

A nicer place another year.
 Next year they'll likely not be here.
 So year by year they drift away
 From folks with better show than they;
 And year by year the wife grows old,
 And less and less life comes to hold
 For her of things that women crave.
 She, too, is nothing but a slave—
 A slave to crops and a busy man
 Who must keep going when he can;
 A slave to toil that has no end
 And does not help her lot to mend.

I tell you it's no little thing
 To take a woman's heart and wring
 It dry of every hope she had
 In days when she was young and glad.

It must be my fault that it's so!
 I've tried and failed. But still I know
 There's something wrong. I can't say what,
 But what I've earned another's got.
 A nigger cabin, a muddy yard—
 That's my wife's portion. God! it's hard
 To think of hopes that once she had
 And keep myself from going mad.

THE FATHER AND THE MOTHER OF WEALTH

Sir William Petty, who was Surveyor-General of Ireland under Charles II. and author of various works on political economy, says in his *Treatise of Taxes and Contributions* (London, 1662), ch. x, s. 10, "That Labour is the Father and active principle of Wealth, as Lands are the Mother"; and in Captain John Graunt's *Natural and Political Observations on the Bills of Mortality*—a work in which Petty collaborated, and which was published in London in the same year—there is a similar observation about "Hands being the Father, as Lands are the Mother and Womb of Wealth" (ch. viii, s. 14). Petty's epigram is sometimes quoted in abbreviated form, as on page 8 of Mr. Frederick Verinder's pamphlet, *Is There a Cure for Unemployment?* (London, 1921). The point of it is that Labour is the Father and Land is the Mother of Wealth, because all Wealth is ultimately got by Labour out of Land.

How much confusion and argument would have been avoided if these words had been consistently used to denote these subjects, and if the word "Capital" had been correspondingly used to denote Wealth (in this sense) applied to the production of more Wealth! Unfortunately, however, the word "Wealth" is frequently used not only to denote the Wealth produced from the Land, but also to include the Land; and the word "Capital" is similarly used not only to denote the produced Wealth applied to further production, but also to include the Land—so that the word "Capitalism" is used to include landlordism, and the word "Capitalist" is applied indiscriminately to such different people as, for instance, the producer who applies the products of industry to further production, and the land-monopolist who may be withholding land from use and hindering production. This ambiguous use of words has produced much of the present confusion, and sometimes leads people to think that they are debating questions of substance, when in fact they are only differing about what they mean by particular words.

Words, of course, are merely counters, but it is important to have a clear idea of what we mean by them, or, rather, of the subjects that we use them to denote. The four subjects here considered are—(1) the gifts of Nature that exist independently of human action, (2) human action in all its forms, (3) the products that human action gets from the gifts of Nature, whether without or with the aid of previous products, and (4) these products applied to

further production. We may call these four subjects "Land," "Labour," "Wealth" and "Capital," or we may call them by any other names; but—whatever we call them—the proper classification of them is at the root of economic thought and of economic reform.

J. D. W.

IN ALASKA

Where the Land Rents provide the Public Revenue

But there is, in Alaska, a scene to be found nowhere else—surpassing, to my mind, every other scene in the world. It is not a mountain, or an island, or a lake, but a city. I refer to Metlakatla, on the island of Annette. And this is its charm. It is a Christian city—out and out, through and through, altogether—as no other city in the world. You land at a good pier. A well-made road and gravelled footpath lead you to the town. A massive church with two towers first catches the eye. It is in a commanding position, and dominates the view. The church in Metlakatla is the centre of life: everybody goes there, and not occasionally, but always. The houses consist of cottages and villas. Every house has a garden. The public buildings are a girls' school, a boys' school, a town hall, and a hotel. Stores and shops are in the main streets. Gas and water are supplied as in our own cities. There is a public park, much frequented and enjoyed by the people. A band of 25 instruments plays in the evenings and on holidays. Most of the industries are in vigorous operation. They are joint-stock companies, the shares being held by the islanders. A fleet of steamers, owned also by the islanders, carries on trade with near and distant ports. Not a few of the young men and women have studied and graduated at American Universities, and are to be found in the different professions. The Government consists of 30 men, popularly elected. It holds the land, and supports itself from the rental. Two functionaries are wanting. Metlakatla has no policeman and no Poor-law officer. They are not needed. There is neither crime nor poverty in the city. The people are entirely contented and perfectly happy. They are quiet, do not talk much, but seem to get on well together, neighbour with neighbour and class with class. I would say the place is the nearest approach to heaven on the globe. And not because of a fine climate and situation, comfortable houses and conditions of labour, plenty of money and things to enjoy—not mainly. And it has got all these advantages. But because the people are Christians—live soberly and righteously and godly in their private, domestic, industrial, and civil life. Loyal to Christ and to His will, they are loyal to one another and to the State. An out-and-out Christianity saves them from the appalling conditions prevailing in our godless and sin-tormented cities.—*Rev. A. F. Forrest, in the GLASGOW HERALD, 7th May, 1921.*

Taxes on large incomes are never really paid by the wealthy people the Socialists are trying to get at; they are passed on to the public in the shape of higher prices for the commodities which these wealthy people are interested in, and by reducing the wages of their workers. But how different with a tax on land values; it is absolutely the only tax which cannot be shifted on. Land is not a thing of human production; it is nature itself, and the amount of it is fixed. We can tax ground rent to the last penny and there will be no "restriction of output"; there will not be one acre less land. On the contrary, the tax, operating on true value of millions of acres now purposely kept out of use, will "flood the market" with desirable sites, and rents must inevitably come down with a bang.—*John Cameron in the COATBRIDGE LEADER, 4th March.*