

It is about the last dying confession of an order that is passing because of its inability to look facts in the face and deal with them in the best interests of the State. It is the resurrection of the exploded wage fund theory with a spice of Malthusianism to cap the climax. Such a lame conclusion, in the light of what has been written and said about land monopoly both here and in the Dominions, can only be arrived at by those who learn nothing and forget nothing.

Why cannot the miners find employment here, in the land of their birth, if work on the land be the alternative to work in the mines? The answer is, that for exactly the same reason the land in the Dominions is not being put to use because of land monopoly, and where this obstacle has been overcome to a degree, Protection is in evidence to rob the farmer for the benefit of the manufacturer.

But the Dominions can speak for themselves. They are grappling with their own problems as we must deal with ours. The Commissioners have put the question that must be answered: If the miners are not wanted at the mines, why cannot they take to the land? Manifestly it is not because of any scarcity of land. There are millions of acres that might be put to use and millions more to better use for the production of wealth, and if these acres were available to labour on fair terms, unemployment would cease and wages would rise. To quote Henry George once more, dealing with the primary industries in SOCIAL PROBLEMS, in the chapter on Unemployed Labour:—

The condition of labour in these first and widest of occupations, determines the general condition of labour, just as the level of the ocean determines the level of all its arms and bays and seas. Where there is a great demand for labour in agriculture and wages are high, there must soon be a great demand for labour, and high wages, in all occupations. Where it is difficult to get employment in agriculture, and wages are low, there must soon be a difficulty of obtaining employment in all occupations.

It is true that as men are turned off the land they flock to mines, railways and other industries. The unemployed man at the pit mouth determines the wage of the man underground. The cure is to send the outsider, the fugitive from landlord greed and incapacity, back to the land. It is the only possible way to help the mines, the coal industry and the country at large. Land monopoly is the bottom cause of the trouble and the Taxation of Land Values is the instrument that can be used and must be used if mining and all other industry is to survive.

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"A BLOODLESS REVOLUTION"

Rumania has accomplished a bloodless revolution in turning her *latifundia* into peasant small holdings. In doing so she solved at one stroke two main social problems: the elevation of her peasant class from a state of subservience and the stamping out of any possibility of spreading Bolshevism. The agrarian expropriation was first enacted in Bessarabia, and was more sweeping than in the rest of the country. The peasant is now a little landowner and too much absorbed in cultivating his long-desired plot of land to lend a willing ear to the insinuating prattle of Communist agents. The danger of Bolshevism is almost *nil* in Rumania, and of this even the Soviets are apparently convinced.

Another important consequence of the agrarian reform is the disappearance of the Conservative party. The Conservatives and the Liberals were the only two political parties existing in Rumania before the War, and the late King Charles, the creator of modern Rumania, used to rule by a convenient system of "Ins" and "Outs." The Conservatives, being exclusively composed of the landed gentry, the *Boyars*, were by far the stronger and the richer. The War has upset the social order and the agrarian reform came to break the backbone of the party. After the death of their leader, Alexandre Marghiloman, they were absorbed by other parties. On the ruins of the party was built a new and promising organization, the Peasant Party, which, owing to its hold on the masses, is at present the centre of political gravity. The "new-poor," the former landowners, owing to the depreciation of currency, have received only one-twentieth of the value of their expropriated lands.—*Your Bucharest Correspondent*, SPECTATOR, 13th March.

THE LONDON UNEMPLOYED

The newspaper reports as to the decline of unemployment should not mislead any of our readers as to the real facts of the case. It must be carefully borne in mind that these figures relate only to the *registered* unemployed, *i.e.*, those who are on the "live" registers at the Labour Exchanges. If a person comes off the register for any reason, except that he has found a job, and is thus unable to provide for himself, his name is usually transferred to a different sort of register. Take, for instance, the figures for London as officially given by the L.C.C. On 1st March there were 35,289 fewer registered unemployed than on the corresponding date in 1925. But the number of persons in receipt of Poor Law relief, either in institutions or at their homes, showed an increase, during the same period, of 35,699. The only consolation to be extracted from these figures is that, while the number of (registered) unemployed is slowly decreasing (though it is still 20·2 per 1,000 population) the number of persons in receipt of Poor Law relief is, for the time being, nearly stationary, though it still reaches, for London, the high figure of 51·3 per 1,000. Yet every device to abate unemployment—including road works (upon which the L.C.C. employed 884 men in February)—has been tried, except the opening up of land to labour by the taxation and rating of land values.

F. V.

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