

inclusive. The thing we propose to do is to apply the common wealth to public uses in lieu of taxation. I shall not, at this time, propose a name. I think I have not overstepped the bounds of modesty in my attempt to impress upon the minds of my fellow Single Taxers the urgent need of change, and I shall be glad to leave the question at this point in abler hands.

LAND MONOPOLY, THE CURSE OF THE CENTURIES.

I—Poverty Caused by the Denial of the Common Right to the Use of the Earth.

II—Rise and Growth of Land Monopoly in Great Britain and Ireland.

(For the Review)

By H. MARTIN WILLIAMS.*

I

That there is increasing poverty amidst abounding plenty; that there are hungry men, women and children in a land teeming with grain and all the fruits of the earth; that there are hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of men, able and willing to work, in enforced idleness in a country which, under natural conditions, affords opportunities for labor and productive enterprise superior to that of any country on earth, are conditions which should challenge the earnest attention of all lovers of liberty and justice, and of all who desire to see "a government of the people, by the people, and for the people," endure among the nations of the earth.

These conditions are not confined to any clime or country. They are as wide-spread as civilization. They are apparently as deep seated as the institutions of human government. Where civilization has made its greatest triumphs where human invention and human skill have done most to economize labor and strength, and increase the productive power of man; where the refining influences of education have been most potent; where the arts and sciences have done most to improve and elevate the human mind, there, strange to say, we find these conditions intensified.

Beside the greatest wealth we find the most bitter, biting poverty.

Beside the greatest moral and intellectual refinement, we find the deepest moral and intellectual degradation.

*H. Martin Williams, who has written a series of papers on land monopoly for the *SINGLE TAX REVIEW*, of which this is the first installment, is one of the "old guard" in the movement which began with the publication of *Progress and Poverty* in 1879. He has not ceased during this period his interest and activity in the work. We are glad to be privileged to print this result of Mr. Williams mature study of conditions based on statistics he has carefully collected.—Editor *SINGLE TAX REVIEW*.

In this wonderfully fair, fruitful, rich land of ours, with its incomparable, incomputable wealth and its teeming millions of industrious, willing workers, we find the wheels of industry clogged, productive enterprises crippled, financial depression everywhere, and the gaunt forms of Hunger and Want standing in the doorway of innumerable homes.

These conditions are not the result of natural causes. The earth is free from famine and pestilence. There has been no visitation of Providence, leaving destruction and woe in its track.

On the contrary, the seasons have been propitious. The good kind, loving All-Father has sent His genial sunshine and refreshing showers, causing the soil to yield generously to the labor of the husbandman. For years the earth has groaned beneath the load of its abundant crops.

These conditions then, must result from other than natural causes. They must be the result of bad laws and an unjust and vicious social organism. They lie deeper than any system of finance. They are beyond any question of tariff. They cannot be reached and remedied by any of the proposed reforms of existing political parties. They come from the denial of man's natural right to live and move and have his being on this earth, unhindered and unobstructed by any code of laws, any set of constitutions or any form of government.

The denial of this natural, inherent, indefeasible, indestructible right, is the primary, underlying, all-sufficient cause of industrial and financial depressions, and results from the prevailing system of land tenure, which permits a few to forestall and monopolize what was intended by the Creator for the common use and benefit of all mankind.

The right to the elements necessary to sustain life is the sequence of the right to life itself. If some men are permitted the exclusive use and ownership of the means necessary to sustain and preserve the lives of their fellows, to be parted with only on such terms as they choose to make, then some men are given a property right in the labor and muscle of other men. In short, they who own the land, own the men who live on the land. The land monopolist may exact from his less fortunate brother, such portion of the results of his labor—of the wealth he produces,—as he may desire,—limited only by the prickings of an outraged conscience,—for having given him leave to apply his labor to the land; for vouchsafing him the precious privilege of exercising a natural right, upon the use of which depends his very existence.

Hence it is, that we hold land monopoly to be the most monstrous crime of the ages—the sum of all political villianies—the continued existence of which means the perpetual drudgery and ceaseless, unending toil for the masses, and the enjoyment of fabulous, unearned wealth by the few; the ultimate downfall and ruin of free government and the ushering in the night of despotism.

Land monopoly is the prolific parent from which have sprung all the other forms of monopoly. It is a Bohun Upas tree which withers and blights and kills everything that is touched by the deadly shade of its poisonous branches.

But it is not so much my purpose to portray the baneful effects of land

monopoly, as it is to show by facts and indisputable statistics, the existence of the evil, in a manner which will impress its enormity upon the reader.

This appears to be rendered necessary by the continued asseveration of those who antagonize the remedy which we propose, that there is not and cannot be such a thing as land monopoly in the United States with its hundreds of millions of acres of unused and unoccupied land and its comparatively sparse population.

Every person of ordinary reading and intelligence, readily admits the existence and evil effects of the monopoly of the land in the Old World, but many laughs at the statement that in this new country of ours, we are suffering from the same curse which they admit exists abroad.

The history of the rise and growth of land monopoly in Europe is interesting at this time only for the lesson which it teaches of the manifold evils which flow from a system which permits the monopolization of nature's gifts to all mankind.

II

The story of the crimes which have been committed to create and perpetuate land monopoly in Europe, and especially in Great Britain and Ireland, is as "familiar as a thrice told tale." The bare recital of the wrongs and outrages which have been heaped upon the Irish tenants, the Scotch crofters, and the disinherited poor of England and Wales, causes the breasts of American citizens to heave with indignation which finds vent in mass-meeting, speeches, resolutions and editorials denunciatory of the heartless acts of British landlords.

Since the study of landlordism or land monopoly in Great Britain affords the most striking illustration of the evils which result from the system, it may be instructive to sketch its rise and growth.

Originally, the soil of England was held by the community, and cultivated by the people in common. The land was as free to every human creature as the water, the light and the air. Laveleye, the great Belgian publicist and political economist, in his work on "Primitive Poverty," says:

"There can be no doubt that originally, Great Britain was occupied by agrarian communities. * * * Numerous traces of the ancient community still exists. * * * The laws of Edgar speak of common pasturage, as the ordinary property of every villiage or township. Certain remote districts retain the ancient agricultural system."

In this communal state, the people were happy, independent and free. This condition of things lasted until the Conquest, when the Norman robbers subjugated the Saxons, stole their lands and parcelled them out among themselves. In a few years these alien robbers quarrelled among themselves, and the lands stolen from the Anglo-Saxons were stolen from each other, and again divided up, the stronger plundering the weaker.

Like their neighbors across the Channel, the ancient Celts held the land of Ireland in common. But when the Tudors had robbed the Catholic Church of

all the lands that belonged to it, which constituted one-third of the soil of England, their attention was turned to Ireland, which they proceeded to wrest from its occupiers by the most brutal system of pillage ever resorted to by that greatest of land pirates—England. The history of the crimes and brutalities that characterized the seizure of the lands of Ulster by that monumental monarchial land thief, James I, is sickening in its details. Says a recent writer on this subject:

“This land-grab was carried out in mid-winter under the most heart-rending surroundings. The natives of the soil were driven out at the point of the sword, their homes were razed to the ground, and their fields devastated. They were forced onto the barren waste lands of Connaught, which were so sterile that it had passed into a proverb. There is not water enough to drown an enemy, wood enough to burn him, or even hemp enough to hang him. To return to their native lands was made high treason, and the new seventeenth century British acreocrats cordoned Ulster around with castle and cannon, and any Celt, either man, woman or child, daring to cross the border was remorseless y shot down like a dog.”

The same writer goes on to say:

“The best part of what was left to the native Irish by James I and Cromwell, was, after the battle of the Boyne, divided up among the followers of William, Prince of Orange. It is an historical fact that one-third of all Ireland came into the hands of King William III, by the sequestration of estates. He gave one enormous block of this stolen land to his mistress, Lady Elizabeth Villiers. To the Earl of Portland, the oldest son of his favorite, Benwick, Duke of Portland, he granted 135,820 acres out of 1,060,692 acres of confiscated Irish lands.”

The processes by which the lords of the soil of England have obtained their vast estates are equally execrable and criminal. William Marshall, an eminent British historian, who wrote from 1770 to 1820 says:

“A few centuries ago, nearly the whole of the lands of England lay in an open and more or less in a communal state. Each parish or township was considered one common farm.”

It is a fact, not disputed by any well informed persons, that out of a total area of 240,000 acres in Huntingdonshire, 130,000 was communal.

The Enclosures Act passed by the British Parliaments from 1710 to 1843 in obedience to the dictation of the landocracy, authorized the lords of the manor to enclose the common lands for their own use, and made private property of 7,624,249 acres, nearly one-third of the cultivated area of England, which in 1867 amounted to 25,451,626 acres. More than 600,000 acres of communal lands have been enclosed, and have become the property of land-grabbers, since 1845. In 1862, the Forest, the play-ground, of the London poor, having an area of 7,000 acres was reduced to 3,000, the other 4,000 acres being handed over to the titled aristocrats.

In Scotland vast areas of territory, once covered with happy homes of the tillers of the soil, are now owned by the titled robbers who have changed them

into deserts and deer forests, and where a few years ago could be seen the herds of the thrifty husbandman, one sees now only the wild deer and hears the horn and the baying of the hounds of some regal hunting party, who could ride for a day over their own possessions stolen from the rightful occupants of the soil.

To sum up the argument in the case against land monopoly in Great Britain and Ireland, I quote from an article which appeared in the *London Times* a few years ago:

"The extent of the land in the United Kingdom is 72,117,766 acres. Of this extent it appears that 348 owners hold 17,302,466 acres or nearly one-fourth; or, 2,198 owners hold 33,885,967 acres or nearly one-half; or, 10,911 owners hold 52,082,095 acres. which is upwards of two-thirds of all the land in the United Kingdom. The other third of the land is held by the multitude, altogether numbering 1,162,772 owners. The average quantity of land held by each of the 10,911 owners, is 4,773 acres, and by each of the 1,162,772 owners is 17 acres."

But what of the multitudes in the United Kingdom, who do not own an inch of soil? In 1881, the population of the United Kingdom was 36,998,032, so that as there are only 1,173,683 of the population who own land, 35,824,349 of the people are deprived of their natural inheritance in the soil, which God intended alike for all of his creatures who might be born in the United Kingdom.

In England the aggregate holdings of twelve of the largest land owners is 1,058,883 acres; and their respective acreages are, 186,399, 133,001, 102,789, 91,024, 87,515, 78,542, 70,022, 68,066, 66,105, 61,018, 57,802, 56,600.

But it is in Scotland that land piracy assumes its most colossal and magnificent proportions. There the holdings of the twelve largest land-owners aggregate 4,339,722 acres, and their respective acreages are 1,326,453, 432,369, 424,560, 372,729, 305,831, 302,283, 253,221, 220,663, 194,640, 175,114, 166,151, 165,645.

The aggregate holdings of the twelve largest land-owners in Ireland, is 1,297,888 acres, and their respective acreages are 156,974, 121,353, 118,607, 114,881, 107,119, 101,030, 95,008, 94,551, 93,629, 86,321, 72,915, 69,501.

The twelve largest land-owners in the United Kingdom and their respective acreages are as follows:

Duke of Sutherland.....	1,358,548
Duke of Buccleugh and Queensbury.....	459,260
Sir James Matheson.....	406,070
Earl of Breadelbane.....	372,609
Earl of Seafield.....	305,891
Duke of Richmond.....	286,407
Earl of Fife.....	257,629
Alexander Matheson.....	220,433
Duke of Athol.....	194,649
Duke of Devonshire.....	193,121
Duke of Northumberland.....	185,515
Duke of Argyle.....	175,114

In England, 1 person in 20 is an owner of land; in Scotland, 1 person in 25; in Ireland, 1 person in 79.

In view of these startling facts, is it any wonder that John Ruskins wrote:

“Though England is deafened with spinning wheels, her people have not clothes; though she is black with digging coal, her people have not fuel; and though she has sold her soul for gain, they die of hunger.”

As the result of this wholesome filching of the lands from the common people by the nobility of Great Britain, and their consequent power to appropriate the earnings of labor, the inequality of social conditions is more marked than in any other civilized country on the globe. The few are immensely rich, while the many are miserably poor, and from the throats of millions of land-robbed and disinherited British subjects is going up the hoarse cry of discontent. Hunger and starvation are staring them in the face, and the Government is confronted with one of the most serious crises in its history.

CORRECT SCIENTIFICALLY AND PRACTICALLY.

Most men who have much to do with this tax levying business have been forced to the conclusion that not only scientifically, but practically, the Single Tax theory is correct.—Lincoln (Neb.) *News*.

CULTIVATION is, at least, one of the greatest natural improvements ever made by human invention. It has given to created earth a twofold value. But the landed monopoly that began with it has produced the greatest evil. It has dispossessed more than half the inhabitants of every nation of their natural inheritance, without providing for them, as it ought to have done, an indemnification for that loss, and has thereby created a species of poverty and wretchedness that did not exist before.—THOMAS PAINE.

THE Labor Bureau of New South Wales reports that there are no unemployed in the State.

WE regret the failure of Mr. James R. Brown to furnish the second installment of “My Island,” begun in last issue of THE REVIEW.

AN interesting account of Fairhope appeared in the *Chicago Record-Herald* of April 9th from the pen of William E. Curtis, the well known correspondent.