

Land Values

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THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARLIAMENTARY LAND VALUES GROUP

Mr. Chas. E. Price, M.P., has represented Central Edinburgh in the House of Commons since the General Election of 1906. For many years previous to his entry into Parliament he had acted as Chairman of the Southern Division (Edinburgh) Liberal Association, where his services in the democratic cause had established and proved his title to speak and act in his present capacity.

The greater reputation he has since gained in the limelight of public life in Parliament has abundantly justified the confidence the electors placed in his ability to serve them while fighting for the reforms he had consistently advocated. It is particularly owing to his experiences as a business man that he has appreciated the justice of our proposals; in his own words, as declared at the London National Conference in 1912 (and since reprinted as an instructive leaflet by the United Committee) he did not adopt the principle of the taxation of land values because of anything he had read. It was not the result of studying Henry George's books or anybody's speeches. They have but confirmed his opinions, and his first concern when he became a responsible Member of Parliament was to concentrate attention upon the taxation and rating of land values. In this campaign he has taken a foremost part, never missing an opportunity either at question time or in debate to impress his views on the House and show the relation of the land question to all the numerous aspects of the social problem. From the first he associated himself with the band of Members, who formed the Land Values Group in 1906 in order to strengthen their position and their influence in the House of Commons. After the January, 1910, General Election he became Chairman of the Group and has presided over all its deliberations since.

The work of the Group as a whole and the determined stand it has taken on numerous occasions when its principles were the issue are matters well known to our readers. Its success and its power as a factor in directing the course of the movement are the reward of the zeal and devotion of its individual Members, among whom Mr. Price has been a

distinguished example of vigilance and tireless energy. But he has been more than this. He has been an ideal chairman, fitted by temperament and courtesy to keep the forces together. Himself a Radical of Radicals, he knows how necessary it is, if any progress at all is to be achieved, to gain the support of those who will go part of the way without endangering or weakening the funda-

mental principle. He has used the same talents to restrain the vigour or even impatience of the extreme doctrinaire, persuading him and the more moderate politician to present a united front. He has guided the Group through all the discussions that followed the passing of the Finance (1909-10) Act 1910, out of which came the "Memorial" Policy for the completion of the Valuation and the direct taxation and rating of land values. The friends of the movement inside and outside Parliament have cause to feel proud of this stalwart supporter, to whose sincerity, tactfulness, and courageous consistency so much is due.

Mr. Price like a wise parliamentarian has always been convinced that his influence in the House of Commons and that of his colleagues rests always on the strength of the sentiment in the community; and in this conviction he has thrown himself eagerly into the campaign in the constituencies. He unites the skill of the politician with the ardour of the propagandist, and has figured on numerous plat-

forms up and down the country, ever ready and able to state his case. In these campaigns, and especially in the East of Scotland, he has made a household name for himself as one who has nobly stood by his trust. His exacting work in Parliament and the calls that are continuously made upon his earnestness and industry have sometimes overtaxed his strength, and he has been occasionally obliged to seek rest and change. But somehow he always manages to take that enforced holiday when Parliament is not in Session and seems to sacrifice everything to be at his post. Long may he be spared to fight the good fight.



CHAS. E. PRICE, M.P.