

LORD SNOWDEN'S MESSAGE

In a letter to the Hon. Charles O'Connor Hennessy regretting his inability to attend the Henry George Congress in New York, Viscount Snowden writes :—

There never was a time when the need was greater than it is to-day for the application of the philosophy and principles of Henry George to the economic and political conditions which are scourging the whole world.

The root cause of world's economic distress is surely obvious to every man who has eyes to see and a brain to understand. So long as land is a monopoly, and men are denied free access to it to apply their labour to its uses, poverty and unemployment will exist. When the land monopolists do permit the use of land they do so on terms which extort its full economic value.

Speaking of England particularly, there never was a time when land values were increasing so rapidly, and it is not an unrelated fact that for the last few years we have had the largest volume of unemployment in our history.

At the time I write Europe is trembling on the brink of an Imperialist War, the magnitude and consequences of which no man can calculate. The root cause of this impending conflict is land acquisition for the purpose of alien exploitation. All the diabolical machinery of modern warfare is to be employed to crush the independence of a defenceless State and to appropriate its land.

In its saner moments every country admits the ruin which is being inflicted on world trade by Protection and other methods of artificially created hindrances to the free flow of Commerce ; but selfish interests and a perverted nationalism keep the nations in economic bondage.

Great Britain's departure from Free Trade has been a disaster not only to herself but to the world at large. We no longer can set an example to the world of the advantages of a free trade policy. Our Protectionist policy is corrupting the political life of the country and creating vested interests at the expense of the community.

Permanent Peace can only be established when men and nations have realized that natural resources should be a common heritage, and used for the good of all mankind. It is to inculcate this fundamental truth that your Congress is meeting, and I hope the day is not far distant when it will be universally appreciated ; and then will be the age of Freedom based on Eternal Justice.