

owning privilege. First we are arrested by the startling "jacket" of attractive design with the barred gate and "Strictly Private" lettered across the iron grating. To whomever was responsible for this, our congratulations!

And then the book itself with its fascinating history of landownership and the long tragic story of the alienation of the workers from the land.

Just a glance at the chapter headings reveals something of its contents: The Land of the Realm, How They Hold Our Land, Our Stolen Lands, Lords of the Land, Landholders in the Commons, Landlords in Local Elections, etc., etc. To quote significant extracts would be to quote the book itself entire, for it is the most thorough indictment of landlordism that has appeared to date. And no words are wasted. There are no superfluous sentences. The guns are turned upon the formidable fortress of landed privileges, and every shot tells.

The work will aid land restoration as no other work has done. There is no talk of the Single Tax, nor the taxation of land values—that is not Graham Peace's way. Nothing but a law of the Commons providing for the immediate collection of the full economic rent and the abolition of all taxation! And in doing this they will have the support of the best authorities on English law. Legally as well as morally the land of Great Britain is vested in the people of England and under the crown.

The Constitutional History by Stubbs says: "The king of Domesday is the supreme landlord of all the land of the nation; the old folk and has become the king's and all private land is held mediately or immediately of him." And Mr. Peace adds: "This, the central theory of English law, has not been changed through the centuries."

When the people of the United Kingdom realize that the whole question of unemployment can be solved by the restoration of an ancient right, how long will they hesitate? Conservatives may delay the day of resumption and salvation, but how long will they hesitate? Conservatism may itself be enlisted for the restoration of the land rights of the English people in accordance with the older laws that have never been repealed and today form the basis of English law.

Again, congratulations! This is one of the most telling books in all our literature. We owe Mr. Peace a profound debt of gratitude for a splendid piece of work superlatively well done, that will serve the purpose of educational and political propaganda up to the very time that shall crown the triumph of our principles. Not until that day will this book fail to serve us.

J. D. M.

*The Great Robbery, by J. W. Graham Peace, clo., 128 pp. Commonweal Press, price 3s 6d. 43 Chancery Lane, London, 2 W. C. England.

Correspondence

TUGWELL HODGE-PODGE

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Prof. Tugwell believes that we can do better in the long run than continue a pattern of land settlement which is essentially "hodge-podge" provided we proceed "not by mandate but by providing new and better opportunities—renewed frontiers—within our borders."—*New York Times*, Jan. 14, 1934.

With all due respect to the Professor his problem can not be solved by buying out those able to subsist on marginal lands. It has no more chance of curing the disease that he knows exists than an opiate has of curing a broken leg. The hodge-podge Mr. Tugwell objects to is certainly an anomaly in a land so gifted by the Creator with every possible feature of topography and climate and which once could be used for nothing. This hodge-podge is not the cause of our distress. It is the inevitable effect. It could never have occurred if the land had not been given away or sold, first by the Crown, and then by the Colonial Governments, and lastly by the Federal Governments through its Homestead Laws. If such land had been retained by the

people through their governments, colonial, state, or otherwise, we would now be spared any problem of marginal cultivation. Under secure leases from the government no men would be forced to use lands which can provide but a bare subsistence no matter what the expenditure of labor or capital.

The cause is land monopoly. The best lands can not be had except at a price. Therefore they are in great part held out of use. They can not be forced into use by spending \$25,000,000 to buy out all the holders of marginal and submarginal lands. Production will be limited to the better lands but the hodge-podge will continue, the least productive of the better land now in use will become marginal land and real wages will be forced still lower. The reason is this; as the withholding of the better lands forced men to poorer lands and lowered the margin of cultivation so will the withdrawal of marginal lands force their users from employment at living wages to idleness at no wages at all. They must be supported by those employed and the necessary taxation will cause the margin of cultivation to rise so that lands once able to produce a surplus will now produce but a bare living. Methods of agriculture under this weight of taxation will be forced to deteriorate instead of improving. Look at India or Egypt. The owners of land out of use and the landlords of tenant farmers will not be affected except as the standards of living is lowered for they will continue to receive without returning goods or services. Real wages will be depressed because of the drain upon production to support non-producers.

Men do not choose the hardest way of doing things as Prof. Tugwell well knows. It is an axiom that man seeks to gratify his desires with the least effort. Thus inventions are made, new processes discovered, new lands opened. Therefore, since he sees the futility of overcoming this hodge-podge settlement of America by mandate and the necessity of providing new and "better opportunities—renewed frontiers—within our borders," why not force the frontier into use by collecting its economic rent for the people of the United States? It is useless to complain about the use of marginal lands when nothing is done to remove the cause, so give man a chance to work without paying tribute to some other man for the privilege and the necessity of planning will disappear with the opening of the new old frontier.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

JOHN LUXTON.

ASSEMBLE THE FACTS AND PUT THEM TO WORK

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

President Hennessy's idea regarding the assembling of data bearing on land speculation as the cause of depressions and panics is excellent.

Recently I have been noting the marked differences between the prices received at auction sales in foreclosures and the assessed value of the parcels sold. If these values are any criterion of real values then they are surely bargain sales. The liquidation of speculative values is inevitable and must take place before recovery comes. But evidence based on such transactions can hardly be regarded as convincing because it lacks the factor of mutual agreement between a willing seller and a willing buyer.

Perhaps my reasoning is faulty or my presentation weak, but I seem to have difficulty in establishing such convincing evidence. Quite lately instances came to my notice which for me at least provided convincing evidence, but I was not able to use it so that others would be convinced.

One dealt with a parcel of land recently offered for development purposes. It consists of approximately six acres located in a district the site value of which is the highest in the town. Assessments on adjacent land mostly improved bears at least some relation to its value for use but the particular parcel was assessed as pasture land. The owner kept a few highly bred dairy cattle and at such times as the weather would be injurious to such delicately nurtured creatures they were allowed to graze on this tract. The peculiarities of certain state laws were thus satisfied. The assessors were forced to value this tract,