

desire to do better in the hope that it will meet the eye of the subscriber who waits until he can send that ideal sum more in harmony with his estimate of the journal. We appreciate this ambition to do better, but meanwhile the Sustention Fund misses that 10s., more or less, that we should be pleased to acknowledge.

We have been assured that for every friend who takes the trouble to write and send the sum of 10s. there are one hundred who are always going to do likewise. There may be some truth in this opinion, but whatever it implies we must leave it to the hundreds for whom it speaks. What we are certain about is, that if only one-third of those who welcome LAND & LIBERTY, and who have the means, could be moved to send 10s. to the Fund, it would be a help and a great stimulus to the work the journal is capable of promoting. J. P.

### LIBERAL LAND POLICY

To the Editor, LAND & LIBERTY

SIR,—In your excellent article in the October issue, there is one rather important matter needing modification. You say that Mr. Lloyd George scrapped the valuation. Fortunately that was beyond his power. The values, areas and descriptions of each unit of valuation are still intact in the custody of the District Valuers of the Inland Revenue Department. Though not now up to date, these records will save a vast amount of preparatory work for the next valuation, which ought to take about a quarter of the time occupied by the first—partly for that reason, and partly because the next valuation will probably be limited to the unimproved value of land.

What Mr. Lloyd George did scrap were the absurdly misnamed Land Value duties, over whose grave we need shed no tear.

Yours truly,

28th October, 1925.

EDGAR HARPER.

[The land clauses of the 1909 Budget, including the valuation clauses, were scrapped by Mr. Lloyd George's Coalition Government in 1920; all that remains is a Valuation Department in possession of records it cannot use for the purpose intended. The succeeding Tory Government dealt the final blow to the Department in 1923 when its power to command particulars of sales and other transactions in land were taken away—Editor, LAND & LIBERTY.]

Along the pavements stand poor, unassertive men with matches and bootlaces and trays of brass trinkets. It seems but yesterday that they went forth in step to battle with song on their lips and women wept at their departure. It is really a long time ago, so long ago that a new generation that knew nothing of it has since grown to manhood. Yet once this derelict by the pavement had his own business, his home, his wife and domestic felicity. Perhaps on some morning the papers of England rang with enthusiasm over the courage of him and his fellows, and when he spent his few life-thirsty nights on leave there was none so proud as not to welcome recognition from him. But now the war is over, and long over; neither business nor wife remains to him, and he has gradually declined on the slope of social life until he has become a furtive thing, down in the mud, panting, dodging, bewildered, resentful and afraid.—*Oliver Scribe in T.P.'S AND CASSELL'S WEEKLY.*"

### DARK DAYS IN ENGLAND

By Charles O'Connor Hennessy

(Appearing in LAND & FREEDOM, New York)

Recently I have been in England, which I had not visited since 1911. Before that I had on various visits, reaching back over a period of thirty years, spent more or less time in the British capital. By reading and by personal contacts during many years, I have tried to keep intelligently acquainted with the trend of public affairs over there, and with the tendencies that may mean so much to the people here and elsewhere in the world. Since my return to New York I am frequently asked to answer the question, "How are things in England?" I cannot help making a gloomy answer.

Meanwhile the signs of great poverty and misery, and of widespread and outspoken discontent with the existing order are more numerous, I believe, than ever before known in England. The number of men out of employment approaches 1,500,000. Exports of manufactured goods have greatly fallen off. Trade depression in many industries grows worse. Housing conditions continue shockingly bad, despite various paternalistic and expensive schemes of government to bring relief. Not a few wretched, homeless men, women and children may be found at night, if you look for them, sleeping in dark places along the Thames embankment, a short distance from the gay and well-lit hotels where comfortable American tourists spend their London days. These symptoms, and many more that might be cited, of the prevalence of a terrible social disease that seems to threaten the existence of an ordered human society, are not yet receiving from the leaders of thought and action in England, or here, the attention that, I believe, their great seriousness demands.

The reduction in the demand for British coal abroad, the stagnation of domestic industries and the greater use of oil as fuel are all, no doubt, factors in what is called the Coal Crisis. But it is interesting to be told by the MANCHESTER GUARDIAN that one of the chief grievances of the miners against the existing order in the mining industry is the heavy charge against both capital and labour involved in the ground rent or royalties paid by the operating owners to the owners of sub-surface rights in the coal lands, or for "wayleaves" to pass through or under the land of another owner in bringing coal to the surface. The royalties alone amount to a toll of about thirty million dollars a year upon the industry.

But a writer in LAND & LIBERTY, mouthpiece of the parliamentary land reformers, pertinently points out that an inquiry into what is truly the matter with the coal industry should be only the beginning of finding out what is the matter generally with trade in England. Other important industries are very sick also. The house building business is kept going, even in a most inadequate way, by immense subsidies. Iron and steel plants are closed, or running on short time; shipping is at low water; many merchant ships are idle for want of out-bound cargoes, retail trade is everywhere depressed. What is needed more than a coal inquiry is a broad and immediate inquiry into *what is the matter with England.*

Henry George, prophet and economist, honoured more in England than in his own land, saw this situation coming.

More than 40 years ago, in the first chapter of his SOCIAL PROBLEMS, he visioned it all with startling accuracy, and gave solemn warning of the dangers that would some day threaten the structure of civilized society in England. He saw that the evils resulting from the exploitation by a few of the land and natural

resources of the country, would inevitably lead to the conditions we are now witnessing. He saw that the complexity of the industrial machine, and the delicate interdependence of its parts, would some day make vital and terrible the carrying out of the threat that organized labour recently delivered to Mr. Baldwin. Let Englishmen (and Americans too) read the first chapter of SOCIAL PROBLEMS, first published in 1883, and see how true to life it is to-day. Just a paragraph:—

"In London, dwellers in one house do not know those in the next; the tenants of adjoining rooms are utter strangers to each other. Let civil conflict break or paralyze the authority that preserves order and the vast population would become a terror-stricken mob, without point of rally or principle of cohesion, and your London would be sacked and burned by an army of thieves. . . . Strong as it may seem, our civilization is evolving destructive forces. Not desert and forest, but city slums and country roadside are nursing the barbarians who may be to the new what the Hun and Vandal were to the old."

So it seems to me. Henry George declared that if disaster was to be averted there was need for the cultivation of a high degree of social intelligence—"for that consensus of individual intelligence which forms a public opinion, a public conscience, a public will; and is manifested in law institutions and administration."

If England's governmental managers know what is the real trouble with England; if they have any apprehension of the fundamental economic causes of industrial stagnation and unemployment, they make no sign. They palliate and postpone. They treat symptoms only, and these with soporifics and anodynes, which serve only to postpone the day when a desperate disease must be cured by fundamental remedies. The policy of subsidies and doles has imposed a tremendous financial burden upon a country already terribly oppressed with the cost of old wars and of preparations for new ones. The doles paid to the unemployed now reach a great sum annually—not less, I am told, than \$250,000,000. The housing subsidies have already reached hundreds of millions. Agricultural land owners are subsidized for about fifteen million dollars a year. Old age pensions take great sums, not to refer to the cost of pensions to war veterans and their dependents. One can hardly envy Mr. Churchill the job of balancing his budget.

While I was in London the newspapers for nearly a week carried extended daily reports of the annual

BY HENRY GEORGE

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From our Offices.

meeting at Southampton of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, at which men of great learning told interestingly of the many directions in which advances in scientific research and discovery had been made recently. British scientists are fully abreast of the times. But contemplating the disordered and unhappy state of the country industrially and politically, I was reminded that it is still painfully true, as Henry George pointed out, that the application of intelligence to social affairs has not kept pace with the concentration of thought upon individual and material ends.

That most of the leaders of British trade unionism in this exigency are, as a rule, more enlightened than the government, does not appear. While discountenancing the communist agitators, they, nevertheless, play the game of these red extremists, by keeping alive the spirit of class warfare and of antagonism to "capitalism." There has not yet come to the more powerful of the leaders of trade union movement a recognition of the fact that the legalized system that permits a monopoly of land and natural resources, is the fundamental source of England's trouble; a system that oppresses both capital and labour, employer and worker.

A well-remembered witticism of Mark Twain is to the effect that while everybody complains about the weather, nobody does anything about it. That cannot be said of the Henry George men of England, and their friends in the political world. Day in and day out they keep the land question to the forefront of discussion. When Parliament is in session, it is discovered that scores of the members in both Liberal and Labour Parties hold the opinions of Henry George, and force discussion of the land question whenever opportunity appears. When Parliament is not in session (or is in session), propaganda is kept up by letter writing to the newspapers and the circulation of books and leaflets. This is the work of a devoted and highly intelligent body of men who direct the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, and its subordinate organizations.

A circumstance that points to the probability that the land question may soon be the storm-centre of British politics, is the recent spectacular "Back to the Soil" campaign inaugurated by Lloyd George, in which he is demanding that the monopoly of agricultural land be destroyed, and access to idle acres be secured for idle men. It is not clear that he has any definite idea of how this is to be brought about, except by involving the country in deeper socialistic commitments to be financed by the people for the ultimate benefit of the monopolists. Remembering his various and terribly expensive adventures in state paternalism in the past, one must smile at the assurance which permits him in recent speeches to attack the Baldwin government for the subsidy dole to the coal people. "If we go on," he says, "we shall be subsidizing each other right to the end of the chapter. We shall all of us be paying each other's wages."

Which is true enough, of course. But coming from Mr. Lloyd George, this seems to justify the old taunt of Lord Cecil, that the Welsh statesman has "an opalescent mentality that protects him from embarrassment when confronted with the ghosts of his dead selves."

The Conservative Government at the Streatham (London) Parliamentary Debating Society last month just escaped being turned out of the seats of the mighty. An amendment to the address regretting, among other things, the failure to provide for taxing land values, was defeated by 29 to 26 votes. The local paper reported an interesting debate on which we read with pleasure that: "In a capital maiden speech our young friend, Mr. W. A. Jones (a new recruit) advocated the taxation of land values."