

## THE SUSTENTION FUND

The friend who last month offered £10 if nine others would subscribe a like sum will be pleased to learn that three other regular subscribers to the Fund have accepted his challenge. Six more are required to win this prize and if they come soon the combined sum will have its own place on the register for the current year.

We have frankly stated the case for the Fund, but LAND & LIBERTY must make its own appeal. The need for its mission is freely acknowledged, and one thing urgent is the call for new readers especially those interested in practical politics.

One of the three new £10 subscribers writes: "I send the subscription especially as a mark of appreciation of (1) the 'A. W. M.' letter to the MANCHESTER GUARDIAN dated 27th October in reply to that journal's editorial on Lloyd George's speech in Manchester, and (2) the editorial article in the November number of LAND & LIBERTY."

We can only trust that the editorial this month from the same capable and industrious pen will stimulate others to adopt this perfect "mark of appreciation."

A faithful and generous supporter sends this cheering word: "You have struck a mighty blow this time. The greater publicity we need so much is coming. That is all to the good; I am delighted beyond measure."

A Blackburn reader responds: "The November issue of LAND & LIBERTY is of such an excellent character especially in its exposure of the Lloyd George land scheme, that I think it ought to be in the hands of all people of progressive thought, and others to make them so, that I am sending you 5s. to cover cost of forwarding a copy to each of the enclosed (twenty) addresses."

There is room for more of this kind of introduction to people of progressive thought. It is out of such energetic action that LAND & LIBERTY can best lay hold of new recruits. It is one way of endeavouring to increase the circulation; another is to select your man and have the journal posted to him for a certain time. Follow up with a personal visit and get to know at first hand how the new reader regards your interest in his political advancement.

An enthusiast thinks that every reader should resolve to take one to one dozen extra copies of the journal each month for a year, or half a year, and have them delivered to associates in the kirk and market place. That may not be possible with every subscriber but we shall be delighted to hear from those who favour the proposal.

Meanwhile the Sustention Fund for LAND & LIBERTY and its related publications is open for all the direct support available. If the journal can begin the New Year free of any embarrassing financial obligations it will be well for the work that is before us in the immediate future.

J. P.

## THE THINGS THAT MATTER

By William Reid

(*Appearing in THE CATHOLIC TIMES, 21st November*)

The things that matter are: (1) the tenure of land and security from disturbance, and (2) that the land be put to use. Distributing ownership raises questions of compensation and other kinds of friction: the very things which have given politicians the excuse for doing nothing. Our object is to penalise the withholding of land. We would tax or rate vacant land on the same basis as we would tax or rate a contiguous site which was being put to its highest use. The speculator would then not only lose rent or interest but would be burdened by taxes as well. All he would require to do to escape this burden would be to use the land himself, sell it or let it to someone else who wished to use it. That would add to production and by lowering the rewards to idleness secure a better distribution of the products of land.

What we argue (rightly or wrongly) is that land value is created not by individual but by communal effort. Because of that we hold that the community, by the same moral right as the individual, is entitled to its own earnings. When we call it a tax, or rate, we are making a concession to popular language. It is not a tax in the sense that we take anything from anybody that rightfully belongs to them. We propose to take for the community what rightfully belongs to the community, and to leave sacredly to the individual the products of his enterprise, his labour, his invention, his organization, skill or any personal quality whatever.

We do not as a community erect buildings for the individual, nor do we, as a community, repair them or repaint them. So why do we fine the individual—in rates and taxes—because he has a building in a good state of repair? As a community we provide fire brigades, policemen, sanitary inspectors and other public servants; we make roads and bridges, and we supply public lighting. Strangely enough the same type of erection on two different sites has two different values. So it must be the site to which the building is attached and not the building which is enhanced in value by public services. Rates are collected now by the municipality to pay for these public services, and the landowner who owns the sites which are enhanced in value by this expenditure of public money secures the return in the form of increased rent.

The community sows and the landowner reaps. Surely in morals the community ought either to reap or the landowner to sow. We propose to accomplish both these objects by asking the landowner as a member of the community to come forward at the seed time and to take no more than his share of the harvest.

To conclude, I find no analogy between the skill of an artist or athlete and the monopoly of a landlord who may hold the other two titles as well. The artist and athlete perform services to the community. It would complete the analogy if some one would indicate what service a landlord qua landlord renders to the community.

Mr. John Murray, Liberal candidate for Ripon (YORKSHIRE EVENING POST, 20th November), in reply to question replies: "It cannot be too definitely stated that I am distinctly against the land policy of Mr. Lloyd George." The YORKSHIRE EVENING POST says: "It is because Mr. Murray has found the land policy unpopular in the division that he has dropped it."