

due to the efforts of the community," etc. It is the old fraud of 1909 over again.

Do the Liberals mean the taxation of all land values; or do they stand for an increment tax on the increased value of some land, the proceeds of which is to be used to buy out other lands? They ought at least to be honest and frank. It is farcical to have one Liberal speaker telling the other, by implication, that he is not stating the true Liberal land value policy. To play up to the Whig opponents in the Party in one speech and to Radicals in another, or to both in the same speech as Mr. Lloyd George did at Edinburgh on 20th December, and as he does in his "Coal and Power" pamphlet, is both bad form and bad politics. As an old Scottish Radical put it: they go on in their contradictions; we say nothing and they think we don't ken!

**Undeveloped Land in London.**—There has been a series of striking articles by Mr. E. Clephan Palmer in the DAILY NEWS on the terrible conditions of overcrowding in London, and the growth of new slums. In his final contribution, 31st December, Mr. Palmer talks of remedies, and can only propose more subsidies for house building. He dismissed the land question with the remark that with one or two exceptions there is no vacant land in any borough within the County of London.

A reply to this statement was sent to the DAILY NEWS in a letter to the Editor, as follows:—

"Mr. Clephan Palmer in his final article on the housing problem remarks that, with one or two exceptions, there is no vacant land in any borough within the County of London. I would draw his attention to the evidence given by Mr. Frank Hunt, valuer to the L.C.C., before the Royal Commission on London Government in January, 1922.

"Mr. Hunt stated that the total extent of undeveloped land in London amounted to between 7,000 and 8,000 acres, or about one-tenth of the county. These figures are not far short of the 8,102 acres of land rated as 'agricultural,' according to a return for 1911-12, reported in the JOURNAL of the Royal Statistical Society of May, 1918. It was then pointed out that these 8,000 odd acres (although of great building value) contributed no more than £2,594 to the rates of London, or at an average of less than 6s. 5d. per acre. In the L.C.C. Election in 1913, the Progressive Party issued leaflets giving particulars of the area of undeveloped land in London, from which it appeared that there were 1,531 acres of such land in Wandsworth alone.

"There is plenty of land within the county that could be used for building, more than enough to house half a million people. Why is it withheld? I appeal to Mr. Clephan Palmer to consider the urgency of land value taxation as a means to make that land available, and at the same time reduce or abolish the 'hostile tariff' of the rates on houses long ago roundly condemned by Campbell-Bannerman and all the Liberal leaders who have followed him. That reform is essential to any sound or lasting solution of the housing problem."

The DAILY NEWS published part of this letter on January 1st, and the rest of it on January 5th.

**The Banner of Israel**, November 12th (an official journal of the British-Israel-World Federation), contains a timely and informing short article by Mr. George Crosoer. It is in reply to a correspondent on the subject of Land Nationalization. Mr. Crosoer writes:—

"But absolute private ownership of land puts the bulk of the population in the position of competing with each other for the opportunity to produce, or

even to live at all; and such progress as is achieved, in spite of these conditions, is chiefly absorbed in raising the value of land.

"The ideal system would seem to be that which combined security of individual possession with national ownership of the land itself, or at least of its value. Production would be favoured, while no individuals would appropriate the value created by the community. The taxation of industry, from which the world is suffering badly, would be relieved.

"These ideas would seem to have been at the root of the Mosaic system, under which the tendency to extreme inequality, with other evils due to absolute property in land, were restricted by the institution of the jubilee. The system was probably not well administered. If it had been, the Israel nation would perhaps have had the place in the world to which its racial qualities appear to entitle it.

"The subject is well treated in small compass in MY NEIGHBOUR'S LANDMARK, by F. Verinder (published at 376, Strand, W.C.2, price 2s.). It is probably known to many of your readers, to whom its point of view should make it of special interest.

"The same idea of security of individual possession, combined with public appropriation of land-value, is at the base of the theories of those illustrious representatives of Britain and America, Alfred R. Wallace and Henry George."

"**One of the Great Natural Thinkers.**"—The following comment is taken from an article by the late H. W. Massingham, former editor of THE NATION, appearing in the SPECTATOR, 4th October:—

"With this healthy school (the Christian Socialists) I came in contact soon after my journey to London. The leader was Stewart Headlam, best and simplest of men, who, though a born pastor of souls, could never get a cure of them in London, because the Bishop failed to share his enthusiasm for the Milanese ballet, which he regarded as an exclusively religious exercise. The other half of his creed was Land Nationalization, and through him I came in contact with Henry George. He was my first introduction to the man of genius. George was taken here for a type of the American crank, but he never talked like one, being, in fact, one of the great natural thinkers who reduce the detail of life to pure vision. Doubtless he was one-idea'd. He saw society restored to happiness by the way of land restoration, and that, in its turn, achieved by the method of the single tax. At one time that idea, as the popularity of the wonderfully-written PROGRESS AND POVERTY showed, looked as if it would capture the whole democratic movement, leaving it, as the Crusades left Christian Europe, in a state of complete disillusion. Its final and useful function was to implant in our urban population the almost lost sense of their right to the land—i.e., to its enjoyment in a properly organized State. Henry George was just the type of man to fix a moral idea such as this. All the Socialist leaders of my time and before it—Marx, Bakunin, Kropotkin, Hyndman, Shaw—even William Morris—were middle-class intellectuals, some of them sophisticated intellectuals. George, the ex-compositor, was a man of the people, a Rousseau without Rousseau's vices. He drew direct from life, expressing his thought with the simplicity of Cobden and Bastiat, but with more feeling."

Poor Massingham! He was a great journalist, a master of English, a fearless critic, a thorn in the flesh of the politicians he constantly made war upon. He was out for national progress and international peace and if he had been given that "one idea" he might have been a "man of the people" himself and made some lasting impression upon the thought of his day.