

is sometimes countered by arrests and occasional shootings by the gendarmerie, who, incidentally, come directly under the authority of the French commander-in-chief, not of the civil Government.

It is gratifying to see *The Times* newspaper thus revealing the fundamental causes of the trouble.

### Landless Africans in Kenya

A Petition to Parliament demanding the restoration of the land to the disinherited Africans of Kenya forms the keystone of a great campaign initiated by the Kenya African Union. A statement published by the Congress of Peoples Against Imperialism, who are circulating the petition in Great Britain, refers to the alienation of 16,700 square miles of land taken from the Africans by Europeans during the present century. Mostly the best agricultural land has been taken. Some of it is farmed by only 2,000 Europeans (out of a total "white" population of 38,000). The rest lies idle. Most of the five and a half million Africans are crowded into the barren and tsetse infested "Native Reserves," forced to scratch a bare living from the poor soil allowed them. This in turn leads to excessive cultivation, causing soil erosion and a further worsening of the Africans' condition.

Before the settlers came, the land was held in common by the tribes. But when Kenya was made a Protectorate—a cynical word to employ in view of subsequent developments—it was claimed that such communal ownership passed to the Government.

The Crown Lands Ordinance, No. 27 of 1938, and the Native Lands Trust Ordinance, of 1938, authorise the alienation of native lands and the restriction of African occupation to reserved areas. The Commissioner of Lands can survey land and divide it into farms which have been given to Europeans only. In these areas, Africans are excluded entirely from the occupation of land. A European farmer may not even employ a non-European manager. The Petition calls for the withdrawal of these Ordinances. Further, it asks that Africans shall have the right to occupation and ownership of land in any part of Kenya and that they shall be allowed to occupy and farm immediately the large unused areas at present reserved to Europeans.

This journal deplors these conditions in Kenya. We recognise the just protests of the landless Africans, none-the-less we regret that the Petition should call for rights to the "occupation and ownership of land." So long as one man owns the land on which another must live there will be exploitation and inequality. To the tenant it makes little difference whether the land-owner be white or black. How much better, had the Petition demanded that the land of Kenya be thrown open on equal terms to all who wish to work it, subject only to the payment to the Exchequer of a rent equal to the benefits they enjoy, and to be shared equally by all. Only thus can justice between white and black, land-holder and landless, be achieved.

[Delegates of the Kenya African Union were guests at the Georgeists' Dinner held in London, on February 2. Copies of the Petition may be obtained from the Congress of Peoples Against Imperialism, 21 Strutton Ground, London, S.W.1.]

**How the English People Became Landless.** A brief history that should be in every senior pupil's satchel. 2d.

**Henry George—A Biography.** By Professor R. Geiger. Paper Covers. 1s. 6d.

### Source of Egypt's Discontent

Egypt's present political controversies with Britain seem a "superficial froth," writes Mr. Clem Brown in *Forward*, December 22. Returned from Egypt where he has been employed for twenty years as a technical adviser to the Government there, Mr. Brown says that the real cause of that country's social, economic and political troubles may be traced to peasant land hunger. "Competition for land, either to rent or to buy, drives land up to fantastic figures."

Good soil, a dependable climate and a well-organised irrigation system have made cotton growing immensely successful and a large proportion of the land is regularly planted with this crop. The high quality cotton Egypt grows finds a ready market, and so everyone from the rich land-owner to the poorest peasant is cotton minded. As a consequence everyone who can tries to buy land. The ambition of the small peasant owner is to increase his holdings so that he may one day become a wealthy pasha. Some few, luckier or more successful than their fellows, climb the land-owning ladder to success. Others, attracted by the high prices offered, sell their small family holdings. The unsuccessful small peasants flock into the towns to sell lottery tickets or become street hawkers.

The paramount need for land reform in Egypt is ignored by the people and their Government. Rulers and the people alike press for more and more industries, writes Mr. Brown. In a simple minded-fashion they believe industrialisation to be the key to modern progress. They ignore the horrors of the Industrial Revolution, the worst features of which, Mr. Brown says, are being copied in the new industrial slums of Cairo and Alexandria. Yet industrial progress is slow, for none of the basic conditions of heavy industry exist in Egypt. Only cotton spinning is successful.

The *Forward* article concludes with these words: "Who is to solve, and how, the problem of pasha and peasant—a problem which came before politics and will outlast politics?" The question of a method, simple, just and expedient, may be readily answered. How long abysmal poverty with its concomitants, disregard for human personality, internal and external strife must continue, history alone can answer. But if Egypt is not to perish a national saviour must arise to grant all her citizens equal and inalienable rights to work the soil of their country and to share in its value.

### Africans Oppress Africans

Liberia, "Glorious land of liberty, by God's command," the sovereign African Republic on the west coast of Africa is ravaged by poverty and inequality equal to anything to be found in the European governed settlements elsewhere in Africa. (Area of Liberia, 43,000 square miles, population 2,500,000, population of Monrovia 20,000.)

In a broadcast talk published in *The Listener*, November 22, Patrick O'Donovan described the contrast between the belt of slums on the sides of the rock, on which the capital, Monrovia, is built and the quasi-American splendour in which "the wealthy" live on the top.

The inhabitants of the capital and the coastal strip