

movement, fraternal greetings to our people in New South Wales and South Africa. They all knew as they listened to Mr. Firth's speech the amount of propaganda, work, sacrifice, good faith and good fellowship that was behind the great achievement. Their guest at his numerous meetings in this country and in his Press interviews had met objections as a man who spoke with authority, conquered prejudices, and in his own quiet and courteous manner carried conviction everywhere he went. Their next function would be held in that room to do honour to Mrs. Anna de Mille, the daughter of Henry George. The date would be announced later. Mrs. de Mille, with her two daughters, were coming to this side for a holiday trip, and he hoped all present would resolve to be in attendance.

## PENSIONS FOR WIDOWS, AND OTHERS

We reproduce with pleasure the undernoted lesson on Pensions, Industry and Monopoly, appearing in a letter to the *GLASGOW HERALD*, 22nd May, contributed by Mr. WM. REID, Secretary of the Scottish League:—

"SIR,—While Socialists have a lot to answer for, I think your criticism is quite unfair. An impartial examination should provide them with the negative satisfaction that they are no worse than the Tory Government, the Liberal leaders, or the *GLASGOW HERALD*. So far as I can see all these parties stand for a 'contributory' scheme, which is a pure hoax. Surely no greater confidence trick was ever worked off on a guileless and unsuspecting electorate.

"Your leading article says: 'Socialism is doing its utmost to destroy the individuality that expresses itself in thrift.' Well, the Sunday-school scholar thought the Priest and the Levite passed by on the other side because the man had already been robbed, and the Socialist may abandon any hope of accomplishing a purpose which has already been carried out by others.

"How is thrift encouraged now? Is not every individual penalized for thrift? From what does he pay his rates and taxes? Surely from the returns due to his thrift or that of some one else. Is there one single rate or tax that you can show to fall on monopoly, idleness, or thriftlessness? I answer my own question; there is no one. Mr. Wheatley's case against the Bill was destroyed before he resorted to the vituperation with which you accuse him. His school believes (I think correctly) that Labour pays all the taxes. That being so, it is surely futile for him to try to get something out of the rich which will ultimately be paid by the poor.

"If by 'contributory' is meant a handing over of money to the Government by buying stamps or paying taxes, is not that what we are all doing now? Indirectly we do more; as consumers we refund to the manufacturers what they have paid in stamps. It is all a question of the incidence of taxation. Taxes do not hit those at whom they are aimed. They harass and hobble trade, and they make thrift hardly worth while.

"After we have taken money out of industry to maintain the unemployed Sir Alfred Mond tells us that the only way to get rid of unemployment is to hand the money back for the purpose of subsidizing industry. A non-contributory scheme would not harass industry if we relieved industry of taxation and transferred the burden of taxation to monopoly. Recently the Corporation of Glasgow paid £55,000 for 49½ acres of land. Industry has already been burdened with that private tax. If a proportion of all such burdens were taken for public purposes industry would not be further burdened but would be relieved by the amount we absorbed from monopoly.

"All people in work and in health are contributing to the funds of the State. At the end why should 'some poor shipwrecked fallen brother' who has paid more than his share be shut out of pension or other benefit on a technicality? Why should the taint of pauper rest on the thrifty through no fault of their own, but because largely of State exactions to assist sheltered sections?

"Socialism, in its attempt to distribute benefits, is at least right at heart. When it comes to muddle-headed thinking the Socialist has no monopoly. Burdens on industry are not to be relieved by shirking duties. It is the duty of the State to maintain those who have fallen in its service. The State has funds which rightly belong to itself, and does not need to tax the thrift of individuals. The rent of bare land—unimproved land value—is created by communal services. Tax it for purposes of widows' and old-age pensions, and industry will not be burdened."

## LAND VALUE POLICY

By J. Dundas White, LL.D.

The following review of Land Value Policy, signed by C. D. Thompson, appears in the January number of the *INDIAN JOURNAL OF ECONOMICS*, Allahabad, India:—

"Dr. White is already the author of 'Land Reform in Theory and Practice' and 'Land Value Problems.' He states the whole case for land value taxation briefly and clearly. He believes in the untaxing of houses and other improvements. He would get over the difficulty of 'improvements that merge into land' by allowing them exemption for a period of forty years. He believes that land value taxation will tend to force the land into the hands of the cultivators and will thus facilitate much needed reforms in land tenure. After dealing with these subjects, he has given chapters on rent, wages, capital, and inventive progress, showing that every invention, whatever its effects on wages or interest, must increase rents, and the value of the land. There are interesting, practical chapters on legislation, valuation, and the method of collection, and notes on marketing, machinery, contracts, agricultural rates, title-rent charges, land acquisition, etc.

"The question has great importance in India to-day in view of the appointment of the Taxation Enquiry Committee, who are particularly inquiring into the difficulties of sub-infeudation and mortgages in connection with land taxation. Dr. White gets over the difficulty of multifarious claims to some share in the surplus produce or to some sort of toll, tithe, or feu-duty, by making the basis of taxation the 'annual land-value,' by which he means the sum-total of rights that would attach to the fee-simple of the land, if leased in perpetuity, free from all incumbrances and taxes, and by applying to this annual land value the principle of proportional contribution by all who have any share in these rights. For the mortgage difficulty he quotes the New Zealand practice of subtracting from the land tax whatever income tax has been paid by the holder of the mortgage. Our chief difficulty in India, however, is to know how to deal with the problem of the small cultivator of an uneconomic holding, who needs all that share of the surplus produce which is left to him to exist decently. We should like to ask Dr. White to tell us whether it is good economic policy to tax such a man if he holds directly from the Crown."

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"There's no more tribute to be paid. . . . If Cæsar can hide the sun from us with a blanket, or put the moon in his pocket, we will pay him tribute for light; else, sir, no more tribute."—*Cymbeline*, Act III, Scene 1.