

CHURCHILL ON LAND MONOPOLY

During the Commons debate on the Town and Country Planning Bill, December 1, Mr. R. R. Stokes quoted the following extracts from speeches by Mr. Winston Churchill: "We have to face all the resources of a great monopoly, so ancient that it has become almost venerable. We have against us all the modern money power . . . There are only two ways in which people can acquire wealth. There is production and there is plunder. Production is always

beneficial. Plunder is always pernicious, and its proceeds are either monopolised by a few or consumed in the mere struggle for possession . . . The present land system hampers, hobbles and restricts industry . . . They (the then Liberal Government) are resolved if they can to prevent any class from steadily absorbing, under the shelter of the law, the wealth in the creation of which they have borne no share, wealth which belongs not to them but to the community, wealth which they can only secure by vexatious obstruction of social and economic progress, far more injurious and wasteful than can be measured by their own inordinate gains."—At Drury Lane Theatre, April 20, 1907.

"It is quite true that the land monopoly is not the only monopoly which exists, but it is by far the greatest of monopolies. It is a perpetual monopoly, and it is the mother of all other forms of monopoly . . . Roads are made, streets are made, railway services are improved, electric light turns night into day, electric trams glide swiftly to and fro, water is brought from reservoirs a hundred miles off in the mountains and all the while the landlords sit still . . . To not one of those improvements does the land monopolist, as a land monopolist, contribute, and yet by every one of them the value of his land is sensibly enhanced. He renders no service to the community, he contributes nothing to the process from which his own enrichment is derived . . ."—At Edinburgh, July 17, 1909.