

COUNCILLOR F. C. R. DOUGLAS MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

It is with profound gratification that we announce the election of our colleague and co-worker Mr F. C. R. Douglas as Member of Parliament, representing the constituency of North Battersea, where for a number of years he has been the accepted candidate in the Labour interest. It is the constituency which he has represented as member of the London County Council since March, 1934.

The Parliamentary election which has returned him was occasioned by the retiral, owing to ill health, of the sitting Member, Mr W. S. Sanders; it took place on 17th April. The figures were:

F. C. R. Douglas	9,947
E. C. Joyce	791

In virtue of the war-time political truce between the Government and the Opposition parties in the House, there was no Conservative candidate and but for the intervention of Mr Joyce (standing as "independent and anti-war" and with Communist support), Mr Douglas would have been returned unopposed. Mr Joyce forfeited his deposit.

Mr Douglas has been associated with the political and municipal life of Battersea for more than 25 years and became an Alderman of the Borough in 1919. In 1922-23 he held the office of Mayor and since then has been one of the most prominent, as well as indefatigable, members of the Council of whose Finance Committee he is now the Chairman. In the London County Council he is Chairman of the Housing Committee and Vice-Chairman of the Finance Committee, the latter being the body which, which as our columns have so fully related, did a remarkable work in promoting the Rating of Land Values. The London Bill, presented in Parliament, was the result; and in all the work that led up to this achievement, Mr Douglas and his "chief," Mr Charles Latham, the Chairman of the Finance Committee, share with Mr Herbert Morrison, the leader of the Council, and others, the credit for the patient, genial and persuasive way in which all the discussions were piloted, bringing even from opponents a testimony of high praise.

Born in Canada of Scottish parentage, Mr Douglas was educated in Glasgow and graduated at the University with the degree of M.A. with honours. He has his own story to tell of how he "came into the movement" and was captured by *Progress and Poverty*. That was in 1910 and the late James Busby, the Secretary of the Scottish League for the Taxation of Land Values, figures in it. In 1913 he joined the staff of the United Committee and at once showed his abilities as writer, lecturer and giver of good advice. Then came the 1914 war, after which he devoted himself to legal study and took up the profession of solicitor, while always keeping in closest touch with the Committee and *Land & Liberty* and rendering never-failing assistance. When John Paul died in 1933, it was the very good fortune of the Committee that Mr Douglas was available to join its staff again, becoming its assistant secretary and assistant editor of *Land & Liberty*. We echo the many messages which express the hope of a long, happy and useful service for him in the high court of Parliament for which his training and experience in municipal life and his understanding of the cause he has espoused so well fit him.

A. W. M.

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BENEFITS OF BETTER ROADS

An article in *Highways and Bridges* (31st January) deals with the large programme of road making which has been carried out in Nova Scotia in recent years. A special feature is the incorporation of salt under the road bed as an anti-freeze mixture. The author says:

"In Canada, as in Great Britain, public highways are a utility more universally used by the people than any other. The benefits brought about by new paved roads in Nova Scotia have distributed amongst all classes highways which greatly enhance the value of property, not only in towns and villages but in rural districts. They also improve appearances and eliminate the dust nuisance, which means much to the farmer as well as to motorists, especially farmers who cultivate crops near the roadside. For in times past the dust nuisance has been severe.

"The Minister of Highways and Public Works justifies this large expenditure of public money on several grounds:

- (1) Steady markets are made accessible to the farmers.
- (2) Country merchants can depend on direct deliveries.
- (3) Rural districts are assured of an improved medical protection.
- (4) Prompt bus services assist with the school attendance.
- (5) A regular mail service through all seasons is established.
- (6) Snow removal is made easier, and open roads in winter are provided.
- (7) Year-round highways influence increased social activities.

"In short, paved highways mean a new development of social and intellectual life and improved educational facilities. Another important factor is the saving in operating costs of motor vehicles. Experts have estimated this to be a penny a mile which, when applied to the number of miles driven each year by the cars registered in this Province, makes a handsome total."

This is one more illustration of the old story that better roads make land values higher and everything else cheaper, but the lesson that the cost should be charged on the land values has yet to be learned in Nova Scotia as elsewhere.

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