

ENGLISH LEAGUE FOR THE TAXATION OF LAND VALUES.

Annual Report for the year ended June 30th, 1910.

THE twenty-seventh year of the League's existence marks a turning-point in the fortunes of the great Reform to the accomplishment of which its activities are devoted. It has been a year of most strenuous endeavour and of solid progress. For it has seen the setting-up of the machinery for that separate Valuation of Land which the League has always demanded as the necessary preliminary to the Taxation of Land Values. It is therefore with great satisfaction in the past and hope for the future that the Executive submit their Twenty-seventh Report to the members.

THE TWENTY-SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING was held in London on July 21st, 1909. Addresses were delivered by Mr. JOSIAH C. WEDGWOOD, M.P. (retiring President), and by Mr. E. G. HEMMERDE, K.C., M.P., who was elected President for the ensuing year. A resolution in support of the Valuation proposals of the Finance Bill was spoken to by Mr. J. R. CLYNES, M.P., Mr. R. L. OUTHWAITE, and the Rev. THOS. HILL, M.A. The hall was full and the meeting enthusiastic throughout. A very hearty vote of thanks was accorded to the outgoing President "for his valued services during the past year in Parliament, in the Press, and on the Platform."

The services which Mr. HEMMERDE has rendered to the movement during his year of office, by his speeches in the House of Commons and in the constituencies, are gratefully acknowledged by all friends of the movement.

LECTURES have been delivered or MEETINGS addressed by the League speakers at the following places:—

London (126); Abbots Langley (2), Aldbury, Alton (2), Ashted (2), Aylesbury, Bardney, Barnoldswick (2), Barnsley, Batley, Bedmond, Biggleswade (5), Binbrook, Bingley, Birkenhead, Bishop's Stortford, Blackburn (3), Blandford, Bookham, Bournemouth (6), Bovington, Bradford (4), Brierfield (2), Broom (Beds.), Euxton, Chelmsford, Chipperfield (2), Claygate (2), Cononley, Crewe, Croydon (3), Denholme, Devizes, Dorking, Ealing, Eastbourne, East Ham, East Grinstead, Epsom, Ewell, Farnhill, Glossop, Golcar, Grainthorpe, Grassington, Great Missenden, Halifax, Hastings (4), Hatfield (2), Headley, Hemel Hempstead (2), Henlow, Herne Bay (3), Hersham, High Wycombe, Hitchin (3), Hoxley, Hook, Hornsey, Horsforth, Huddersfield (2), Ilford, Ipswich, Keighley (10), King's Langley (3), Laycock, Leatherhead (2), Long Marston, Longwood, Loughton, Louth (2), Mablethorpe, Market Rasen, Marsden, Mickleham, Mitcham, Nelson (2), Netherton (2), North Somercotes, Nottingham, Oakworth, Ossett, Outlane, Oxenhope, Oxford, Oxshott, Penistone (2), Pinner, Preston (2), Pudsey, Radcliffe, Reading, Richmond (Surrey), Rotherham, Sandy, Safford, Seven Kings, Sheffield, Slough (3), Skipton, Southall, Stafford, Stone, Sutton (Surrey), Thornton, Tring, Tunbridge Wells, Wakefield (4), Walthamstow (3), Walton-on-the-Hill, Walton-on-Thames, West Ham (2), Willesden, Winchester, Wilstone, Wragby, Worcester Park (2).

This list would be much lengthened if it were possible to include the very large number of meetings addressed by members of the League during the two great Election campaigns of the year. The Branches of the League also—in Tyneside, in the Isle of Thanet, at Warrington, York, and Shrewsbury—and the affiliated local Leagues—at Manchester,* Liverpool, Bolton, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, and Portsmouth—all report numerous meetings (not included in the above list), arranged or addressed by their officers and members during the year.

The Executive desire to express their deep regret at the death of Mr. S. R. ALLISON, local Honorary Secretary at Margate, who contracted pneumonia while taking part in a canvass of the constituency organised by the Isle of Thanet Branch.

* Formerly the Manchester Branch of the League.

There has been some slackening in the demand for lectures since the death of KING EDWARD, but arrangements are already in hand for the renewal of the campaign on an extended scale in the coming autumn. An opportunity will be specially offered to Conservative Clubs of hearing and discussing the proposals of the League.

The public discussions, now usually held in connection with the Quarterly Meetings of the CENTRAL COUNCIL, have this year been unusually successful. At the October meeting, the GENERAL SECRETARY read a paper on "The Land Clauses of the Finance Bill as Amended." In January, a large public meeting gave a rousing reception to Mr. HENRY GEORGE, JUNR., and Mr. LOUIS F. POST, who spoke on "The Issues and Results of the General Election," Mr. H. G. CHANCELLOR, M.P., fresh from his victory in Haggerston, being in the chair. At the April meeting, Mr. GODFREY COLLINS, M.P., presiding, Mr. W. R. LESTER, M.A., opened a discussion on "How the Budget makes possible the Untaxing of Industry."

The Annual "HENRY GEORGE COMMEMORATION DINNER" was, this year, postponed till November 29th in order that it might also serve as a celebration of the passing of the Finance Bill by the House of Commons. Mr. CROMPTON LL. DAVIES and Mr. JOHN PAUL, Secretaries of the United Committee, were the guests of the evening. Both in point of numbers and of enthusiasm, the dinner was by far the most successful function of its kind ever organised by the League. Mr. C. H. SMITHSON, who had just been returned unopposed to the Halifax Town Council, presided in the regretted but unavoidable absence of Mr. HEMMERDE.

The League was also well represented at the Dinners given by the United Committee in honour of Mr. HENRY GEORGE, JUNR. (July 12th, 1909), and of Mr. JOSEPH FELS and the Hon. TOM L. JOHNSON, of Cleveland, Ohio, (April 11th, 1910).

The League took a very active part in the organising of the memorable HYDE PARK DEMONSTRATION in support of the Land Clauses of the Budget (July 24th, 1909), and was represented in the deputation which presented the Resolution, then passed, to Mr. Asquith (August 7th).

The League's delegates have attended regularly the meetings of the UNITED COMMITTEE of the Leagues, and have done their share of the magnificent work which has just been placed on record in the Third Annual Report of the Committee, a copy of which may be obtained on application to the League's office. Mr. F. SKIRROW—Yorkshire Agent of the League—now gives part of his time to organising and open-air work in various parts of the country, under the direction of the Westminster office.

At the GENERAL ELECTION (January, 1910), 61 members of the League stood as candidates, of whom 39 were successful. These included the President, two Past-Presidents, and six Vice-Presidents of the League. Some of the most noteworthy victories of the Election stand to the credit of our members. It is greatly to be regretted that Messrs. W. R. LESTER and R. L. OUTHWAITE failed to win the seats which they attacked so gallantly.

A month before the LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTION (March, 1910), the Progressive leader, Sir J. W. BENN, declared that "at this election the Taxation of Land Values will come at the top of the Progressive programme." The League did its best, in co-operation with the United Committee, to secure the fulfilment of this forecast; and its special leaflets, as well as those issued by the Committee, were widely distributed in all the county electoral divisions. Many seats were won from the Moderates by candidates who stood for the rating of Land Values, and there are signs that this reform may secure the support even of some of the Moderate members. The Rev. STEWART HEADLAM and Mr. A. L. LEON (members of the League) are on the new

Council, and with them such stalwart friends of the cause as the BARON DE FOREST, Mr. PERCY A. HARRIS, Mr. R. C. LAMBERT, and Mr. FRANK SMITH.

Th. sales of LITERATURE during the year have been the largest on record, amounting to about £574. Much of this has been sold at greatly reduced rates for election use, and, in addition, there has been a free distribution of leaflets, pamphlets, and posters, on a scale unprecedented in the history of the movement, for the use of members of the League, of affiliated clubs, and of friendly candidates. This work was rendered possible by the ready response of many members to a special appeal for funds. The Executive are specially grateful to Mr. T. F. WALKER, one of the founders of the League, for a generous donation of £70 to the Election Fund.

A special feature of the recent electoral campaigns has been the large number of POSTERS dealing with the Taxation of Land Values. Liberal use was, of course, made of those issued by the United Committee, and several thousands of the famous "Duke" poster of the MORNING LEADER—"What! Tax my Land!"—were purchased and issued by the League.

The office of the League is the headquarters of the LAND VALUES PUBLICATION DEPARTMENT of the United Committee, and the chief publishing office of LAND VALUES, the monthly organ of the movement. The circulation of the paper has greatly increased during the year, and steps are now being taken which will, it is hoped, lead to a still larger increase of its sales in the near future.

The following LEAFLETS have been issued by the League since last report:—

- "A Marching Song for Land Reformers."
- "A Famous Case at Richmond" (4 pp.).
- "The L.C.C. Election (1910) and the Rating of Land Values."
- "Holding and Withholding."

A Reasonable Proposal To REAL RADICALS.

The Right People.

People who believe in the Taxation of Land Values are real radicals. That goes without saying. Real radicals are true reformers. True reformers do their own thinking. Doing their own thinking fits them to properly place and appreciate the thoughts and opinions of others. Therefore the Publisher of "The Open Road" puts this advertisement in "Land Values" with confidence, knowing that he makes his announcement to the right people. Besides he is a leaguer himself.

No Excuse Now.

"The Open Road" is valued by many not so much for what it tells them as for what it makes them think. It makes them think. Yes! It does not do the thinking for them. You have only the Publisher's word for it, of course, unless you are already one of the many valuers. Sometimes Publishers are right. This is a case in point. But, considering this is the first time "The Open Road" has been advertised in "Land Values" and considering also that it has not been advertised much anywhere, it is not to be wondered at if you do not know "The Open Road." However, there is no excuse now.

A Reasonable Proposal.

This advertisement of "The Open Road" is not the last you are likely to see. You may see one next month. It all depends on you. In any case you will come across another in this issue, unless you won't read your journal right through. Which is unthinkable! But here is a reasonable proposal. Buy one copy of "The Open Road" and test the value of this advertisement. You may never have seen a copy before in your life. But it will certainly not be the last you will want to see. You will become a regular subscriber. Prove the truth of this prophecy. Send four penny stamps to the Publisher, C. W. DANIEL, 3, Amen Corner, London, E.C., who will send you in return a copy of "The Open Road" and other interesting matter, which will make you rejoice that you saw this advertisement. In another advertisement, which appears elsewhere in this issue, you will discover a new application of the principle of the pooling of advantages. The subscription to "The Open Road" is 3s. yearly. To the United States 1 Dollar.

The "Marching Song" was adapted by the officers of the League from an American Anti-Poverty song, set to the spirited tune of "Marching through Georgia." Large editions of it, with and without music, were afterwards issued by the United Committee. There was an enormous demand for copies, and the singing of the "Land Song" soon became a recognised part of the proceedings at almost every election meeting. Other Radical candidates could probably say, as Mr. WEDGWOOD did, that "my opponent must have heard it even more often than I did!" The fact that a commercial firm has thought it worth while to make a discophone record of it is a testimonial to its popularity.

The GENERAL SECRETARY of the League, besides giving a large number of lectures in many parts of the country has written two memoranda on the Finance Bill—"as introduced" and "as amended" (LAND VALUES, July and December, 1909); two articles on "The Lords and the Budget" (for the L. V. Press Bureau); one on "The Budget and Land Values" (DAILY NEWS Year Book, 1910), and a paper on "The Taxation of Land Values in its Relation to Free Trade" (to be read on behalf of the "United Committee" at the International Free Trade Congress, Antwerp, August, 1910); as well as two leaflets for the League.

The following RESOLUTIONS on questions of policy have been adopted during the past year:—

(1) "That this Annual Meeting of the English League for the Taxation of Land Values welcomes the provisions in the Finance Bill for giving effect to Mr. Lloyd George's pledge 'to provide machinery for a complete valuation on a capital basis of the whole of the land in the United Kingdom,' and urges the Government not to allow the Land Clauses of the Bill to be weakened in any way that may imperil the completeness and accuracy of the Valuation."—[Annual Meeting, July 21, 1909.]

(2) "That this Meeting of Members and Friends of the E.L.T.L.V. thanks Mr. HENRY GEORGE, Junior, and Mr. LOUIS F. POST for their addresses; expresses its satisfaction at the large majority in support of the Budget already returned in the General Election now drawing to a close; pledges its support to the Government in any measures that may be necessary to vindicate the sole right of the People's Representatives to control the finances of the country; and urges the Government to complete the Valuation of Land as speedily as possible with a view to the early adoption of the Value of Land, apart from Improvements, as the basis of Local Rating."—[Essex Hall Meeting, January 28, 1910.]

(3) "That the Executive of the E.L.T.L.V. protests against the proposal of the Improvements Committee of the London County Council to sell a freehold now belonging to the Council to Sir J. Wolfe Barry, K.C.B., as it is against public interest that Land Values which have become public property should be alienated into private hands."—[Executive, February 14, 1910.]

(4) "That this Executive heartily congratulates the Rt. Hon. D. LLOYD GEORGE, Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the passing into law of the Finance Bill (1909-10); expresses its gratification at the setting-up of machinery for the valuation on a capital basis of the whole of the land in the United Kingdom; and urges the Government to complete the Valuation with all possible expedition, in order that it may be made the basis of such a system of taxation, national and local, as will relieve the materials, processes and results of industry from the burdens of taxation and rating."—[Executive, May 9, 1910.]

The following organisations have become AFFILIATED to the League during the past year:—

Midland Land Values League; Huddersfield Junior Liberal Association; Portsmouth Working Men's Liberal Club; Aylesbury Liberal and Radical Association; Slough and District Liberal and Radical Club; Hyde Division League of Young Liberals.

It is unnecessary to give here more than the briefest sketch of the great PARLIAMENTARY STRUGGLE, the story of which has been told in detail in the columns of LAND VALUES. The Finance Bill passed its second reading on June 10th of last year. During its long and stormy passage through committee, Mr. LLOYD GEORGE made many "concessions," and accepted, or himself proposed, many amendments. But no amendment and no concession was allowed to imperil the one thing—the Valuation—which, from the League's point of view, was the most valuable in the Bill.