

# The SINGLE TAX

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## COUNCILLOR DAVID M'LARDY,

PRESIDENT,

SCOTTISH LAND RESTORATION UNION.

We congratulate ourselves and the Single Tax Movement on the return of Mr. David M'Lardy for the Fourth Ward in the Town Council of Glasgow at the November Elections. The Cause of Democracy and Social Regeneration is advancing in the public mind, and it augurs well for the future to have a tried reformer of Mr. M'Lardy's kind sent to represent us in an administrative assembly like the Town Council of Glasgow. Municipalities cannot legislate, but they can demand legislation from Imperial Parliament empowering them to tax land values; and that there is a growing sentiment in favour of this "just system of taxation" is clearly seen by Mr. M'Lardy's success. He is, and has been for the past ten years, an uncompromising disciple of Henry George. He has filled many positions of honour and trust as a public man and a reformer. He has been, since he first ventured out into the open, secretary of the now defunct Scottish Land Restoration League, Prime Minister in the Glasgow Parliamentary Debating Society, President of the Glasgow Junior Liberal Association, and about two years ago he succeeded Mr. Alex. Bowman as president of the S.L.R. Union, which position he has since occupied. He also occupies at present one of the highest representative positions in the councils of the Scottish Liberal Party, where, two years ago, he carried unanimously, at their National Conference, the now well known and famous

resolution—"That the land belongs to the people, and that the values or rent should be taken for public purposes only." Wherever he goes he makes friends for the Single Tax cause,



and commands always the respect of its enemies, Mr. M'Lardy was practically unknown to the Fourth Ward, except as public men are known to the average elector, yet it was scarcely

announced that he was to contest the seat, when Radicals, Temperance Reformers, and Home Rulers rallied to his side. His meetings were more than successful. His clear, lucid statements, and his masterly expositions of the intricate phases of the hydra-headed social and labour problem drew all classes to his support, and one of the most charming incidents of the campaign, and at the same time one of the greatest compliments to the candidate and to the cause he claimed to represent, was the way in which Temperance Reformers and other than Single Taxers who spoke for him would insist in giving the land question and the taxation of land values the foremost place. As Mr. M'Lardy himself would say it is no victory of his, it is a victory for the good cause. Time and events are on our side. This question of taking for society the unearned increment of land value is vividly before every English speaking country even now, and Glasgow, nor Scotland cannot lag behind. "We are waiting" said a Councillor at the recent election in one of the Northern Towns, "to see what Glasgow is going to do on this question." Mr. M'Lardy and his colleagues in the Glasgow Council will take these words to heart. They have a far bigger and ever growing constituency than Glasgow and its suburbs. They have set their hands to the plough, and sooner or later they will win, for the cause they stand for is the cause of truth and justice.

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### Notes and Comments.

AS THE NIGHT FOLLOWS THE DAY.—Speaking to the Bradford Chamber of Commerce on Monday, 29th October, Mr. Shaw Lefevre said, "depression of trade was mainly due to re-action following a period of excessive speculation." Speculation in land is the biggest industry in the speculation line. In fact inasmuch as there is no monopoly, generally speaking, in any particular branch of trade, and as trade is but the modification and transporting of the raw material of land fashioned by labour into the various desirable forms that society needs, it is difficult to see how anything but restriction could bring trade depression. The bottom restriction is land monopoly. Private ownership of land induces speculation in land, and speculation in land tends at once to stop production, and so trade receives its first check. Now with the Single Tax in operation, speculation in land would cease for the reason that the values of land being taken in taxation for public uses, no one could speculate on the ability to take these values. Those who desired land for use could then secure it at its real value; but the important vantage ground

gained to trade would be the complete destruction of land speculation, and with land thus freed it would be difficult to make a "corner" in anything produced from the land.

"THIS IS THE LAW OF RENT:—As individuals come together in communities, and society grows, integrating more and more its individual members, and making general interests and general conditions of more and more relative importance, there arises, over and above the value which individuals can create for themselves, a value which is created by the community as a whole, and which, attaching to land, becomes tangible, definite, and capable of computation and appropriation. As society grows, so grows this value, which springs from and represents in tangible form what society as a whole contributes to production as distinguished from what is contributed by individual exertion. By virtue of natural law in those aspects which it is the purpose of the science we call political economy to discover, as it is the purpose of the sciences which we call chemistry and astronomy to discover aspects of natural law,—all social advance necessarily contributes to the increase of this common value, to the growth of this common fund. Here is a provision made by natural law for the increasing needs of social growth; here is an adaptation of nature by virtue of which the natural progress of society is a progress towards equality, not towards inequality; a centripetal force tending to unity, growing out of and ever balancing a centrifugal force tending to diversity. Here is a fund belonging to society as a whole from which without the degradation of alms, private or

public, provision can be made for the weak, the helpless, the aged; from which provision can be made for the common wants of all as a matter of common right to each, and by the utilization of which society as it advances may pass, by natural methods and easy stages, from a rude association for purposes of defence and police into a co-operative association, in which combined power guided by combined intelligence can give to each more than his own exertions multiplied many fold can produce. By making land private property, by permitting individuals to appropriate this fund, which nature plainly intended for the use of all, we throw the children's bread to the dogs of Greed and Lust; we produce a primary inequality which gives rise in every direction to other tendencies to inequality; and from this perversion of the good gifts of the Creator, from this ignoring and defying of his social laws, there arise in the very heart of our civilization those horrible and monstrous things that betoken social putrefaction."—Henry George.

A PLEADING FOR HOME RULE FOR SCOTLAND.—Lord Provost Russell, of Edinburgh, in his evidence as one of the deputation to the Scotch Secretary on the reform of private bill legislation, stated that during the past twenty-three years the City of Edinburgh had spent £97,151 in London in securing the privilege of doing works of public utility. Treasurer Gray, of Glasgow, stated that "owing to the present system private bills had cost Glasgow, for the last thirty years, £10,000 per annum." Home Rule for Scotland would settle this high-handed system of legal tyranny. If the lawyers must be employed to settle the claims of the interests

OFFICE—45 MONTROSE STREET, GLASGOW.