

## CROMPTON LLEWELLYN DAVIES

The death on 23rd November of Mr Crompton Llewellyn Davies deprives the movement for the taxation of land values of a zealous and brilliant protagonist, the last of three brothers who each in his way made a great and enduring contribution to its advancement.

Mr Davies was first associated with the work of the Scottish and English Leagues for the Taxation of Land Values. After the Liberal victory at the General Election of 1906 he was one of the prime movers in the formation of the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, as a central organization with offices in Westminster, for the purpose of taking advantage of the new political situation that then emerged. The Committee was born in his house at 14, Barton Street, Westminster. It was largely owing to his insistence that John Paul was brought from Glasgow to be secretary of the Committee, a choice which was abundantly justified by its results.

For a number of years Mr Davies was closely connected with the work of the Committee as joint secretary together with John Paul. The combination was a happy one. He brought to the partnership the trained mind of the lawyer, the experience of a man of affairs, and native shrewdness, as well as enthusiasm for the cause. His knowledge of all the technical intricacies arising in the practical application of land value taxation was no doubt widened by association with his brother Theodore, who was joint secretary to the Royal Commission on Local Taxation and was largely responsible for the separate report on the rating of site values signed by the chairman and other commissioners.

Mr Davies behind the scenes was responsible for much of the inspiration of the Liberal Campaign over the Budget of 1909, which contained the first, though very imperfect, attempt, to value the land of the United Kingdom. He was the compiler of one of the most popular handbooks on that subject, *The Budget, The Land, and the People*.

He took a leading part in the work of the Land Values Parliamentary Group, and was the draftsman of the Memorandum presented by the Group to the Departmental Committee on Local Taxation, and gave evidence in support of the Group's proposals. Subsequently he wrote an admirable review of the conclusions arrived at by that Committee and by the Liberal Land Inquiry, the reports of both of which were published in 1914. This survey was published as a supplement to *Land & Liberty* and as a separate pamphlet.

Apart from numerous services of this kind which were of necessity anonymous, he was the author of two books on the land question—*The Foundations of Freedom*, by "Emeritus," and *An Irish Commonwealth*, by "Dalta."

Other phases of his career are indicated in the obituary notice in *The Times* from which we may quote the following:

"Born in London on 13th July, 1868, he was the fifth son of the Rev J. Llewellyn Davies, the Broad Church divine, translator of Plato's *Republic* and Alpine climber, and of Mary, eldest daughter of Mr Justice Crompton. From Marlborough he went up with a classical scholarship to Trinity, Cambridge, where he and his younger brother Theodore were the centre of a large group of attached friends, many of whom have since become distinguished. They were elected to Fellowships at Trinity on the same day, to the delight of the Master, Montagu Butler, who was a very old friend both of their father and of their mother. Theodore entered the Treasury and seemed certain of distinction in the public

service when he was drowned while bathing near Kirkby Lonsdale in 1905.

"Crompton became a solicitor, his articles being served in the office of the firm, then headed by Sir John Hollams, in which he was a partner many years later. He was for several years a member of the firm of which Sir John Withers, M.P., is the head. He was then offered by Sir H. Samuel the post of solicitor to the Post Office, which he held through a somewhat eventful period which included the inquiry into the Marconi troubles. He was not entirely in his element in the Civil Service. He was neither by training nor temperament a typical Civil Servant; original, humorous, often critical of his superiors, and very outspoken, he must often have alarmed those with whom he had to work, who could not but respect his great ability and lofty character.

"He had married an Irish lady, Moya, daughter of Mr James O'Connor, M.P., she became an ardent sympathizer with the Sinn Fein movement and an admirer and friend of Michael Collins. These sentiments her husband shared. At the height of the revolutionary movement the house of Mrs Davies, then in Dublin, was raided by the 'Black and Tans.' She was arrested and confined for some months in Mountjoy Prison without any charge being brought against her. A parcel of letters to her from her husband was seized during the raid. These letters, no doubt strongly criticizing the Government policy, were handed to the authorities at the Post Office, who decided that their authorship was inconsistent with the position of a Civil Servant in an important post, and Llewellyn Davies was dismissed. He afterwards became a partner in the important City firm of Coward, Chance and Co., and continued in active work till his death."

He is survived by his wife, a son, and a daughter, to whom we tender our sincere and grateful condolences. In this sympathy we associate his sister-in-law, Mrs Harry Ll. Davies, and his cousin, Charles E. Crompton. His loss will be felt by many friends, but by none more than those in this movement with which he was associated so early in his career and in which he took a deep interest till the last.