

expenditure out of loans 21, making a gross expenditure of 169½ millions. The latest figures were for 1922-23, and they found that the gross total had risen to 418½ millions. The chief increases were in education, from 28 to 70½ millions; poor relief 11 to 35; highways and bridges 13½ to 35; and police 7½ to 18½. The total receipts in rates for 1914 and 1925 were 71½ and 242 millions respectively—per pound of assessable value 6s. 8d. and 11s. 8½d., and per head of population 38s. 11d. to 73s. 11d. Comparing these with their local rates, he thought that they would find about the same ratio of increase.

Contending for the taxation of land values, he said when Aylesbury's population was about 3,000, and mainly dependent on agricultural pursuits, there was not a high market value to any land, but the growth of transport facilities, the expenditure on local services, together with the general improvements in arts and science, had given a value to much of the land far above its agricultural value. The time had arrived when they should cease to penalize people who put labour to its best use, viz., in drawing forth from the land for man's use and sustenance, and to follow the example of their Colonies by separating the value of the land from that which stood in or upon it (improvements, labour value), and gradually reduce the rates and taxes on the improvements (labour values), until the site value, which was due to the presence, the industry, and not least the rate and tax expenditure of the community, bore the proper share of the burden.

THE COPENHAGEN CONFERENCE

To the Editor, "Land & Liberty"

DEAR MR. PAUL,

If you will publish this letter in *Land & Liberty* I shall be pleased. Some of your close associates will possibly not, for some months at least, believe me when I say that I and my immediate friends in the Geogist movement went to Copenhagen to endeavour to bring concord in our ranks and to lay the foundations of a united International Association. What then brought the deplorable split? Not disagreement really, for there is essentially none; but misunderstandings, which could have been removed by free and amicable discussion, a conferring together over points where disagreement appeared to lurk.

English, like Germans and Danes, all pride themselves on being practical. Each group, yours and mine, is, unfortunately, apt to think it alone understands practical politics. You want to keep in close touch with the systems of to-day, with present political parties, to use the old terms, and to emphasize a fiscal policy. We, on the other hand, want none of these things. We believe real headway can be made by preaching a moral issue of economic emancipation. When that message has been delivered widely the peoples everywhere will put the political parties of the day in their place, using them if they can, and they can, too, easily use constitutional means and the fiscal machinery at hand to inaugurate the economic revolution. Minor differences of view can be understood and strife dispelled by equality of

opportunity to produce and exchange opinions. In any case all should be able to agree to a declaration of principle. For what is a principle? Why something which is a self-evident truth and readily acceptable by persons speaking whatsoever language if stated in carefully chosen terms which are free from ambiguity.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

S. VERE PEARSON.

[We willingly print Dr. Pearson's letter at his request and only regret that space could not be found sooner for it and the necessary comment. Dr. Pearson says that he and his friends went to the Conference in a spirit of concord. We are not inclined to dispute this, but there is no question about the facts or the line of argument which aimed to "bring concord," as our correspondent would have it. The Conference was organized and convened with the Promotion of Land Value Taxation and Free Trade as its declared aim and object. The group in question enrolled as duly inscribed members; and having enrolled, their agitation, in which Dr. Pearson took a chief part, both in open Conference and in the Resolutions Committee, had for its purpose the exclusion of the words "Taxation of Land Values" from any declaration or resolution it was proposed to adopt. When an amendment to omit the words was moved and objection had been made because it was out of order, the President sustained the point of order but requested that it be waived for the time being so that discussion could take place. The amendment was defeated by 72 votes to 19, and the resolution was carried with only 4 voting against. Despite that vote, a similar amendment was moved at the final session, which was overruled by the Chair in the interests of the Conference, having regard to the previous decision. The "deplorable split" is Dr. Pearson's own description of his failure to carry amendments which he should have known had no possible chance of acceptance and could only make for discord.]

As for the rest of Dr. Pearson's letter, *Land & Liberty* and its related literature, with Henry George's message and writings always in the forefront, can answer without our aid the implication that we fail to "preach the moral issue of economic emancipation" and are concerned merely to emphasize what Dr. Pearson calls a "fiscal policy."

A fiscal policy may be just or unjust, may take what belongs to the community or may rob the individual, may create privilege or overthrow it, may stimulate industry and reward the labourer or stop production and destroy trade. The deepest moral issues are here at stake and they are to be resolved in the light of the fundamental principle that all have equal rights to land. What Dr. Pearson seems to cavil at has nothing to do with statements of principle, but is concerned with declarations of policy, on which action must be taken if we are to have any place in human affairs. How to establish the equal rights to land? It is not sufficient to say "collect the economic rent"; to say as little is but the foreword to a policy and shelves the pertinent question, how is this to be done? It was Henry George's great contribution to the science of politics that he supplied the answer: make use of existing State machinery "without shock or jar" and *appropriate rent by taxation*. And, "insomuch as the taxation of rent, or land values, must necessarily be increased as we abolish other taxes, we may put the proposition into practical form by proposing—to abolish all taxation save that upon land values." These words, the summation of the argument of *Progress and Poverty*, declare the policy for which we stand.—EDITOR, *Land & Liberty*.]

THE NEW POLITICAL ECONOMY

Address by John B. Sharpe before the Young Men's Civic Club of Pittsburg.

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