

THE SINGLE TAX AND LIBERAL POLICY

“ N. R. (St. Mary Cray).—No. The Single tax has never been Liberal policy. Lord Oxford has said of it, that it ‘ is consistent neither with justice nor with expediency.’ Ladybank, Oct. 5, 1912.”—*Land News*, November, 1926.

It is also true that Lord Oxford has said: land value is a communal value. In other words, it belongs of right to the community, just as the improvements on the land belong of right to the improver. That is the moral standing of the case. The Liberal land policy includes the Taxation of Land Values, which, whatever be the amount levied, can only be an instalment of the Single Tax. The Party claims that such values belong to the people as a whole and ought to be brought under contribution for the needs of the State. The claim is made on the Single Tax principle. Here it is in Lord Oxford's own words, at Buxton, 1st June, 1923 :—

It is time for us once more to reassert that we recognize for the purposes of taxation, whether imperial or local, a distinct difference between two kinds of value—the value created by the energy and enterprise of individuals, and the value which is not so created but which arises from the progress and general development of the community at large. Upon this fundamental distinction we have always taken our stand, and we hold that, so far as practicable, local and national taxes which are necessary for public purposes should fall on the publicly created value rather than on that which is the product of individual enterprise and industry.

This does not involve a new or additional burden of taxation; it is a substitution of one system for another. It would, however, produce these two consequences: first, we should cease to lay the burden of taxation on enterprise and industry; and secondly, land would come more readily and cheaply into the best use for which it is fitted. These two things would be potent promoters of industry and progress.

If the *Land News* is of the contrary opinion we shall be pleased to have it. Should the editor venture out on this invitation we would suggest to him a second reading of Mr Lloyd George's speech at Kingsway Hall, London, 28th November; or for that matter any of his leading speeches on the land question.

The Single Tax principle can take care of itself. It is inherent in every genuine speech for the Taxation of Land Values.