

## LIBERAL LIBERTY LEAGUE

MISSIONERS of the League did a good piece of work which had an interesting sequel. Taking advantage of every opportunity of making the League's objects better known they, in the course of their campaign, distributed League literature—including *Purpose and Policy* and *Remove the Barriers*—outside the hall of a meeting organised by the official Liberal Party. It was in a North London constituency. Entering the meeting, for it was a public one, they looked forward to the result. They helped others to press for questions. Soon discussion was evoked on what was the message of *real* Liberalism. Speakers were asked where they stood on the Taxation of Land Values, which had not been expounded. They endeavoured to satisfy the questioners without realising that it was not "party" literature which had stimulated the enquiries, but that of the League. The local party managers were displeased by this intervention and wrote to the League taking exception to it. The letter was followed by a visit from the local agent who wished to explain the objections to "causing disunity." The answer to that is, of course, that the League is a completely independent body free to preach what it believes to be the real principles of Liberalism. The upshot of the questions at the meeting has been much talk about the League and eagerness to know more about it. That interest is to be turned to account by the League's holding a public meeting of its own in that constituency (all Liberals invited!) and without consulting any one on its "right" to do so. The incident caused some amusement when reported at a recent well-attended meeting of the League's executive and gave a valuable hint for its autumn programme of action. Members are asked to notify the secretaries (at 4 Great Smith Street, London, S.W.1) of meetings *under any auspices* about to be held in their neighbourhood, so that suitable arrangements may be made for literature distribution. Also when writing, will they please remember the League's need for funds and their own subscriptions, if they are renewable.

## AT A ROTARY CLUB

*The SURREY TIMES, May 24th, carried the following report:—* "Since about 1918, 200 local authorities have passed resolutions asking Parliament for power to levy rates upon land value. Twenty-six such resolutions were passed since last July.

"This was revealed by Mr. A. W. Madsen, secretary of the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, Ltd., and Editor of 'Land and Liberty,' in a talk to Godalming Rotary Club at the Lake Hotel, on Tuesday, on 'Taxation of land values.' He quoted the example of cities in New Zealand and New South Wales in taking the rates off buildings and improvements, and levying them instead upon the value of the land apart from buildings and improvements.

"If we were to draw up our laws and pass them on moral principles, said the speaker, then we should say that what belonged to the community should be taken for the community and for its good, and what belonged to the individual should be left sacred to the individual.

"It was a deep and abiding principle that you should draw this line, but the present method of local taxation in this country did not do that. It had no moral principle behind it, excepting the power of the State to take what it jolly well liked. The State had not the right to take the property belonging to the individual so long as there was a fund which the community as a whole created by its very existence, and that was the value of land apart from buildings or improvements on it.

"If the taxation of land values was adopted in Godalming, you would have an assessor assessing the site value of every house, shop, factory and other premises in the town, of every piece of land in separate occupation. It was not difficult to do. Then, as quickly as possible, they would get rid of the old assessment which was anomalous and wrong, because it was an assessment of the land and buildings together.

"The present system of rating seemed to Mr. Madsen to give encouragement to owners of property who were not putting it to the best use, or withholding until they could get a still higher

price. The present system also penalised and placed a burden on the progressive and industrious individual who effected improvements and benefited society by the result of his work. The effect of the assessment being increased where and when any property was improved must be to make business bad, and prevent people from building sooner than they would, discouraging effort, and rewarding the idle and the person not doing his best by the community."

Replying to questions, Mr. Madsen said he thought his proposals would tend to make land cheaper. He was thanked for his address by Mr. R. C. Hodgins (President).

Mr. J. L. BJORNER and Mrs. Signe Bjorner, veterans of the Danish Henry George Movement, celebrated their golden wedding on July 3rd. Greetings and congratulations flowed in upon them, and gratitude for their great work in the cause of economic freedom. On behalf of the United Committee and the International Union a cable was sent joining heartily in these tributes.

WE HAVE been pleased to welcome in London Mr. H. A. Pitt, of Melbourne, and exchange news and views with him. Mr. Pitt is a member of the Henry George Foundation of Australia and takes a very prominent part in its work. He was a member of the Banking and Monetary Royal Commission and presided over the Commonwealth War Workers' Housing Trust. He will presently be leaving for Montreal and we are happy to introduce him to our colleagues and co-workers there.

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