

A Noble Protest

DR. CHANNING, the great liberal preacher, abhorred slavery, but he could not make common cause with William Lloyd Garrison, whose methods and words were too violent and unreasonable for his taste. He outlined these objections to the harshness of abolitionist propaganda, to Samuel J. May, a lieutenant of Garrison's. At last May interrupted:

"Dr. Channing," he said: "I am tired of these complaints. The cause of suffering humanity, the cause of our oppressed, crushed colored countrymen, has called as loudly upon others as upon us abolitionists. It was just as incumbent upon others as upon us to espouse it. We are not to blame that wiser and better men did not espouse it long ago. The cry of millions suffering the cruel bondage in our land had been heard for half a century and disregarded. The wise and prudent saw the terrible wrong, but thought it not wise and prudent to lift a finger for its correction.

"The priests and Levites beheld their robbed and wounded countrymen, but passed by on the other side. The children of Abraham held their peace, and at last 'the very stones have cried out' in abhorrence of this tremendous iniquity; and you must expect them to cry out like 'the stones.' You must not wonder if many of those who have been left to take up this great cause do not plead it with all the seemliness of phrase which the scholars and practiced rhetoricians of our country might use. You must not expect them to manage with all the calmness and discretion that clergymen and statesmen might exhibit. But the scholars, the statesmen, the clergy, had done nothing—did not seem about to do anything; and for my part:

"I thank God that at last any persons, be they who they may, have earnestly engaged in this cause; for no movement can be in vain. We abolitionists are what we are—babes, sucklings, obscure men, silly women, publicans, sinners—and we shall manage this matter just as might be expected of such persons as we are. It is unbecoming in abler men who stood by and would do nothing to complain of us because we do no better."

—From a recent Life of WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

The Gasoline Tax

WHATEVER other result it may have, the increase in the gasoline tax, which has just gone into effect, is not likely to induce any motorist to keep his car in the garage. Nor will it even influence many to use their cars less, in the long run. The Ohio motorist undoubtedly has his opinion of the additional tax, but he is dependent upon his car and he knows that his protests just now would not undo the law, so he swallows his feelings, pays the tax and continues to drive.

The Ohio motorist at present is paying at least three taxes on the car he drives. If he has bought a new car this spring, he has still others to pay. On a new car, for instance, he had to meet the federal excise tax. His car is also returnable on the personal property duplicate. In addition, he has to provide himself with licenses and for his new car he has the recorder's fee to pay. On an investment of \$500 for a new automobile, for example, he now pays in Ohio, including the federal charges, something like \$40 a year in taxes, assuming that he drives his car 8000 miles with the gasoline tax at three cents. In addition, he pays insurance premiums against fire and theft losses, at least, and if he is wise he also carries insurance to cover personal and property liability in the operation of his car.

When he totals all of these items and makes an estimate besides for the upkeep and maintenance of his car in the way of repairs and replacements, it is plain that he has something to think about. It is generally estimated that the average cost of operating the ordinary automobile is about eight cents a mile. With all of the charges as saddled upon a car today, it is surprising that it is not more. The multiplicity of taxes and charges in the end will defeat its own purpose. When it comes to the automobile, we are for the *Single Tax*, first, last and all the time.

—Ohio State Journal.

Ramsay MacDonald on "Housing"

WRITING to the chairman of the National Association of Building Societies, the Labor leader says: "A house should be an expression of a personality, and wherever it is possible it ought to be owned, not merely rented. Would that every workman could own his own house, just as he owns his clothes."

There would be no difficulty whatever in realizing this aspiration once the C. L. P. plan were in operation. It is the mystery in which the lawyers have shrouded the business of owning a house that has contributed to prevent their ownership by those residing in them. Let the land be restored to the community, and its full annual rent be collected into the public treasury, and there would be no more "buying or selling" of land. The buying or selling of the house would then be a perfectly simple transaction, and as easily effected as the buying or selling of a loaf of bread, a hat, or any other product of human labor. No lawyer would be needed: the builder of the house would sell and give a receipt to the purchaser, which receipt would be evidence of title; subsequent sales would be a matter of mutual agreement between a willing buyer and an equally willing seller, and the original receipt, endorsed with a record of the subsequent transfer of interest in the house, would pass in return for the purchase money, and would remain with the

new owner as his title. This could be repeated each time the property changed hands. No matter who might own the house, the same obligation to pay the full annual rent of the land would rest and remain upon the occupier of the site. Just as the purchaser of a leasehold house today takes over the obligation to pay the agreed ground rent upon which the lease was granted, so the purchaser of the house (or other building or fixed improvement) upon the site would take over the obligation to pay the rent of the land.

If Mr. MacDonald really means what he wrote, let him have the courage to abandon the time-serving "Land Policy" of his party—a policy framed in the interests of the Land Lords—and come honestly into the open as an opponent of these parasites upon the community. Today, in spite of his words, he is fighting on their side.—*Commonweal*, London, England.

EVERY permanent improvement of the soil, every railway and road, every bettering of the general condition of society, every facility given for production, every stimulus supplied to consumption, raises rent. The landowner sleeps, but thrives. He alone, among all the recipients in the distribution of products, owes everything to the labor of others, contributes nothing of his own. He inherits part of the fruits of present industry, and has appropriated the lion's share of accumulated intelligence.

—THOROLD ROGERS.

THE justice of the Pittsburgh tax plan rests upon the principle of equal rights to the earth that has been recognized by such great statesmen and philosophers as Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and Henry George, and upon the fact that land values are socially created, growing with the growth of population and the extension of public improvements, and are, therefore, in a peculiar sense, a natural and logical source of public revenue.—PERCY R. WILLIAMS in *Kiwanis Magazine*.

The Stupidity of Officialdom

HOW the official mind works—or does not work—is exemplified by an extraordinary report furnished by the Paris correspondent of the Central News Agency. A ten-year-old girl named Piot, playing near the River Isere, fell in. Her younger brother ran to a kennel, unchained a dog and sent him to the rescue. As the animal was crossing to the water, a gendarme seized it, declaring that as it was not on the leash the owner must pay a fine. The boy pleaded, but the official refused to release the dog till the fine was paid. While the argument was going on, the girl was drowned!

And our politicians of every stripe are outbidding each other in their eagerness to burden this community with more, and yet more "officials!"

—*Commonweal*, London, Eng.

FIFTEEN years later Henry George, Jr., made a trip to Japan. I gave him a letter of introduction to Baron Tsuzuki and addressed a separate advance epistle announcing the date of his arrival.

The ship upon which the George party were passengers was met in the harbor of Yokohama by a Japanese gunboat and received a salute. During the whole tour through Japan the George party were showered with courtesies and made to feel at home. Tsuzuki afterward wrote me a gracious letter apologizing for what he called the "meagerness of the reception" and expressed keen regret that Marquis Ito had departed this life and rejoined his ancestors without having the great privilege of greeting my friends on behalf of Japan.

When Japan bursts into bloom she blooms all over.—"Bob Davis Recalls," *N. Y. Sun*, June 9.

Watered Land Values

THEY used to say in Connecticut that the actual value of a good 100-acre farm was a roof over one's head and a job for life at \$3 a day. As economic capital, it is probably true that farm lands have always been overvalued and are overvalued even now. Farm lands present one of the most flagrant illustrations in history of watered stock. Watered stock does not hurt the consumer. The only one it hurts is the person who invests in it in the belief that it does not contain water.

Farming has never been, on the whole or in anything like a universal way, a remunerative employment of capital. But under the illusion created by the wholesale watering or inflation of farm values, there is at present a vast amount of capital actually invested in farm lands. It is a capital that has to pay interest and taxes, and it is only the most efficiently and economically employed farm capital that can do this.

In short, the illusory mirage of high farm values, followed with delight by the unfortunate farmers a few years ago, is one of the grave underlying causes of their present pitiful state. It is a situation calling for the most sympathetic and enlightened treatment.

—MCCREADY SYKES in *Commerce and Finance*.

British Poverty

THE tremendous cost of poverty to the nation (as far as figures go, apart altogether from social and economic injury to all concerned) is shown in reply to two questions in the House of Commons on the 6th of December. In the eight years, 1918 to 1925, there have been paid out in unemployment benefit the sum of \$1,161,280,000. In the same period and in addition, the total expenditure on poor relief in England and Wales was \$1,249,103,700.

—*Land and Liberty*, London.