

WHO IS FOR LIBERTY?

Who is for Liberty? Perhaps at no time in recent history was it more urgently necessary that this question should be asked and answered by every citizen. Look out over the world in any direction we may, and it would almost seem as if tyranny were triumphant on every hand. Italy, with its traditions of Garibaldi, lies under the heel of a ruthless dictator, who stops at nothing to complete the political enslavement of his fellow-countrymen. Press, Parliament and Platform all are muzzled, and Trade Unions are not permitted, except they conform to the pattern approved by the ex-Socialist now in the saddle, whose vain-glorious boasting and mad Imperialism constitute a grave danger to the peace of the world.

Poland, again, has passed under the domination of a military dictatorship, in which all possibility of peaceful progress is sacrificed to the insane dream of "a strong military State." The common people the while crushed to earth under the burden of taxes imposed upon them in order to provide dividends for international armament firms, ever ready quite impartially to supply munitions of war to the armies on both sides. Spain, in turn, is bleeding to death under a similar burden. Military dictator succeeds military dictator: the condition of the people steadily growing worse. Someone has to pay for all these military establishments and, since soldiers, while they may *earn* the pay they get, in no case produce the wealth from which it is drawn, it follows, once more, that it is the plain common people who are ground down under the weight of ever-increasing taxation.

Russia affords another example of suppression of individual liberty by a merciless dictatorship which rides rough-shod over all considerations of natural right. That it is said to be a "Dictatorship of the Proletariat," meaning to imply that the common people have a voice in their affairs, makes not the slightest difference to the fact that the elementary right of every human being to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness is denied by a small handful of persons who, while prating of Liberty in theory, rigidly exclude her in practice. There is nothing to choose between the tyranny of Mussolini and that of Moscow; both constitute a denial of Liberty.

Turning to the Liberal nations, we see in America a growing tendency towards the suppression of freedom of speech. To-day hundreds of her citizens lie in prison for no greater crime than that of having criticised the powers that be. A tendency towards the inevitable militarism, which is the bulwark of all tyrannies, is also to be observed, while the recurring cry for intervention in Mexico, inspired by Wall Street financiers, who see in an Imperialist policy the way to bigger dividends through the "annexing" of that State, at the cost of life and limb of the sons of the common people, is a portent of future evil which all who love their country should strive to prevent. Industrially, too, the same tendency to brutal suppression of "labour unrest" observable nearer home is manifest in every strike. The workers are treated as though of a coarser clay, pre-destined, it would seem, to be hewers of wood and drawers of water for those of finer grain.

Here in England, long famed as the home of Liberty, it has with sorrow to be recorded that now there is actually less liberty permitted to the common people than was enjoyed by them so recently as the year before the war: the war, by the way, which was said to be a war for liberty! The significant and ugly thing to-day, as we see it, is the sneering references

to "Liberty," so common with many of our politicians; Labour, Liberal and Tory alike. The once great powerful Liberal Party, the especial custodian of individual liberty, has almost passed away. So much—or little?—of it as remains is permeated with the anti-Liberal notions and spirit of Socialism, and in all its proposals of recent times we see the same paternalism, the same plans for control and interference with the right of the individual to manage his own affairs common to all schools of Socialist thought. It is a gloomy prospect. To what is it due?

As we see it, it is the inevitable outcome of the fundamental injustice at the base of all civilisations. The truth that all men are born with an equal right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, is ignored, and in practice denied. A false philosophy of ownership, which fails to distinguish between what is by nature *common* property and, therefore, cannot properly be held as *private* property, and that which is by nature *private* property and, therefore, cannot properly be held as *common* property, lies at the root of these present discontents. We who have seen the great truth that Henry George made so clear to the world, know the cause of the evil conditions—conditions which cannot do other than grow steadily worse because their cause still operates—know, also, the remedy. To us is given the high privilege and responsibility to seek, to the extent of our ability and opportunity, to carry the message of deliverance to a tortured world whose peoples everywhere are rightly struggling to be free. It is our mission to proclaim Liberty to the captives in this modern Egypt; to tell these bond-slaves that there is no need to ask of the Pharaoh that he should let them go, for the reason that the doors of the economic compounds in which the slaves are herded swing *inwards*, and can be opened by the prisoners themselves whenever they will.

Who is for Liberty? Liberty that is not limited—for that would not be Liberty. Liberty that must come all at once, not by stages, for, again, that would not be Liberty. The acceptance by the slaves of anything less than immediate and full Liberty would be a danger tending to prolong their enslavement at the hands of Privilege.

As followers of Henry George, we know that the cause of the economic slavery at the base of present-day society is the fundamental injustice of the private "ownership" of land. We know, too, that where land is free, men are free also. That where land is half-free, men will be half-free, which is the same as being wholly enslaved; for a freedom that is even 99 per cent. free is still less than freedom and, therefore, slavery. If it should be argued that Liberty can be gained by compromising with the slave-owners, we reply that Liberty can never be the subject of bargaining. Each man owes it to himself to demand his right to life; not to go cringing cap in hand to some other man to beg of him a little more freedom. He who would do that is unworthy to be free. So, seeing as we do that the claim to "own" land is at the root of our enslavement, we refuse to discuss anything short of the immediate restoration of all land, and without any compensation. Liberty cannot be bought, for it is priceless.

The C.L.P. are for Liberty, and resolutely decline to entertain any suggestion for moderation or compromise, believing that:—

He either fears his fate too much, or his deserts are small,
Who fears to put it to the touch, and win or lose it all.

J. W. G. P.

**WE DEMAND EVERY PENNY OF OUR NATIONAL LAND RENT RIGHT NOW.
NO INSTALMENTS!**

The International Conference, Denmark, July 20—30, 1926.

To the delegates to the International Conference for the promotion of the Taxation of Land Values and Free Trade, at Copenhagen, July 19th to July 30th, 1926. Greetings.

The C.L.P. of England, together with the delegates from the C.L.P. of the United States, are proceeding to Denmark full of hope that they can contribute something towards the unification of the Henry George movement, and to the establishment of a true Internationale.

The delegates have one great regret, and that is that, owing to ill-health, they do not number amongst them R. L. Outhwaite, who has done so much with voice and pen to forward the Cause of Freedom.

The conveners of the Conference state as the reason of the Conference the desire of the followers of Henry George to promote the Taxation of Land Values and Free Trade. In the statement, adopted by the International Conference at Oxford in 1923, and now issued for the guidance of Conference Members, this declaration was made:—

“That until measures are taken to stop the private appropriation of the rent of land, all remedies currently relied upon for improving social conditions are incapable of achieving their purpose.”

With this statement the C.L.P. are in full agreement; also with the following recommendation advocated as a principle of universal application:—

“That the equal right to land be established and the full fruits of industry be secured to industry by devoting the rent of the land to the uses of the Community and by abolishing the enforced tariffs, the taxes on improvements, and other fiscal burdens which penalise the production and exchange of wealth.”

It was pointed out at the Conference at Oxford that this statement covered the Henry George doctrine, and it was urged that they were expressions of principles to which every Henry George man would fully agree.

The C.L.P. endeavoured to point out the importance of using the correct words to express the ideas they were seeking to promulgate. Experience has shown that, presented as a taxation problem, a mere fiscal reform, the issue is confusing, and the appeal to the sense of justice which must be made before the reform can be instituted properly, largely fails. As the President of the English League of the Taxation of Land Values says:—“It is the wrong name for the right thing.” The C.L.P. attach very great importance to plain language being used to express the Henry George doctrine.

Dr. Dundas White, in a recent book, has shown how the collection of the economic rent of land, which is what is meant by the “taxation of land values,” is not the operation of a tax at all, and the use of the word “taxation,” as well as the recommendation that was made, that such taxation should be dual in its character, and be levied by both National and Local Authorities everywhere, is declared by Dr. White to be a confusing and inefficient policy. Indeed, Dr. White goes so far as to say that it is extremely probable that the use of this word “taxation,” which does not correctly represent the thought that is in the minds of the users, has hindered the progress of the cause everywhere. No one believes, or says, that those who advocate and promote the taxation of land values do not earnestly desire to stop the private appropriation of the rent of land; they publicly declare they do, and we believe them. They have worked too devotedly for 40 years endeavouring to interest people in the Henry George doctrine as a taxation problem, and the C.L.P. fully recognise that the world, through their efforts, has had its attention drawn to the fundamental principle that private property in land is an immorality of far greater hurtfulness than private property in chattel slaves.

With all this in mind, and having in mind also the actual fact that so long as there is a speculative value left in land there will be those who will speculate in it and perpetuate the evils we seek to destroy, and as a result of over seven years' practical experience trying to spread the gospel of Henry George among the people of England, the C.L.P. have long

arrived at the conclusion that at this juncture in the world's history it would be highly desirable that the International Conference in Denmark should issue a new statement to which no such exception can be taken. The C.L.P., therefore, have prepared, and had signed by various local bodies of Henry George men, a statement setting forth what in their opinion are the true rights of men. In the great and noble Declaration of Independence issued by English Colonists, in what is now the United States, the self-evident truths of the equality of right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness were stated in a manner which has held the imagination of the world. It is not necessary to go into reasons, but the C.L.P. are of opinion that the inference from the assertion of equality of right to life has not been drawn correctly, and has been disregarded entirely by those politicians who have undertaken to rule and govern the world. They consider, therefore that the inference should also be plainly stated. Equality of life without equality of access to the means of life is a meaningless mockery.

The C.L.P. earnestly desire the Danish Conference to come out plainly on this question, and to make no reference whatever to any problem of taxation. Whatever taxation of land values has been established anywhere in the world, is the work of legislatures which have not been wholly convinced, and speculation in land is still as great an evil as it was in the days when Henry George first denounced it.

With the elimination of the words “Tax” and “Taxation,” and the substitution of “The Economic Rent,” the C.L.P. would find themselves in complete agreement with the declaration made at Oxford, and our delegates are proceeding to Denmark in the hope that what we consider an error will be rectified by an International Conference animated by the spirit of brotherhood and thoroughly agreed on the two great principles which Henry George laboured to make clear, viz.:—

1. That Private Property in land is immoral, and the private appropriation of its rent must be stopped.
2. That the sacred right of personal property, the result of the labour of man's hands, should be secured to everybody.

The other declaration of man's rights, made by the French Assembly in 1789, is not complete and has never attracted the attention that the American declaration did and does.

The C.L.P. urge this Conference to make a third declaration of rights, and suggest the model. They are persuaded that every possible point that can be urged is treated in that declaration, that the principles upon which society can endure and prosper peaceably are there stated clearly and unmistakably. The Declaration makes no reference whatever to many things which are of great interest, such as War, Banking, Free Trade and other usual subjects of discussion, believing that once the Declaration is understood, and private property in land and all taxation abolished by the collection in full of the economic rent of the land everywhere, the other questions referred to will settle themselves naturally and justly.

The C.L.P. have been told again and again, “You are clearly right, but it will not settle everything.” The reply is: “The establishment of Justice we urge will settle every problem that has arisen as the result of the injustice upon which the present social order is founded; that is all the C.L.P. claim for it.”

The C.L.P. declare as emphatically as possible that they have no quarrel with any man who believes in and is working for the acceptance of the Henry George principles. To collect the economic rent, they wish to urge, is not to “Tax”; to collect a *part* of the economic rent is not something which is wrong, but for Henry George men even to seem to acquiesce in partial Justice is most decidedly to delay its coming. They repeat again that their earnest desire at this International Conference in Denmark is to get a thoroughly harmonious but clear expression of the truths for which we all stand, and for which we are all working, and to leave all reference to taxation to those who will continue to oppose any instalments of Justice as strenuously as they would oppose the demand for complete Justice.

THE COMMONWEAL.

We, therefore, put before this Committee a new statement which has been signed by our colleagues in the United States, the Argentine, New Zealand, and which has a number of supporters in Australia also, and a copy of which is appended hereto.

In this connection, and with a view to securing its friendly reception at the hands of the Conference, the C.L.P. venture to quote from that passionate lover of freedom and devoted worker for the Cause of Henry George—R. L. Outhwaite:—

“Force, the agent of disharmony, by the private appropriation of the Earth, has made economic slavery almost universal and brought desolation upon the world. The Evangel that the peoples need is one that will harmonise with Natural Law, that of the brotherhood of mankind delivered to the world two thousand years ago. *Such an evangel was given to the oppressed by Henry George*, but the message of deliverance which he gave to the people has already suffered the fate of Christianity. It has been taken from the people by the pundits and politicians, leaving those to whom it was delivered bereft of hope. The peoples sit in darkness and in the valley of the shadow of death in life. *The hour has come to rear for them the beacon light of Truth*. All unavailing is the tallow-dip in the storm. A beacon fire is needed which the storm that is coming upon the world will not put out, but cause to burn the brighter to guide the shipwrecked into haven. The truth that Henry George proclaimed has been verified by the passage of the years; the prophecy that he made has been fulfilled in the reversion of the world to barbarism. The world awaits a new Declaration of Emancipation to complement the old which affirmed that all men are born with an ‘equal right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.’ For the fulfilment of which it needs to be added that ‘and all men are born with an equal right to the Earth.’ Through the denial of this inherent right, Empires and civilisation have fallen, as their records show that have been rescued from the dust.

“Only by the assertion of this right can the peoples avert the similar fate that is now in the making for themselves. When man-made law no longer subverts the Natural Law, when the common heritage wrested by Force from mankind is restored to mankind, then, and not till then, will man come by the fulfilment of his desires. Then, and not till then, will his feet be set in the broad way to his high destiny. Then, and not till then, will he come by Happiness. To proclaim this simple truth is to bring hope to the disinherited and the oppressed; and with the restoration of Hope all can be accomplished.

“Those who will the end must also will the means of accomplishment. If the end aimed at be the emancipation of mankind from slavery, the means must accord with that high aim. This great cause must be lifted out of the political gutters, taken from the priests and pundits who seek to make its presentation accord with the convenience of politicians. It is vain to think that the day will be won by cunning. The slave-owners will not be placated by such tactics, the slaves will be disheartened. Faith should not be placed in the guile of politicians, but in the yearning of man for Freedom, in the fierce resolve that will one day come to burst out of the torture chamber. These are days in which Europe is being recast. In every direction triumphant reaction is busy seeking to secure that in the aftermath of war the foundation-stone of slavery shall be better and more truly laid. This the people dimly realise, but in their impotence consent with the passivity of despair. But now is the hour to raise the standard of Freedom. Now is the hour to demand justice unqualified. Now is the hour to proclaim the Natural Rights of Man and to secure their assertion in full through the Restoration of Man to equal partnership with Nature.”

The C.L.P. earnestly hope that this representative, important International Conference, will take this view of the necessities of the case, and proclaim to the world as clearly and forcibly as R. L. Outhwaite has proclaimed it, the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE RIGHTS OF MAN.

Whereas the Political and Economic worlds have been guided into chaos by almost universal adherence to a wrong theory and philosophy of ownership both of the Earth and the Wealth produced by labour from it; which wrong theory Henry George opposed by a theory which conforms in every way to Natural Law and common sense, and when adopted will lead to the swift establishment of Justice in the relations between individuals and their only means of Life;

Be it resolved by the International Conference of the followers of Henry George assembled at Copenhagen that the following Statement of Principles contains the true theory of Life and Politics, as made clear by Henry George, and that it be circulated as widely as possible amongst all the Peoples of the world, and their Rulers or Leaders for the time being, as a new statement of the “Rights of Man,” supplementing the statements of 1775 and 1789.

This Conference declares anew the inalienable right of every human being to Life (including equality of opportunity of access to the means of Life), Liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and demands the restoration of these rights, which can be made speedily by peaceful political action through the ballot, and it warns the world that if it be not so made, the alternatives are more deprivation of liberty under the guise of “Socialism,” or futile attempts to bring about a just distribution of wealth by physical and bloody revolution.

The Conference believes these rights can be set forth as follows:—

1. Every human being, by the mere fact of “being,” has an equal and inalienable right to life (and therefore to access to the means of life), and a liberty bounded only by a like liberty of every other human being.
2. No legal enactment can deprive any human being of these inalienable rights, even with the consent of the individual; they are always and forever inalienable.
3. No human being, therefore, can have or obtain any exclusive right to ownership of the Earth, the source of all sustenance, the mother of all wealth. It is always and forever the inalienable property of all its inhabitants.
4. Security of tenure and exclusive occupation (**not ownership**) of portions of the Earth are necessary for the better production, transportation, and exchange of those things (wealth) upon which mankind depends.
5. Security of tenure and exclusive occupation of portions of the Earth can be in conformity with the natural inalienable equal rights of all, only if:

The value of such exclusive occupation is taken annually by an Authority representing the whole Community, and expended by that Authority in the service of and for the benefit of the whole Community. This value is **Rent** (or economic rent), and the measure of it is the difference in desirability, from any cause, of any portion of the Earth, as compared with the least desirable portion.

6. This **Rent**, or value of the bare site, appears as the result of the presence of human beings, and grows with the growth of the population.
7. The collection of this **Rent** for private use (as at present) is a denial of the right of access to the means of Life: a denial of the justice of equality of opportunity: and has no sanction in equity or in natural (or moral) Law. It is, in fact, the assertion by some of a greater right to Life and Liberty than that right which should be enjoyed by all.
8. This denial of the equality of the right to Life has led to a denial of the real right of property in the things produced by labour, viz.:

The imposition of unequal, unjust, arbitrary taxation on Industry, to meet public needs, on the principle that “Necessity knows no Law,” which is the denial of the right of the producer of wealth to retain it for his or her own use. This denial of the right

TAXATION.

of property, together with the failure to collect for public use the annual value created by the public, is the real cause of wars, revolutions, involuntary poverty, and most of the disease and crime of the world.

9. The **Rent** created by the Community is sufficient in normal times, under just conditions, to meet the expenses of the public services, and to enable the managers of the public business to take care of the incompetent and the old, and to provide educational facilities for all alike—not as charity or benevolence, but as mere Justice.
10. No generation can bind a following one, and it is the right and duty of the living to do Justice, even if some who profit by unjust conditions suffer hardship.
11. No legislative enactments of the past that are contrary to the natural Law of simple Justice can be regarded by the living as valid; if there are any such, they should be ignored or repealed.
12. No human being can purchase or otherwise acquire any valid title to the right to exact toll from other human beings in exchange for permission to use the Earth. All claims to such, or for pecuniary compensation on the part of individuals claiming to "own" the Earth, for loss of power to confiscate public rent, as above defined, should be denied.
13. Whoever exercises labour on land after opportunities are equalised by the collection of the **Rent** of the bare land for the public Treasury, has an exclusive right to all the products of such labour, free from any arbitrary, confiscatory deductions by officials.
14. Proposals for the control of human activities by the State or Government are in the direction of economic slavery; any such, and any interference with the right of the individual to self-development and self-sustenance, are no substitutes for a freedom based on the foregoing principles and leading to a natural and voluntary extension of the co-operation under which alone Society can peacefully endure and prosper.

For the Commonwealth Land Party, Great Britain:—

H. J. BULLIVANT.	J. W. GRAHAM PEACE,
E. J. COOPER.	<i>Secretary.</i>
H. H. W. DRUITT.	GERTRUDE L. A. PEACE.
T. C. FRANCIS.	E. MARY PEARSON.
JOHN E. GRANT.	RICHARD E. PEARSON.
J. W. MARSH.	S. VERE PEARSON.
LETTICE NEWMAN.	E. RICHMOND.
R. L. OUTHWAITE.	M. WARRINER.
WM. C. OWEN.	F. A. WILMER.

For the Commonwealth Land Party, Ohio, U.S.A.:—

JAMES BRUCE LINDSAY, *Chairman.*

For the Commonwealth Land Party, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.:—

R. C. MACAULEY, *Chairman.*
CHARLES J. SCHOALES, *Secretary.*

For the Commonwealth Land Party, New York State:—

LAURENCE W. TRACY, *Chairman.*

GEORGE LLOYD.	M. VAN VEEN.
CHARLOTTE O. SCHETTER.	WM. J. WALLACE.

For New Zealand:—

R. H. CHAPPELL.	HENRY J. NIGHTINGALE.
GEO. FOWLDS.	RALPH E. TAYLOR.
C. H. MCLEAN.	J. JULLEY THOMAS.
G. N. FOWLDS (JR.).	WM. WHITE, J.P.
C. H. NIGHTINGALE.	

For the Partido Liberal Georgista, Buenos Aires:—

C. VILLALOBOS DOMINGUEZ, *President.*
WIFREDO SOLA, *General Secretary.*

HENRI LEEMANS.	EMILIO FERRERES.
ALBERTO A. DE LIMA.	JACINTO ORELLANO.
C. AGUILAR BECERRA.	MARCELO MASTRANGELO.
ENRIQUE VERA.	NICOLAS LIENDO.
MANUEL MASEGOZA.	

The late Lord Morley said that taxation and religion were always two fruitful causes of revolution. He probably meant that intolerance about religion led to disturbance. Most people would agree that a complete tolerance and freedom in religious opinion should replace intolerance, and one fruitful cause of revolution be removed, but we believe that taxation—the more fruitful cause, should be abolished also. There are no willing taxpayers, none who would not be delighted to feel that what was rightly theirs was secured to them, free from any depredations of burglar or of Governments. Taxation is the taking of private wealth. Governments exist mainly for the purpose of making life and property secure from the burglar or thief. They do it by taking the property from its possessor to any extent deemed necessary—necessity which, as we all know, knows no law, being the defence. Very few believe there is a quite moral and legitimate method of collecting the wealth necessary for the maintenance of "law and order," and for the provision of the public services, the management expenses of those things which are the common concern of all. Most people seem quite ignorant that there is a community-produced value ready at hand for this purpose now being collected privately—hence the defence "necessity" is accepted as valid until taxation deprives citizens of too much of their property and revolution threatens if it does not actually break out. A worse system of raising revenue for public services could not be devised than that now operated by all so-called civilised communities. It was not devised, unless that religious sect which believes that Satan was given charge of the world some thousands of years ago, is right. Only some arch-enemy of man could have consciously devised a system so calculated to lead to man's undoing. It was not devised, it grew up out of man's ignorance, and remains because of his ignorance. Mr. Lloyd George, speaking at Rhyl on July 9th, is reported to have said that our civilisation is founded on injustice and cannot last. The Bishop of Salisbury is reported as saying that the nation must be "driven" to prayer before the existing conditions will be improved. The bishop suggests that we close our eyes and hope for the best. Foolish advice, even if he believes Satan does rule the world. Mr. Lloyd George is correct and repeating truism. It is a pity he did not specify the injustice on which he believes society is founded. He well knows that it is the private ownership of the Earth. It is not so clear that he knows that it is also the evil thing that must follow the private ownership of the Earth, viz., the insecurity and theft of private property in the wealth produced from the Earth. It seems reasonable to suppose that as some portion of the wealth produced must be used to maintain those who are set apart to manage the public affairs, to keep the people's accounts, to plan and make the people's roads, to light and police them, that it makes very little difference, if any, what system is employed. The wealth will have to be taken from the producer of it. That is a lazy conclusion, and until the people take the trouble to examine the question a little more closely and with a greater desire to substitute Justice for Society's foundation, instead of the injustice of which Mr. Lloyd George speaks, there can be no alteration of any consequence.

It makes all the difference how the public revenue is raised. If it cannot be raised without the unblushing denial of the right of private possession of wealth, it ought not to be raised. There can be no excuse for failure to follow fundamental moral law in this matter, and no escape from the penalty. This society is suffering and will continue to suffer as long as the offence continues. Chancellors everywhere proceed according to precedent. Attempts at laying down canons of taxation have been made by economists for generations—the most generally accepted being the particularly foolish one, that it should be based on "ability to pay." The argument is interminable. Is

direct taxation—the open forcible extraction of the citizen's money—if he has any ability to pay, or indirect taxation the best method?

Your money or your life in the one case, or as the article in the Encyclopædia puts it, "The process of bleeding to death." Which do you prefer—that you should be robbed by force, or be the victim of a sneak thief of whose operations you are not fully conscious?

Look at the United States, the richest country on Earth, and probably the furthest from revolution. Its citizens, compared with those of England, are said to be lightly "taxed." Yet we cull from the press from every part of the country severe criticisms and complaints as to taxation. To say nothing of the confused inheritance tax situation, in which all considerations of morality are thrown to the winds, writers speak of the present business taxation as a "plague." Not so much so on account of the amount collected, although that "challenges the best thought of legislators." They won't accept the challenge, however, until the citizens are more unitedly determined to compel them to do so.

The 48 States in the union each have their own taxing power, and there is, of course, endless variety in the methods and forms to be returned by the victims.

There is no variety, however, in the principle observed, which is the same everywhere; find out how much wealth the victim has, and take as much of it as you require without driving him to falsehood and tax dodging. Don't go to extremes, or he may get wise and rebellious, and imagine that he has a right to keep his money, if it is honestly his, and this would be the beginning of trouble. One case is typical. One corporation filed over 200 reports for itself and subsidiaries doing business in more than 25 States. A special tax department has to be maintained to deal with the returns which must be made, including franchise, license, excise, capital, stock returns, annual reports, lists of stockholders, and all information as to transfers of stock. It had to file in addition, in various States, lists of employees, and in some cases had to act as tax collector of personal income tax required by the States and federal authorities from its employees.

Accountants, statisticians, lawyers (of course) and engineers are employed by many companies to prepare returns and to make them as little as possible within the limits of the law. It is stated that many of these departments often cost several hundred thousand dollars, in addition to the taxes, which are finally paid—sometimes after years of argument. They are rich in the U.S., but thus is their substance, taken from them and largely wasted.

Land values have increased from around \$50,000,000,000 in 1876 to more than \$170,000,000,000 in 1926. The suggestion is that 5 per cent. annually on the value of the land in the U.S. would produce \$8,500,000,000. As the U.S. federal budget is around \$4,000,000,000, it is seriously suggested that the annual rental value of the bare land is enough to provide all the public revenue necessary for both the Federal and State authorities.

Why don't the citizens insist upon sweeping away the immoral, unscientific and oppressive system of taxation based upon the claim of the State to take what the Government likes from the citizens, and the substitution of the just, scientific and beneficial system which it is the glory of perhaps the greatest American who ever lived to have explained to the world? Because they do not know about it, and politicians there and everywhere else are also blind or ignorant of the true method of raising the public revenue.

When it is remembered that the rental value of land is the creation of the community as a whole, and not the creation of any single individual, it ought to be clear that its collection is not a tax robbery of private property—is not open to any of the objections urged, and rightly urged, against "taxation."

X.

WHAT ABOUT IT?

Liberal Women and Land.

"Liberal women are determined to make the new Liberal Land Policy an effective political weapon," says the *Daily News*. That's just the trouble, but they do not see it. It is devised as a "political weapon," and one which is to be "effective" in the interests of the Liberal Party. No Land Policy framed for so mean and narrow a purpose as that can be of any assistance to the landless. The cause of human freedom is far greater than the interests of any political party, but the politicians get an inverted view. With them it is ever the interests of the party, and all Liberal, Labour, and Tory policies are framed with a single eye to the likely effect upon the fortunes of the party and of the place-hunting adventurers who hang on to its fringe.

At their conference the Liberal Women carried a resolution—"with only a few dissentients"—urging the Party to put its united energy into the Land Policy campaign. This was moved by Mrs. Francis Acland, who said the first considerations were a "living wage" for the labourer and his right to have a bit of land for himself. Here we see the Liberals committing themselves to the servile, whining plea of the Socialists—a "living wage"! The labourer has an equal right with the Aclands to those 39,897 acres of this country which they call theirs. It is an insult on the part of those who are keeping the labourers in poverty to talk to them of a "living wage." Who is to determine what this is? Let the Aclands and other Liberal Land Lords pay rent to the community for "their" acres, and the labourers would quickly secure, not a miserable "living" wage, but the natural wage which is the due reward of every labourer, viz., the whole of his product. The only real Land Policy is that of the C.L.P. Immediate restoration of all land. And no bargaining with Land Lords!

A Tragedy of Civilisation.

"Suicide whilst of unsound mind" was the verdict at an inquest at Poplar, on Monday. The subject was one, John Relph, aged 73, who had been "depressed through being out of employment." Such a thing could happen only in a civilised community! Were it not for the robbery of labour due to land monopoly, every worker could make ample provision for his old age, and unemployment would have no terrors for one who had passed the allotted span.

Golden Land of London.

The site of 28, Brook Street, London, W., has just been sold for £9 15s. per square foot. This is at the rate of £424,710 per acre, at which figure the holder would pay a rental of £21,235 10s. yearly into the Common Land-Rent Fund proposed by the C.L.P. One such acre would yield as much in rent as 8,494 small holders each with a 5-acre holding of good land at 10s. per acre rent. In this way the high land rent of the towns, which is created and maintained by the rural dweller as well as by his brother of the city, would be brought into contribution to the public services on the countryside. Rates could be abolished entirely, and new, wider, and better roads built and maintained from a Common Fund into which every citizen would put his quota of land-rent.

Our "Voluntary" Army.

Because they could not obtain relief from the Guardians, over 200 young unmarried miners have joined the Army, it was stated at the Cannock Guardians meeting last Friday.

In theory, the British Army is recruited upon a voluntary basis; in fact, the majority of the men join up because they are compelled by pressure of economic circumstances. Those die-hard Land Lords who think to rely upon the Army to defeat the demand of the C.L.P. may get a rude awakening from their dream, for the present Army is a thinking one, and soldiers can appreciate the fact that we seek freedom, not for a class, but for all.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO SIGN THE SAME.

THE COMMONWEAL.

Independence Day.

July 4th marked the 150th anniversary of the American Declaration of Independence. In a leader upon the subject, the *Daily Chronicle* said: "American civilisation has come nearer to our own again." Certainly it has, and for the same reason. There is a "housing problem" over there, unemployment is not unknown, poverty as acute as anything to be found in this old country, exists in American cities; appeals for playing fields for the tenement-dwellers are published in the American Press. The farmers are suffering from the same blighting influence that afflicts the English countryside. Intolerance of opinion threatens liberty of speech just as with us, but there is nothing remarkable in all this. American civilisation is not based upon the Declaration of Independence, but upon the same unjust foundation of special privilege and monopoly that lies at the root of our social order. Like causes will ever produce like effects, and a civilisation founded upon the denial of the equal right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness carries within itself the seeds of its own destruction. Where there are Land Lords there is no independence for the landless—or the Land Lords!

A Disgrace to Civilisation.

Sir Kingsley Wood, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health, told the delegates to the Fourth Conference on Maternity and Child Welfare that: "Mr. Chamberlain hopes this year to make some fresh proposals to Parliament to deal with village housing; next year he hopes to make new proposals to facilitate slum clearances."

Hope springs eternal in the politician's breast, it would seem. Mr. Chamberlain's other proposals having failed of effect, he "hopes" to make some fresh ones. That is as far as he will ever get since he will not go down to the root of the evil. Sir Kingsley Wood is as blind as the rest of them. In the same speech he said: "Many of the evils of to-day are due to bad housing and especially to slums." But to what is "bad housing" due? If the Secretary would seek an answer to that question he might be in a position to advise his Parliamentary chief.

Slum Clearances Good for Land Lords.

Bad housing will never be eradicated by slum clearances, for these methods make bad housing a paying proposition for the slum-lords, who have nothing to do but wait until the evil becomes so acute that action is taken and millions of public money poured into their pockets as compensation. Make the slum-lords pay full rent for the land upon which their filthy hovels stand, and they will quickly carry through slum-clearances on their own account without coming upon the public for a penny of the cost. Invariably the value of the land is greater than the value of the wretched dwellings upon it. Collect that value, and the slum-lord stands to lose money every moment he delays his clearance scheme.

Blow to Steel Trade.

The secretary of the London Iron and Steel Exchange, in his weekly report, says:—"For all practical purposes the British iron and steel trades have ceased to be competitors in the world's markets for iron and steel, owing to the lack of fuel resulting from the coal strike.

"Business amounting to over 20,000 tons is reported to have been placed by British shipbuilders with Continental makers owing to their inability to obtain British material."

Of course, the stoppage of industry due to the present coal lock-out—not strike—is causing immense harm to British interests, but this is a temporary stoppage. What of the harm caused to the British steel trade by the burden of local rates to which United Steel Companies, Ltd., called public attention recently? Their Counsel said in court that the rates, which in 1914 were under 6d. per ton on each ton of finished steel, had now risen to over 6s. per ton. The Iron and Steel Exchange might with advantage to its members give some attention to this particular handicap to our trade. It has a bearing on the question of lost contracts: 6s. per ton on the steel used in building a ship may well mean the loss of much work which but for this fine would come to this country.

Secret of High Wages.

At a luncheon to the authors of the recently published book on this subject, Mr. Philip Snowden said: "The Trade Union idea in the past—and to a very great extent to-day—has been one of antagonism to the employers. Now we have got to change all that. . . . I would like to see the Trade Union policy changed in this respect, that the Trade Unions would not be merely concerned, regardless of the condition of the industry, in getting the highest possible wages they can screw out of industry, but rather helping to make industry thoroughly efficient, so that the most will be there out of which the highest wages can be paid."

Mr. Snowden should know that increased efficiency in industry spells increased land value. So, too, will higher wages unless first things be done first. The authors of the book in question confirm this in their reference to the effect of the high wages paid by Henry Ford in Detroit. The immediate effect of his decision to pay errand-boys £1 a day was shown in a great rise in rent within a wide radius of the Ford works. Notwithstanding its title, the book does not disclose the secret of high wages.

Church and Wages.

Anglo-Catholics are the latest to take up the cry of a "Living Wage." It is one of the subjects for discussion at their Congress. We can only repeat that such a cry is the whine of slaves. To the worker belongs of moral right the whole of his product. That is his wage; and he should claim it without regard to cost of living or any other consideration whatever. No man has any right to secure the labour of another for less than its full value. The spectacle of the I.L.P. going out on a campaign for "Socialism in Our Time," having emblazoned on their banners this miserable whine is enough to make Keir Hardie turn in his grave.

The Secret Out!

In an interview given to the *New York Evening World*, Sir Bruce Bruce-Porter, the eminent medical authority, said: "Ill-health is undoubtedly at the bottom of the majority of our troubles to-day. If we could only establish a higher standard of health throughout the world there would, in my opinion, be fewer disagreements between employers and employees, and fewer talks about strikes and lock-outs." The eminent doctor adds, near the conclusion of the interview: "Ignorance of the proper food to eat and the proper way to live is at the root of the trouble. A good deal, of course, is also due to bad housing conditions and actual poverty. People living under bad conditions, not getting enough food, and existing from hand to mouth, produce delicate and often neurotic children."

All of which is quite true, but we profoundly disagree with the remedy, hinted at rather than openly declared: "In the animal world and among savage tribes, the unfit are ruthlessly destroyed," he reminds us.

Sir Bruce Stops Short.

The trouble with Sir Bruce is that affecting so many of our publicists. He stops short of going to the root. Ill-health and bad or under-feeding he puts first. Bad housing and actual poverty are mentioned as "also-rans." Surely he has got it all inverted? Is it not the fact that actual poverty is the cause of under-feeding? Are not both poverty and bad housing conditions due to the monopoly of the source of both food and houses—the land? When will these "scientists" apply a modicum of science to their search for causes? Throw open to the labour of the people the natural resources contained in the land and there will be an end to actual poverty, bad housing conditions, and ill-health arising therefrom.

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By J. W. GRAHAM PEACE.

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A Cramped Vision.

Mr. C. T. Cramp, Industrial Secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen, speaking at the N.U.R. Conference at Weymouth, is reported by the *Daily Herald* to have said: "Unemployment was inherent in the capitalist system, and he did not believe any person, no matter to what political party he belonged, could abolish the evil. It had its ever-recurring cycles. He questioned whether the present Parliamentary machine could deal with the situation. It was not so much Socialism and Socialists who would have to deal with the problem, but scientists. It was not the class struggle alone, but struggle against the forces of nature, and it would be necessary to review the scientific facts of the situation. The central problem was how to get food and air. The land in the hands of deer-stalkers, especially in Scotland, should be given to the people to live on."

Here the *Daily Herald* report breaks off, so we had to turn to the "capitalist Press" in order to get the rest of Mr. Cramp's words. The *Daily Chronicle* supplies them: "To-day, land in Great Britain was largely going out of cultivation, but whether it was capable of keeping the whole population, even if it were tilled, was a matter which required scientific investigation. Our land laws ought to be revised and the land restored to the people."

A Losing Struggle.

If Mr. Cramp is right, and it is a "struggle against the forces of nature," then we had better submit quietly, for man is not stronger than nature, and so must inevitably be beaten. Happily, it is not any such thing. Unemployment is not due to nature at all; it is due to man's ignorant interference with nature. All employment—and we speak only of productive employment—is just the application of labour to land. Nature has supplied abundant land; and that land is inexhaustible because indestructible. But man is foolish enough to be persuaded by some other man that what nature has supplied for all can be "owned" by some. Hence we see idle men, but not all of us see idle land as the sole originating cause. Mr. Cramp got near *the* solution in his reference to the "deer-stalkers of Scotland," but he slipped off the track when he spoke of "giving" the land to the people to live on, if by that he intended to confine the reference to the Scottish deer forests. We are pleased to see from the second report we quote that he was safely back upon the main line once more when he said the land must "be restored to the people." This is the right line, and the only safe one; but to restore, we would remind him, is to "give back." No "purchase" nonsense about it! To give back to the whole people, at once, and without any compensation. This is the only just way.

Land the Fulcrum.

An American reader who is a keen student of affairs writes of the late strike: "I am thankful that Churchill and his belligerent friends failed to precipitate a clash between the troops and the strikers. Trade Unionism comes out of the contest in its usual bedraggled condition, but the admirable restraint shown by the strikers is an indication of their latent strength. When they find out that the land is the fulcrum they need to raise themselves to a higher level, the politicians will be like chaff in a gale."

Lloyd George Going to Russia?

It appears that Mr. Lloyd George, our Socialist Liberal who says he is not a Socialist yet proposes nothing but Socialist measures, is to visit Russia to study the situation in that country. What does this portend? His last trip for a similar object was to Prussia in the early nineties, and upon his return he split the Liberals over his Socialistic Insurance Scheme. We may yet see him advocating a Dictatorship.

Radicals Not Wanted.

At a meeting of Liberals in London, called to consider the proposed formation of a Radical League, the proceedings "were very stormy, and the resolution was rejected by a large majority," says the *Daily News*. There is no place for a Radical in the Liberal Party of to-day. Alone of all political parties, the C.L.P. goes direct to the root and is, therefore, the true Radical Party. Unattached Radicals, please note.

What Is A Radical?

Asking this question, a reader of the *Daily News* says in a letter to the editor: "The general opinion in the Liberal Party seems to be that if you are nearly, but not quite, a Socialist, then you may use the term 'Radical' as a description." Such a belief is only possible when we forget that the fundamental philosophy of the Radicals was a philosophy of human rights, individual liberty and social justice. It had nothing whatever to do with the nationalisation of Industry, or bureaucratic control, or interference with the liberty of the subject, which is the underlying philosophy of Socialism."

This is a timely reminder of their danger, which should be a warning to those Liberals who are being led astray by the under-hand activities of the Fabian-Socialists, so many of whom are now in the front rank of the "experts" who are advising Lloyd George to his destruction.

Holding the Field.

"The Liberal proposals still hold the field," said Mr. Lloyd George, at Rhyl. If this were true, it would not amount to much, for there is nothing in the Liberal proposals that need cause any alarm to the few Land Lords who hold our fields. Instead of challenging their unjust claim, the proposals of Mr. Lloyd George admit it, and seek to provide compensation.

"The Liberal Party proposed that the freehold should gradually be secured," he told the farmers. Freedom for farmers will never come that way. As William Lloyd Garrison once asked: "Has not the experience of two centuries shown that gradualism in theory is perpetuity in practice?"

British Empire Union and "Confiscation."

We are favoured by this organisation of super-patriots with a copy of a petition to Mr. Stanley Baldwin, Prime Minister, in which he is urged to do quite a lot of things. No 8 hours' day for him, seemingly! Poor Mr. Baldwin is to get out after "alien-Communists," and other strange creatures existing very largely in the disordered imagination of the ladies and gentlemen composing the B.E.U.

"The confiscation of property of British citizens without compensation" is regarded by the petitioners as a serious offence—when it is committed by the Russian Government. The petition is signed, "Queenborough," Chairman, and in a covering note the secretary tells us his "Board of Management would be grateful for any editorial reference you can make to this important subject." Well, it's nice of him to say so, and we hope his Board will appreciate that we have done our best to oblige.

Quite an "imposing" list of "Past Presidents" heads the notepaper, and this, no doubt, explains the absence of all mention of the "confiscation of property of British citizens" now being practised by some of those whose names adorn the sheet before us. Take the Duke of Grafton. This gentleman has got his hands upon 25,773 acres of the land belonging to the citizens, and we should be pleased to hear from him just what useful service he renders to the community for that rent-roll of some £80,000 yearly, "confiscated" by him as a Land Lord. With him, as the lawyers say, is the Earl of Derby. He ought to talk of confiscation! 69,942 acres is his little lot, with a rent-roll of not less than £500,000 a year. The wicked Russians are but children in the art of "confiscation" compared to our "Empire Unionists." There is no sickening hypocrisy about the Bolshies; much as we detest and are opposed to all their methods, for at least they do not pretend to be moralists. Other lesser-known peers are on the list, but the samples we have given will serve to show what is to be expected from that quarter. When British citizens get wise they will put an end to the "Confiscation" and humbug of our "Landed Aristocracy."

The Future of Civilisation.

The Rev. A. E. Jarvis, Chaplain-General to H.M. Forces, thinks "the whole future of civilisation depends upon our belief."

The future depends, not upon beliefs, but upon freedom—mental, physical and economic—and the greatest of these is economic.

Empire Prosperity (?)

From Wellington, New Zealand, under date July 8, comes word of "the sound and satisfactory state" of the finances of the Dominion. "The surplus revenue for the past year," said Mr. Stewart, Minister of Finance, "was £1,150,000, this being largely due to increased Customs receipts."

Customs receipts always represent an arbitrary increase in the cost of commodities passing through the Customs. This increment is not balanced by an equivalent (or any) increase in the value to the consumers of the commodities; in other words, they do not get anything for the extra cost they are called upon to meet. As the increased cost has to be collected from the New Zealanders themselves, it follows that these are the poorer by the total of the duties collected by the Customs. A queer kind of "Prosperity"; and an even stranger mentality that can measure the "prosperity" of the Dominion by the amount of revenue derived from the legalised robbery of its citizens by the State. If this be "prosperity," why not immediately increase all duties 100 per cent. and so double the "prosperity"?

From Our Own Correspondent.

Writing under date June 5, Our Correspondent at Auckland, N.Z., says: "Unemployment has reached a grave state in this country, and, of course, those forming the Committees, etc., suggest everything but the right thing. We have a total population of one-and-a-half millions, and New Zealand is as large as the British Isles, yet we have unemployment and land hunger. I think, to interpret it plainly, that the world is either a huge lunatic asylum or the hell of which our parsons speak." And the unemployed will have to pay their quota of that increase in Customs receipts which the Finance Minister sees as a sign of "prosperity"! One wonders how these statesmen get like that!

Another Pussy-Footer.

Mr. Harry Day, M.P., whose thirst for information exceeds that of the rest of his comrades in the Labour party, if we are to judge by the number of "questions" fired at Ministers, is now on the old, old subject of the taxation of cats. He wishes to know if Mr. Churchill will consider their taxation.

"Cats are a nuisance; let's tax them and so get rid of them." This is the reasoning of those who want the animals taxed. Is it for the same reason that they support the taxation of food, houses, and other things? Just as a tax on cats would have a destructive effect, so does a tax on anything else act injuriously. A tax on "questions" would soon put an end to the hon. member's inquisitiveness—to the great relief of Ministers, doubtless.

Chelsea Slums.

The *Daily Chronicle*, in an article under the above head, drew attention to the fact that the Church of England derives a large part of its revenues from slum property. An indignant letter followed, in which the writer sought to clear his particular place of worship from the charge. The fact remains, however, even if it should be proved that some churches do not receive any of the blood-money direct. Our contemporary appears to be pleased that what it calls "a beginning, though belated, has been made by the Chelsea Borough Council, which has bought nearly two acres of land, on which to erect workmen's flats." This may be a "beginning," but it is the wrong way, for all that. The rent of the land held by the Church should be collected, with that of all other land held, and used to pay for public services. Not even the Church could afford to let slums remain then. Buying land is good business—for slum-lords!

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Secretary: J. W. GRAHAM PEACE

C.L.P. 23.

What the Commonwealth Land Party Want.

By J. W. GRAHAM PEACE.

We want the land, the whole land, and nothing but the land.

We want it for the whole people, not for any section, and we want it now not by instalments but all at once.

Why We Want the Land.

Because it is impossible to live without it.

Because it is the only source of any wealth.

Because from it alone Labour produces all wealth.

Because our food is wealth drawn from land.

Because our clothes are wealth drawn from land.

Because our houses are wealth drawn from land and built on land.

Because everything we need through life is wealth drawn from land.

Because it is the gift of Nature to all mankind, not only to those now living upon it, but to all the generations yet to come.

Because it is the storehouse in which is contained more than enough of all that man needs to sustain his life and minister to his comfort.

Because every child comes into this world with an equal right to life.

Because each child brings with it not only a mouth, but hands and arms by which it can in due time feed, clothe and house itself from land.

The Land Lords who now claim the land as their private property deny the equal right to life of the landless and, by compelling these to pay rent, actually charge them for permission to live.

How We Propose to Get the Land.

Not by purchase; land, being the gift of Nature to all her children for equal use, cannot, never has been, nor ever can be private property.

Not by any method of "compensation"; that would be to admit a right that does not exist.

Not by counting the people and measuring the land and then dividing it into equal portions. Such a mechanical division could not be carried out, for we do not all require to use the same area of land; the farmer will need a number of acres for his work while a worker in the town may occupy but a fraction of an acre.

Not by any partial or step-by-step taxation of land values: experience has shown that we cannot get the land that way.

Not by Leasehold Enfranchisement: that would be to make more Land Lords.

Not by any method of Nationalisation: that would involve a great State department, with a number of costly and unnecessary officials.

Not by Confiscation: the land is, and has always been, the property of the living. They have not got it, consequently it is being confiscated now. To restore the land would not be confiscation but restitution.

The C.L.P. propose that a Declaration of Common Right to the Land shall be made in the House of Commons, after which the whole of the land shall be deemed as from an appointed date to be restored to the people.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer could immediately introduce a Finance Bill (Budget) in which there would be no taxes, but making provision for the collection from each holder of any land of its full annual rent. The whole of the rent to be pooled, and part allocated to the municipalities per head of population, as revenue in lieu of rates; these to be entirely abolished at once. The balance of the Land-Rent Fund to go in reduction of national taxation.

All land has a value and its rent can easily be ascertained. By collecting the rent of land whether used or held idle; and using the Land-Rent to pay for public services every citizen would pay for the land he desired to use, and would get his equal share of the value of the land returned to him in those services.

What We Claim For This Plan.

That it is just: consequently no injustice can be done in putting it into effect.

That it is simple: requiring no elaborate machinery, and that no new Act of Parliament would be necessary. As a Finance measure it would be entirely within the scope of the House of Commons, and the Lords could not interfere to prevent its passage into law.

That it will smash land monopoly: making it unprofitable to hold any land idle.

That it will abolish unemployment: opening all the natural resources of the country to the labour of the people.

That it will raise and keep wages at their natural level: removing the unemployed man, whose competition it is that now forces wages down in spite of all the organisation of labour.

That it will make all men masters of their own lives since, with all natural resources open to labour, no man will be under the obligation to work for wages in order to live.

That by ensuring the maximum production, there being no unemployed, it will keep prices low, thus increasing the purchasing power of wages.

That it will abolish the present wage-slavery and place all workers upon an equal footing with employers in bargaining for employment. The employer knowing that the man need not take the job: the man knowing that the employer knows.

That it will abolish slums, since it will no longer pay to keep these dens upon valuable land, the full rental of which has to be paid quite regardless of the use or non-use of the land itself.

That it will solve the transport question: the land being restored, the community will be able to take whatever it wants for roads without any payment to Land Lords.

That it will solve the housing question for the same reason.

That the abolition of rates upon buildings and machinery will make possible and desirable the adoption of every form of labour-saving device, and that, in the absence of unemployed, such devices will really be labour-saving in the direction of increasing leisure; not, as now, leading to a reduction in the number of "hands" required.

That it will secure to the community the entire increase in land value due to public improvements.

That it will abolish involuntary poverty: no able-bodied person will be unable to secure an opportunity to work either upon his own account, or for an employer.

That it will for ever remove the fear of want, with which will go all that ugly selfishness that is so manifest under present conditions.

That it will give human nature a chance to develop free from the stunting and distorting influences that disfigure it to-day.

That it will permanently improve our trade since trade is only the exchange of goods for goods. "Goods" are wealth drawn from land, and with land freed from the grip of monopoly, there will be no check either upon the production of goods or upon their exchange.

For further information address:—

The Secretary, COMMONWEALTH LAND PARTY,

43, Chancery Lane, London, W.C.2.

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