

tinuing wrong ; they all, as fully as the original wrong, deny that equalness which is the essential of justice. Where they have seemed plausible to any honestly minded man, he will, if he really examines his thought, see that this has been so because he has, though perhaps unconsciously, entertained a sympathy for those who seem to profit by injustice which he has refused to those who have been injured by it. He has been thinking of the few whose incomes would be cut off by the restoration of equal rights. He has forgotten the many who are being impoverished, degraded, and driven out of life by its denial. If he once breaks through the tyranny of accustomed ideas and truly realizes that all men are equally entitled to the use of the natural opportunities for the living of their lives and the development of their powers, he will see the injustice, the wickedness, of demanding compensation for the abolition of the monopoly of land. He will see that if any one is to be compensated on the abolition of a wrong, it is those who have suffered by the wrong, not those who have profited by it.

We who propose that natural and therefore easy method of restoring their equal rights to men, which for the purpose of clearly differentiating it from all schemes of land nationalization we call the single tax, do not propose to take from landowners anything they now have. We propose to leave to landowners whatever they actually have, even though it be in their hands the fruits of injustice ; we propose not even to change the forms of land tenure, and greatly to simplify instead of enlarging the machinery and functions of the state. We propose, in short, only so to change present methods of raising public revenues that they shall conform to the requirements of the right of property, taking for the use of the state that which rightfully belongs to the state, leaving to individuals that which rightfully belongs to the individual.

The truth is that customs taxes, and improvement taxes, and income taxes, and taxes on business and occupations and on legacies and successions, are morally and economically no better than highway robbery or burglary, all the more disastrous and demoralizing because practised by the state. There is no necessity for them. The seeming necessity arises only from the failure of the state to take its own natural and adequate source of revenue—a failure which entails a long train of evils of another kind by stimulating a forestalling and monopolization of land which creates an artificial scarcity of the primary element of life and labour, so that in the midst of illimitable natural resources the opportunity to work has come to be looked on as a boon, and in spite of the most enormous increase in the powers of production the great mass find life a hard struggle to maintain life, and millions die before their time, of overstrain and under-nurture.

When the matter is looked on in this way, the idea of compensation—the idea that justice demands that those who have engrossed the natural revenue of the state must be paid the capitalized value of all future engrossment before the state can resume those revenues—is too preposterous for serious statement.

And while in the nature of things any change from wrong-doing to right-doing must entail loss upon those who profit by the wrong-doing, and this can no more be prevented than can parallel lines be made to meet ; yet it must also be remembered that in the nature of things the loss is merely relative, the gain absolute. Whoever will examine the subject will see that in the abandonment of the present unnatural and unjust method of raising public revenues and the adoption of the natural and just method even those who relatively lose will be enormous gainers.

## THE DEMAND FOR SMALL-HOLDINGS

By Duncan Cuthbertson

It is an anomaly that while there is a steady drift of population from the country to the towns there should yet be a large but unsatisfied demand for small-holdings. According to the recently published report of the Land Division of the Ministry of Agriculture (which gives the figures up till the end of 1936), over 6,000 applications for small-holdings have been refused. Allowing an average of five to a family, this represents a population of 30,000. Although this large number of applications had to be refused, it is more than likely that many more would have applied if they had had reasonable hopes of their demand being satisfied.

In 1936, 1,235 applicants were provided with holdings and 6,780 acres acquired to provide more. At the end of the year (1936), 29,153 small-holdings covering 464,291 acres were held by county councils in England and Wales. The Ministry itself owns 10,000 acres let to smallholders, and in every case a loss is shown. The county councils also show losses on their holdings but these losses are in effect refunded by the Ministry. Allotments continue to decrease, and this is said to be due to the demand for land for building. The number of allotments at the end of the year was 606,000.

There has been, there is, and there will continue to be, a much greater demand for small-holdings than can be met under present conditions. A loss has always been incurred where attempts have been made to meet the demand, even if only partially. If the smallholders themselves have not suffered (but many of them have), the public purse certainly has ; and where the holders have been successful, it has only been by working hard and for long hours.

As long, however, as the present land system is allowed to continue unaltered, it is difficult to see how small-holdings can be made to pay except in exceptional cases. The difficulty, of course, lies in getting the necessary land on reasonable terms. This difficulty is the rock on which all State-aided schemes have been wrecked financially, and it has been increased by the tariffs and subsidies which have kept up or raised the value of land.

The only way to solve the problem is to break the monopoly value of land—to bring down its value to the point at which it pays to use it as a small-holding or otherwise. When rent has been lowered to this extent small-holdings will be established without State assistance.

Until it is generally realised that the only way in which the land can be unlocked to labour is by the taxation of land values (which will bring down its price until it pays to use it), and the necessary measure is passed by Parliament, it is hopeless to expect to stop the migration from the countryside.

### A PHILOSOPHY OF PEACE AND PRACTICAL STEPS

Based on the Writings of Henry George

An Address given at the Conference of the Movement for the Taxation of Land Values and Free Trade, held at Matlock Bath, May 21st, 1938

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