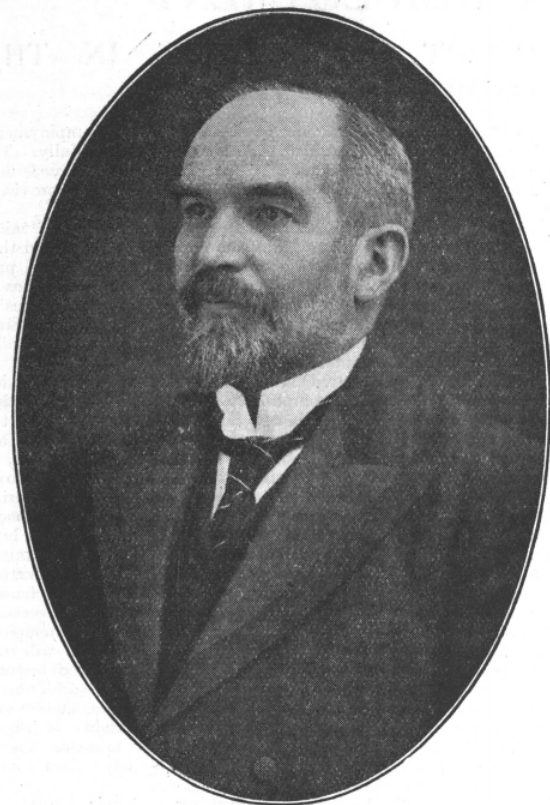


COMPLIMENTARY DINNER AND REUNION



P. WILSON RAFFAN

A Complimentary Dinner was given in London on Friday, 15th December, by the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, to do honour to Mr. P. Wilson Raffan, Member of Parliament for the Leigh Division of Lancashire from 1910 to 1922, and candidate for Ayr Burghs in the recent General Election. The dinner was also the occasion of a Reunion to celebrate the victories of our supporters who had been returned, and to pay respect to those who had made a good fight, though unsuccessful.

Mr. James Dundas White, LL.D., ex-M.P., presided. Eighty guests were present, including Andrew MacLaren, M.P., H. H. Spencer, M.P., W. M. R. Pringle, M.P., A. S. Comyns Carr, Major C. Vasey, T. E. Wing, ex-M.P., H. G. Chancellor, ex-M.P., T. Atholl Robertson, Charles H. Smithson, Lovat Fraser (Labour Candidate for Barry in the General Election), W. R. Lester, Fred Skirrow, and Charles E. Crompton.

Apologies were received from 21 Liberal and Labour Members of Parliament, and from numerous representative supporters of the movement in the country, many of whom, in expressing regret at their inability to attend, wrote in high appreciation of Mr. Raffan. In his letter Mr. Charles E. Price, ex-M.P., said: "No man ever had a more loyal and devoted colleague when he was Secretary of the Land Values Group in the House of Commons and I acted as its Chairman. I know better than most men what we are up against, and for this reason I regret beyond measure Mr. Raffan was not returned to the House at the last election."

Mr. White said they had met that evening under the auspices of the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values to do honour to Mr. Raffan, and to compliment their friends and fellow-workers who placed the Taxation of Land Values in the forefront of their programme, whether successful or unsuccessful. The United Committee had invited him to take the Chair that night, and in the name of the Committee and those present he bid their guests a hearty welcome.

Proposing the toast to Mr. Raffan, Mr. White said that he had been vigorous and active in Parliament and out of Parliament, on the platform, in Committee work, in season and out of season. Rather he should say there was no "out of season" in Mr. Raffan's case. He was one of those who did not recognize any "close time" for land monopoly. As a former colleague in the House of Commons Mr. White could speak of Mr. Raffan's work when he was Secretary of the Land Values Group, Mr. Charles Price was chairman, and he (the speaker) a plain ordinary common or garden Member, but in that humble activity he learnt to know the usefulness of Mr. Raffan's work. Whether in the unnoticed work of preparation, or in the work of bearding Ministers in their dens, or in the work of Committee upstairs or in dealing with questions relating to the Committee on the floor of the House, they knew Mr. Raffan would be in his place at the critical time, that he never failed and never even faltered. Everyone who knew him recognized in Mr. Raffan those high personal qualities which had raised respect to affection, and which had endeared him to all who had worked with him. These were not their views alone; their friends had come to the same conclusions as they had done.

Mr. P. Wilson Raffan, who was received with cheers, responded. He said he was deeply indebted to them for having come there in such numbers, especially as there were present so many friends of his in the United Committee, along with old friends in the English League, with whom he had co-operated so long and so well. He was also indebted to those friends who had attended from Carlisle, Cardiff, Yorkshire, and Hertfordshire; it was a compliment of which he was very proud. If anything could have added to his pleasure it was not only the too flattering speech which the Chairman had made, but that it should have been entrusted to his hands. He had said that they had been colleagues in the House of Commons for a long period of years. They had been more than colleagues; they had been personal friends. That friendship had never been strained for a single moment or by a single thread by the fact that they had ceased to be associated together in the same political party. They all felt the deep debt of gratitude they owed to their Chairman for the special work to which he had devoted himself. Mr. Raffan said his own connection with the movement dated from the days when Henry George started his campaign in this country.

If in the late General Election some had fallen in the fight, there were new recruits and old friends back again in the House, and there was still the opportunity of serving the Land Values movement in the House. He was delighted that Mr. Pringle was back again with all his Parliamentary skill. He was more than pleased that his friend Andrew MacLaren was there also, with all his ability, enthusiasm and devotion to the cause. Mr. Spencer also now had the opportunity to work for the movement in the House that he had helped so well outside. There seemed to him to be all the opportunities in this Parliament to set up again the Land Values Group, which would be quite as strong and quite as useful for the work done, as in the days gone by. All round the world the ideas of Henry George were taking root, and the time would come when they would prevail amongst the people.

The Chairman then gave the toast of "Our Victors in the General Election, and our Co-workers who placed Taxation of Land Values in the forefront of their campaign as Candidates." To this, in the first instance, Mr. Andrew MacLaren, M.P., Mr. W. M. R. Pringle, M.P., and Mr. H. H. Spencer, M.P., responded; and they were followed by Major C. J. Vasey, Mr. A. S. Comyns Carr, Mr. T. E. Wing, Mr. T. Atholl Robertson, and Mr. Lovat Fraser. Short speeches were also made by Mr. Chas. E. Crompton, Mr. Chas. H. Smithson, and Mr. John Paul; and a cordial vote of thanks was given by acclamation to Mr. J. Dundas White for his able conduct of the Chair.