

millionaire in the law courts. That is the principle on which the great landlords of London proceed. They make the laws in their own interest, and they enforce them on a population which, in this respect, are little better than their serfs. The people increase and multiply, there is a great city to administer, to light, to cleanse, and educate, but the whole cost of its administration falls on the tenants, while the ground landlord, to whose land they have given value, never pays a single farthing of the rates.

"One of the great landlords in London is Mr. George Russell's kinsman, the Duke of Bedford. The Duke has

LATELY PUBLISHED A BOOK

in which he shows how his vast agricultural estates in Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire have ceased to yield any revenue. The late Duke, speaking of agricultural depression, used to say he should be in a tight place if he did not own a few lodging-houses in Bloomsbury. The present Duke says nothing in his book about Bloomsbury, and Mr. George Russell supplies the omission. Roughly speaking, the Bedford estate reaches from the Strand to Euston Square. It has been covered with houses, large numbers of which have been 'falling in' to the Duke's hands by the expiration of the ground leases. This vast area is, figuratively speaking, paved with gold—for the Duke. In Mr. Mill's words the landlord of such an estate 'grows richer in his sleep.' Mr. Russell says there are no means of estimating the value of this estate, and he invites his ducal kinsman to add to the interesting account of his agricultural domains the still more interesting statistics of his London property. Mr. Russell asks for 'a full and exact account of

THE VALUE OF HIS LONDON ESTATES

when they first came into our ancestors' hands; of their gradual increase; of the amount spent on them, and of the income which at the present day they yield.' This would serve great public ends and give us 'some valuable suggestions for the Taxation of Ground Values.' There is a hint of what these values are in a sale of ground rents which has lately taken place. Behind the southern side of Bedford Square was a narrow street of stables—a mews. This nuisance has lately been cleared away and a new street run over the site. This street runs from Charlotte Street, Bedford Square, to Tottenham Court Road. The gardens of the Bedford Square houses fill up its north side, but along the south side a row of huge flats is gradually spreading. They are called in the inflated language usually applied to these overgrown piles of brick and mortar,

'BEDFORD COURT MANSIONS.'

Mr. Russell has found in a report of sales that in the early summer 'the ground rents amounting to £2,500 a year secured upon blocks B, C, and D, Bedford Court Mansions, Bedford Square, which were advertised for sale by auction, have been disposed of by Messrs. Dunn and Soman for £82,000.' This, then, is the present value of the ground rents on a part of one side of a single street in Bloomsbury. We are not told for how many years the ground leases are granted; but the whole of the property thus sold is still part of the ducal estate, no considerable alterations can be made in it without the consent of the Bedford Office, and when the ground lease expires, the big buildings of Bedford Court Mansions, blocks B, C, and D will fall back into the estate, and a heavy money payment will be exacted from their then owners on the plea or pretence of 'dilapidation.' This is not only of the Duke of Bedford's

'FEW LODGING-HOUSES IN BLOOMSBURY.'

it is always going on all over London. It is the nineteenth century form of the levies by which the robber Barons of early feudal times lived on the fat of the land. Custom has blinded the eyes of the great landlords to the infinite injustice and it seems that there are working men, delegates of Trade Unions, who think it should not be attacked. This £2,500 a year from Bedford Court Mansions is free of all rates. It is an essential part of the value of the residences, and is included in the estimate of the rateable value. But the tenants pay the rates not only on the value the dwelling is to them, but on the value it is to the landlord. The Duke of Bedford in his book makes much of what is spent on his property in the country. There the tenants have ducal money spent on improvements,

remissions of rent, farm buildings, wages, gardens, allotments, schools, and other matters. In London estates

THE TENANTS PAY EVERYTHING,

the landlords nothing. The streets from which these vast revenues are drawn have to be lighted, watched, swept, and kept in repair; the children of the wage earning classes have to be educated at the public expense; there are sewers to look after, sanitary needs to be provided for, and all the multifarious expenses of administering a crowded area in a great city have to be met, and every farthing of this crushing cost is paid by the tenants, who pay to be allowed to live on the landlord's land. The tenants grumble and submit. Our Diggles and Bumbles make use of their discontent to get their votes for starving the schools or stinting the outlay on sanitary reforms, while the proposal that the landlord should pay his share is treated as revolutionary. The Taxation of Ground Values, or the rating of Ground Rents, will, however, continue to be a leading point in the Liberal programme, and the next Liberal Government will carry it out."

As Others See Us.

BY T. SCANLON.

The following series of letters has appeared in one of the great daily papers published in the Moon, under the heading of "Special Correspondence from the Earth." As the letters relate mainly to economic subjects, they are here reproduced for the benefit of the readers of the *Single Tax*, in the hope that they will assist them "to see themselves as others see them."

[SECOND LETTER.]

London, 21st July, 1897.

It will be a woeful day for the inhabitants of this planet when some of their inventors—and they have several—succeed in contriving a human machine. Well, perhaps I have not made myself sufficiently clear, for I have met no man here yet who was not a machine in some way—but I mean human machines that won't want food or clothing, that won't idle when the employer's back is turned, and that won't go on strike. This would be the capitalists' millenium. I hear that a great inventor named Edison, is trying to construct such a machine. When he does, there will be no further use for the population of the world but to emigrate out of it, though where they could emigrate to is another question. We cannot have them in the Moon because it is full, and if they go to Saturn or Jupiter, or some other outlandish planet, the landlords here will start buying up the land in those parts and letting it out to them at starvation prices, so in that case we should have the same trouble over again. That is how the outlook stands at present, and it is a blue one, as you will admit. Of course I don't say that there is not a way out of the difficulty. For instance when these new machine-men make their appearance would it not be as easy to label them "employers" as "workmen?" In that case they would only *displace the present employers*, and it is they that would have to seek fresh occupations. And of the two, don't you think it would be easier to provide for a few thousand ex-employers than for as many millions of workers? You, Mr. Editor, and I know what we should do in like circumstances, but then we must remember that we are inhabitants of the Moon.

Well, since my last letter I have seen much of the English and of their civilisation. I have attended their meetings, I have sat in their churches, I have seen them at work and at play, and while I still admire the race as much as ever I have nothing but pity for the individual, for indeed everything which makes the race foremost in the struggle for life seems to be at the expense of the individual. The British or English individual is not a man like his ancestor of the sixteenth century; he has become so highly specialised that he is only the fraction of a man, with an ever increasing denominator. Everything about him is fractional; his work is fractional; his perceptions are fractional. Talk to him about the public welfare and the laws which govern human happiness, and his views are fractional and distorted according to the position he occupies in the industrial machine. He is a screw, a nut,

a bolt, a rivet, anything you like but not a complete man. His manhood is no bigger than the groove in which it grew.

Picture to yourself a giant figure of a man, in size something similar to what those earth-people call the man in our own moon, or Atlas of old, who (so they tell me) used to take the world on his shoulders and run with it—a being whose body stretches across the earth, and whose arms embrace two hemispheres. This we will call *British Trade*. But now recollect that this great monster from head to foot, in all his members, and muscles, and nerves, and sinews, and bones, is built up of *human beings* welded together, each living and having a separate existence and a separate moral and intellectual nature. I leave you to judge how much of separate moral and intellectual nature in the individual is compatible with so high a pitch of excellence in this gigantic organisation,—how, in order to build up this monster, the bodies of men are compressed, their eyes put out, their minds dwarfed, their hearts withered and dried up, and in short all the primary purposes of life forgotten for those that are only secondary—the natural end for the artificial means. For it does seem necessary to remind people that after all it is the life of the individual that matters, and not the life of the organisation that has neither a soul to be damned, nor a physical body to feel pain.

I cannot say that this overgrown animal, *British Trade*, has been enjoying remarkably good health of late. Like all overgrown creatures, he seems particularly shaky about the knees; and he is at present labouring under a sharp attack of some internal disorder—I forget the technical term the doctors give it, but it is as if his spinal column were disputing with his head as to which was most indispensable to his existence. It is a case of the old Roman fable about the stomach and the members—I beg pardon, I am falling into the habit of writing for earthly readers, so you can put that clause in parenthesis if you like. But with regard to *British Trade*, all I can say is that if this disorder goes on, it will result, one of these days, in doubling the old fellow up altogether, and my sympathy was just on the point of going out to him, but I recollect what I said above—that it is the life of the *individual* that matters, and that his loss might, by a change of circumstances, become the individual's gain.

Men may be so far advanced in scholarship as to forget their A B C or the Lord's Prayer, and in the same way men may become so lost in the intricacies of their commercial and industrial system as to forget what work is for. Though work be indispensable to wealth it is not by work alone that man lives. Would you believe that there are hundreds of thousands of men in England to day who talk and act as if work were the end of life, and not a means to the end? These people think that if they got everything they wanted for *nothing* they would have to die of starvation because they would have *no work to do*. Down with cheapness! Never pay a penny for an article which you can get for twopence. That is the way to keep *British Trade* on his legs. If the work-people knew that the life of this giant was precarious from the first; if they knew that the march of knowledge would in time raise up other giants in other countries to compete with them, they would not so readily have thrown up their natural inheritance—the land—and sold their birthright for a mess of pottage, so to speak. But now that they have become used to living as component parts of this great machine, or as animalculae in animate bodies, they are like captives in love with their chains, and are ready to blame each other for their distress rather than investigate its radical cause and remedy.

I have laboured this point at some length chiefly to show you the complicated character of English civilisation, and how the complication narrows the life of the individual to a mere cell. The man who sees no more light than enters into his own cell is called "the practical man," "the common-sense man," and "the man who believes that two and two make four," &c., but the man who mounts upon the roof and sees the surrounding objects lit up by the noon-day sun, that man is denounced as a wild theorist, a fanatic, a danger to society. Among such

The Single Tax is the Key to Open it.