effectively reformed, and immense advantages were reaped from that great work to which Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Gladstone (cheers) contributed. Advantages were reaped not only by the poorest but by the richest in the country as well. The system of local taxation to-day is just as clumsy and nearly as wasteful as the old unreformed system of national taxation. In many cases it is as great an impediment to progress, and it is, I think, the most sensible burden that the poorest class have to bear on their shoulders. I believe that it weighs to-day upon the interests of the country as heavily as the tariffs and the Corn Laws sliding scales. "You who shall liberate the land," said Mr. Cobden, "will do more for your country than we have done in the liberation of its commerce." (Cheers.)

MR. LLOYD GEORGE AT CARNARVON.

Addressing his constituents in Carnarvon on December 8th, Mr. Lloyd George, said:—

The Lords say, "We have not rejected your Bills; we are only referring them to the country." (Laughter.) Let us examine that, because you will hear a good deal of it in the course of the next few weeks, though you will not hear much about it afterwards. (Laughter.) And I tell you why it is a claim that does not bear examination. What does it mean? Just you follow the subject in the light of what has happened during the present Parliament. The first Session of this Parliament two great measures had passed from the House of Commons. The first of all was the Education Bill. (Hear, hear.) No one can doubt that the principles of that measure had been submitted to the judgment of the electorate. It was rejected by the House of Lords. What was the second Bill? The second Bill was the Plural Voting Bill, better known as "one man, one vote." That was also rejected. Those are two Bills which have been unquestionably submitted to the electorate, and both were rejected in the first Session of this Parliament. What is the claim of the Lords? The Lords said, "We did not reject them; we simply referred them to the people." Very well, suppose we had taken them at their word. There would have been a dissolution in the first Session of Parliament. The second year we then dealt with two great questions upon which the Scottish

electorate were unanimous. One was the Scottish Small Landholders Bill, and the other was the Scottish Valuation Bill. Both these Bills were rejected. You would have had a second dissolution in the second year of Parliament. Now you come to the third year. We have already had two dissolutions of Parliament in two years, if the claim of the peers is to be admitted. Now we come to the third year. The third year we had a Licensing Bill. (Hear, hear.) What happened? That was thrown out. A third dissolution of Parliament in the third year would, therefore, have been called for. We come to the fourth year of this Parliament, and the Finance Bill of the year is thrown out. A fourth dissolution of Parliament in the course of four years. Do they really think the people of this country are fools? (Cheers.) It is not a reference to the people, it is a refusal. (Hear, hear.) It means that whenever a Liberal Government happens to come into power there must be annual Parliaments, and whenever a Tory Government comes into power then the Septennial Act is to work. . . .

THE LAND TAXES.

I now come to the land taxes. What are the proposals of these taxes? The first is this, that the owners of land should pay on its full real value. And when they talk about us exempting agriculture, the reason why we have done it is that the owner and occupier pay on its full value at this moment. You come to land in the neighbourhood of a town, and very rarely can you get land even upon a tenth part of its value. There is no justice in it, there is no fairness in it. And you must remember this, that the value of land in the neighbourhood of a town had been created by the industrial growth and energies and efforts of the inhabitants of the town themselves. (Cheers.) What is the second principle of the land taxes? It is that we are in future, when land grows in value, not owing to any expenditure by its owner, to any capital invested by him, to any improvements effected by him, but purely to the growth of the community around, then one-fifth of the increased value shall go to the pockets of the community that created the whole of it. (Cheers.) And what is the third tax? We have got in this part of the country the leasehold system which is a truly vicious system. (Hear, hear.) Now, what happens when a man takes a piece of land to build upon it? It may be land at the time for which the owner may be only getting a few shillings. A man builds upon it, and the rent immediately goes up by leaps and bounds to as much as four, five, ten, and fifty times, and sometimes—I can give you cases—a 100 times the previous value of the land—purely because he has built a home for himself upon it. What better purpose could you put land to than that? He gets a lease for 60, 70, or 80 years. Year by year the value of that land and house passes out of the hands of the man that built it, who sweated for it, who raised money for it, into the hands of the man who never spent a penny in erecting that house. What do we say? We say the country has need of money and we are looking out for somebody to tax.—(Laughter.) We do not want to tax food (hear, hear), we will tax no man's raiment, we will not tax the house that shelters him and his family—what shall we tax? We do not want to tax industry, we do not want to tax enterprise, we do not want to tax commerce—what shall we tax? We will tax the man who is getting something that he never earned (cheers), that he never produced, and that by no law of justice and fairness ought ever to belong to him. So when that lease expires and the landlord comes in and seizes that house he has got to give 10 per cent. to the community upon it. (Cheers and a voice:—"It ought to be 50 per cent.") Well, they say that 10 per cent. is robbery (laughter); I do not know what name they would give 50 per cent.; but the landlord makes 100 per cent.; we make 10.

LORD BUTE AND CARDIFF.

Well, now, if you can stand me a little longer, let me take my first proposition, that we are simply charging the landlord upon the real and not the nominal value of the land. I cannot do better than give you one or two cases, one or two concrete illustrations. How they loathe these cases; they think facts are vulgar, so common, it is rude to mention them (laughter) that I really must apologise for giving you a few facts. There is a very fine old castle in South Wales; it is now in the hands of the Scotsman called the Marquis of Bute. It is a magnificent building; it is the Marquis of Bute's South Wales residence. It has over a hundred acres of land, invaluable land in the heart

of Cardiff. If you were to sell that land, I will not say you would get enough sovereigns for it to cover it, but you would get an enormous price for it. Well, that castle is now rated with all that invaluable land at £924 per annum. (Shame.) But, stop a minute, next door to this castle is a tailor's shop. It is 47 ft. by 90 ft.—that is, a little over 400 square yards. The castle and its ground is 500,000 square yards. The tailor's shop was rated at £947 (cries of "Shame!" and "Robbery!"). £924 for this gigantic castle with its magnificent grounds in the heart of one of the most prosperous cities of the Empire; next door is this small tailor's shop, rated at £23 higher every year. ("Shame!") Well, now, nobody wants to take that castle away; that is not the proposal. (A voice. "Turn it into a tailor's shop.") One suggests that I should make a tailor's shop of it. Nobody wishes to confiscate the property of the Marquis of Bute; all we say is that the tailor has to pay full value on his premises. (Cheers.) I could give you other cases, but you can multiply from your own experience, your own observation, your own knowledge. You can compare the way in which the tradesman is assessed in any town, great or small, for his premises with the assessment which is placed on some great baronial castle or residence in the neighbourhood. You find that the tradesman has often to encounter very hard times, and he has always to pay. He has to pay the wholesale man, he has to pay wages, he has to pay the tax-gatherer, he has to pay the rate-collector, and he has to pay the ground landlord, and, it may be, he has to pay the mortgagee. At any rate he has got to pay promptly, he has got to pay on the nail, and very often he has got to deal with people who have not got the same ideas of promptitude and punctuality as his creditors have. A large number of tradesmen are above this anxiety, but they have passed it on their way. No tradesman I have ever met objects to pay his taxes, whether Imperial or local (hear, hear), his fair share, but he objects to pay somebody else's share, for that is what happens here as long as you allow it. What we want is equal treatment for all. (Cheers.)

AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE INCREMENT DUTY.

Let me give you an example of the increment duty. I think I will take an illustration from this town. You had a demand here a short time ago for land for the purposes of a cemetery and a new school. The land which was wanted for the cemetery was rated at £2 an acre. What did the landowner ask for that land? He wanted £847 per acre. ("Shame!") Two pounds an acre at 25 years' purchase would bring us £50; the demand put forward is £847. There are two things in this Budget concerning that—namely, that if land is worth £847 it should be taxed upon that sum (cheers), and not upon £50. If land goes up in value so rapidly in the neighbourhood of towns, land worth £50 goes up to £800, the community which creates that value should get one-fifth of that increment for public purposes. (Cheers.) You had a demand for a public school and wanted land for that purpose. The sum asked in respect for that land, was, I think, about a thousands pounds an acre. In the TIMES to-day—poor old TIMES (laughter), it is getting more DAILY MAIL every day (laughter)—it says I propose to confiscate the land of the people, to tax them out of their land. Who says so? I only propose that the tax should be upon the real value, and not the nominal value; I only propose that where there is increment in the value which is entirely attributable to the industry of the community and not the industry of the owner of land, at any rate the community should have a share of it. That is a proposal that is in existence at the present moment in some of the greatest commercial cities of Europe, but no one calls it Socialism there. (Cheers.) It has not been carried by the Socialistic party; it has been carried by the great leaders of commerce, of trade, and of industry in those cities, and it is perfectly just. (Cheers.) Those are some of the taxes.

THE REVERSION TAX.

I will give you an illustration of my last tax of all, and a very good one too. (Laughter.) It is the reversion tax. This came into my hand yesterday morning; it comes from the trust deed of a Calvinistic Methodist Chapel, and since the monthly meeting vouchers for it, it must be all right. (A voice, "Quite right," and cheers.) There is a little chapel that was built down in the Gower peninsula by the Calvinistic Methodist body. It was built many years ago, and it will be of interest to you to know that one of its first ministers was the late Mr. Wyndham Lewis. It is a very small chapel, and did not cost much to build; but the principle is just the same. It cost about £150. It is a poor

neighbourhood, and for years and years, week in week out, they contributed their coppers just to pay the debt of that little chapel, to keep it going and to paint, decorate and renovate it when necessary. But they had only a lease upon it. It was a lease on miserable hill land. The whole freehold of the land was not worth more than a few shillings. Just a short time ago that lease came to an end, and they thought it might be renewed. Not at all; the trustees were told that the chapel belonged to the landlord, and they had to buy the chapel back from the landlord ("Shame!")—a chapel they had to build with years of sacrifice they had to buy back. ("Shame.") They had to pay £150 for the chapel. They paid for redeeming the chapel site £150. To take that chapel from them I suppose is not robbery. That is not confiscation when the landlord stipulates by that document that the whole fruit of the labour of generations of members of that little church passes at a certain time into his possession. Well, that is property, that is law, justice, but when I come along and say to that landlord, "Here, the State wants money to protect you and your property (laughter) your mansion, your rights, your privileges—we want money to protect you. You must pay £15 out of that £150," they say, "Robber." (Loud Cheers.)

THE VALUATION PROPOSALS.

I venture to say that every tax we impose is a fair one, a just one; but I tell you what they object to. It is the valuation. (Cheers.) How can you go to a town council whenever a town council wants land for a school, a cemetery, a waterworks, or a gas works, or for some other public purpose, say, for small holdings, for houses for the working classes—how can you go to that town council and say that land is worth a thousand pounds an acre when you have already made a declaration to the valuer that it is not worth £50 an acre? You cannot do it. (Laughter and cheers.) There is a man who will go round all this land and will say, "How much is it worth? In my judgment it is worth (let us say) £300 an acre." The landlord will come down and say, "No, it is not worth £100." The matter will be settled by a perfectly impartial tribunal; there will be an appeal against that tribunal, and the ultimate Court of Appeal may say that it is worth £220 an acre. By-and-by that land will be wanted, it may be to build houses for the working classes. They will go to the landlords and say, "This land is worth £200 an acre." He will say, "Good gracious; it is worth £1,500 an acre." How can it be? (Loud cheers.) It is all registered. And if he does say that it is worth £1,500 an acre, and if he proves that it is worth £1,500 an acre, then that means that that land has gone up from £200 to £1,500, and that it has increased in value by £1,300. Who created that difference? You will go to the landlord and say, "Did you make it worth £1,500 when it was only worth £200?" He will say, "Yes." We will say, "What have you done to it? Have you improved it in any way; have you done anything to increase its value?" And if he cannot prove that he has improved it we will then say, "There is an increase in the value of £1,300 which is due to the community, and we will take a modest 20 per cent. of the increase." (Loud cheers.) They hate the valuation. (Cheers.) We are going to get at the real value of the land, and a good deal hangs on that. Each successive Parliament adds to the number of objects for which land can be compulsorily acquired. We have added housing, small holdings, roads for opening up the country, afforestation, experimental farms. In future, when we get valuation, you will say, not fancy prices, but the real value. (Cheers.)

THE OBJECT OF THE BUDGET.

"These are the taxes, these are our proposals. What do our opponents object to? Where is the Socialism, injustice, and wrong? Where is the oppression? Where is the unfairness of it? Do they object to what we are spending the money for? They do not complain about our building Dreadnoughts; they want more, except that they want someone else to pay for them. (Cheers.) Do they object to pensions? What do they object to? Is it unfair to raise money for these purposes? We are imposing no burdens upon the earnings of any working man. The vast majority—I am sure the whole—of the middle class of this country escape additional burdens. We put no burden upon the necessities of life of anyone. (Cheers.) We are taxing the surplus. We are taxing the luxuries. If a man has enough after maintaining his wife and family, and can spare something upon whisky and tobacco, why should he not afterwards contribute towards the pensions and defences of the country? (Cheers.) No; we are raising

money by means that make it no more difficult for men to live, we are raising it for making provision for hundreds of thousands of workmen in the country who have nothing between them and starvation in old age, except the charity of the parish. (Cheers.) We propose a great scheme in order to set up a fund in this country that will see that no man suffers hunger in the dark days of sickness, breakdown in health, and unemployment, which visit so many of us. That is what we are going to do. (Loud cheers.) These schemes for the betterment of the people, we shall get them some day. We cannot get them without effort, and they will not be worth getting without effort. Freedom does not descend like manna from Heaven. (Laughter.) It has been won step by step, by tramping the wilderness, fighting enemies, crossing Jordan, and clearing Jebusites out of the land. I do not regret that we cannot obtain these blessings except by fighting. The common people have taken no step that was worth taking without effort, sacrifice, and suffering.

THE FINAL APPEAL.

Concluding in Welsh, he said:—"I cannot pretend to regret this conflict with which we are now confronted. It is well that democracies should now and again engage in these great struggles for a wider freedom and a higher life. (Cheers.) They represent stages in the advance of the people from the bondage of the past to the blessings of the future. Those who dread these political convulsions, who apprehend from them nothing but destruction and danger, have read their history in vain. The race has nothing to fear, except from stagnation. Against our will, we have been precipitated into this tumult. For all that, we mean to win our way through it to a better time. (Cheers.) The people may not secure all they seek, but if they bear themselves manfully they will achieve other ends they dare not even hope for now. Yesterday I visited the old village where I was brought up. I wandered through the woods familiar to my boyhood. There I saw a child gathering sticks for firewood, and I thought of the hours which I spent in the same pleasant and profitable occupation, for I also have been something of a 'backwoodsman.' (Laughter.) And here is one experience taught me then which is of use to me to-day. I learnt as a child that it was little use going into the woods after a period of calm and fine weather, for I generally returned empty handed—(Laughter.)—but after a great storm I always came back with an armful. (Laughter.) We are in for rough weather. (Cheers.) We may be even in for a winter of storms, which will rock the forest, break many a withered branch, and leave many a rotten tree torn up by the roots. But when the weather clears, you may depend upon it that there will be something brought within the reach of the people that will give warmth and glow to their grey lives, something that will help to dispel the hunger, the despair, the oppression, and the wrong which now chill so many of their hearths." (Loud cheers.)

Replying to a resolution of thanks, Mr. LLOYD GEORGE said:—"I am afraid that I shall not be able to come much among you. Whatever happens, I am pledged to go through some of the English constituencies and some of the South Wales constituencies, and, therefore, I must confide in you, my old friends, to fight this battle, not for me, but for the interests of the country, which, I think, you and I represent best in this meeting. It will make no difference to me whether they bring a man against me or not. (Laughter.) I have arranged my time in such a way as will best benefit the cause we have all at heart. It is not a local fight, it is not merely a national fight. Believe me, the democracy throughout the world watches this battle with an anxious eye." (Cheers.)

LATEST TARIFF REFORM SCHEME.

On December 8, the BIRMINGHAM POST published an elaborate statement of the Scheme of Tariffs which might be proposed if a Conservative Government is returned at the Election. The statement is regarded as embodying the considered views of Mr. Chamberlain, or the other persons who are at the head of the Tariff Reform movement. The following is the practical part of the scheme:—

It is proposed to establish a general tariff, placing duties on practically all goods which are not deemed to be raw material, with the object, first, of raising revenue; secondly, of giving the turn of the market to the home producer when in competition with a foreign rival; thirdly, of making preferential agreements

with the colonies; fourthly, of securing better terms of entry into foreign countries which now exclude us by prohibitive duties; and, finally, of giving such encouragement to home producers that the evils of unemployment will be substantially mitigated. The tariff is to be of the simplest possible form, and is not to be "protective" in the sense in which that word is understood in Germany or the United States. There is no intention, we believe, of having multifarious rates which throw open the door for Parliamentary intrigue or lobbying. There will be three rates of duty only, giving an average of about ten per cent. The plan which we believe to be at present favoured is to allow raw materials to come in free, to place a duty of five per cent. on goods on which little labour has been spent, ten per cent. on goods more nearly approaching the finished state, and fifteen per cent. on completely manufactured articles. There will be no variations from this scale, unless some very exceptional case can be proved. Thus the work of classification will be greatly simplified. Each article will almost naturally fall into its proper class, and even when there is doubt no great difficulty can arise. Just as there are to be three rates of duty, so there will be three scales in each rate. To take an example by way of illustration—if an article is deemed to come under the ten per cent. rate, that will be the standard duty, applicable to foreigners who are commercially "friendly." But there will be a lower duty—possibly seven-and-a-half per cent.—to be charged on colonial produce, and a higher duty—possibly twelve-and-a-half or fifteen per cent.—to be charged on the produce of countries which seek unduly to penalise British goods. The figures we give are intended only to be illustrative. They may be varied in the actual working out of the tariff. Corn, according to present views, is to be liable to a duty of 2s. a quarter when coming from a foreign country. The chief object of this duty, of course, is to make it possible to give a valuable preference to the colonies—Canada and Australia in particular. Mr. Chamberlain proposed to remit the whole of the duty to the colonies. There is, however, a possibility of this arrangement being modified by asking the colonies to agree to a substantial preference which will not free them from the whole of the duty. The chief aim of any modification would, of course, be to increase the revenue, and at the same time to lend some encouragement to wheat-growing at home. Flour will have to pay a higher duty, in consideration of the fact that it has had labour spent upon it, and to the very desirable end of promoting the grinding of corn in this country. It is manifestly better that we should import corn and mill it at home (thus employing our own labour) rather than import flour which has been prepared by other labour. Another modification excludes bacon and maize from the free list. It is recognised that Mr. Chamberlain was mistaken in treating these articles on an exceptional basis, and we do not doubt that he himself is sympathetic with present intentions with regard to them. Such important raw materials as cotton and wool will, of course, come in free.

MR. A. CHAMBERLAIN ON THE CORN DUTY.

Mr. Austen Chamberlain writes to the Rector of Burlingham, Norfolk:—

"I do not anticipate that the small duty proposed on foreign corn will make wheat growing profitable where it is not so at present, but the possession of a moderate preference in regard to other agricultural products, and the increased demand for agricultural goods, which the development of the manufacturing industry under Tariff Reform, will bring, will give the farmer a better market for his produce and the labourer a better demand for his labour.

"The prosperity of the industrial districts is vital to them both, for while the manufacturer may do an export trade as well as a home trade, the agriculturalist is dependent on the home market alone. Any lack of employment in the towns must react injuriously upon the sale of his produce and the demand for his labour, and there is, in my opinion, no greater error which can be committed, than that of supposing it is possible in this matter to separate the interests of the towns from those of the country."

SIR E. GREY IN THE BERWICK DIVISION.

Speaking at Wooler, Northumberland, on December 13th, Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary, said:—

They must not judge the Budget by what they read about it from the Conservative speakers. No doubt it was very much