

## LAND VALUES

Twenty-first Year. (Established June, 1894)

Monthly 1d. By Post 2s. per annum.

(United States and Canada, 50 cents.)

### Editorial Offices

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### "OUR POLICY."

"We would simply take for the community what belongs to the community—the value that attaches to land by the growth of the community; leave sacredly to the individual all that belongs to the individual."—Henry George.

## THE WAR AND AFTER

The days of the nations bear no trace

Of all the sunshine so far foretold;

The cannon speaks in the teacher's place—

The age is weary with work and gold,

And high hopes wither, and memories wane;

On hearths and altars the fires are dead;

But that brave faith hath not lived in vain—

And this is all that our watcher said.

—FRANCES BROWN.

That the European War has its roots in inequality we Single Taxers are firmly convinced. The madness is not now: this is just the stage where diplomacy ends and the struggle is transferred to the battlefield. Some thirty years ago Henry George wrote:—"That in spite of the progress of civilisation, Europe is to-day a vast camp, and the energies of the most advanced portion of mankind are everywhere taxed so heavily to pay for preparations of war or the costs of war, is due to two great inventions, that of indirect taxation, and that of public debt." He goes on to point out in proof of this contention "how tyrannies are maintained, governments corrupted and the common people plundered by the abandonment of the feudal system of land tenure under which the landholders were responsible for the fighting or to bear its cost; that by the institution of indirect taxes and public debts the great landholders were enabled to throw off on the people at large the burdens which constituted the condition on which they held their lands, and to throw them off in such a way that those on whom they rested, though they might feel the pressure, could not tell from whence it came." The justification of this view has been fully amplified by many able writers in recent times.

We live in an age where work is an end in itself and not a means to leisure and the cultivation of the higher faculties. The story of our land system is an open book for those who care to read and study the subject. The bulk of our population have been driven from the soil into the industrial centres, there to engage in a brutish struggle for employment on terms which do not permit

a social life worth the name. How does this condition provoke war or make war possible? It has one bearing on the subject which is quite plainly seen. The keen struggle for markets and trade has in our day fomented the military aspirations of our Junker class, and millions of citizens look to the making of armaments as the source of their living. This is the condition they have been born into, and so long as it prevails they will look askance at, and remain indifferent to the higher and nobler aim which would bring us a society where "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks."

We Single Taxers know, we believe we know, the cure for war; it is the institution of social justice, and we have done what we could to advance a recognition of this in the public mind. To-day we have, like many other genuine movements for reform, to mark time and face the stubborn fact that while this war on the battlefield lasts the propaganda is silent. This is not to say that absolutely nothing can be done or should be done to uphold our ideas, as inclination decides or opportunity offers. There are debates and lectures in various corners where our speakers can and must perforce state our case, and there are, as our news reports tell, still some open-air platforms available for those who feel like using them to point to the cause of war and the true source for meeting the cost of it. But in the main it is recognised by our people that educational effort on any well defined plan of campaign is at a standstill. The United Committee abandoned its Annual Conference at Birmingham last month, and all other fixtures and arrangements involving expenditure of time and money were indefinitely postponed.

The situation has been accepted only too well from the point of view of our exchequer by supporters who, for one reason or another, find themselves fully occupied with more immediate affairs. Many have been hard hit by the crisis and are concerned about their future prospects, while others have withdrawn their support because they are keenly disappointed at this Armageddon and feel the hopelessness of doing anything while it continues.

The outlook is bleak enough, we have to admit, but the sun will shine again. The war will end sooner or later, and the consequences of it cannot in any degree wipe off the map the place we hold in the wide field of our politics. On the contrary, we believe that the opportunity to promote our policy will remain where the war found it, in the forefront of progressive endeavour. Some enthusiasts believe indeed that we shall be in a better position after the war than before it came with all its devastating horror. Their story is quite simple and runs in the direction of the public need for money to repair the damage caused by the war. It is granted that this will amount to something, and it is further admitted that the revenue derived from the income tax and the local rates cannot very well be relied upon as in the *Ante Bellum* days. But this is rather a problem for our tax-gatherers. That they may be

inclined to look at our practical proposals for raising revenue to meet the deficit is as it may be.

We propose the taxation and rating of land values for quite a different reason, namely, to relieve industry of the burden it now bears, and to free the land from the deadly and choking grip of the monopolist. We propose taxation of land values to bring land into the market and in this way to lead to the expansion of industry, to the employment of labour on land held from labour at speculation prices. This is our job to make and maintain public opinion for this "penalising policy." To this end we must strive all we know how to keep our forces intact, to keep our doors open and our various leagues ready, when the time comes, to resume our propaganda at the old pace.

Quite a number of our supporters are giving freely to the various relief funds and schemes promoted to cope with the terrible hardship and misery so bravely endured one way or another by the victims of the war and their dependents. We rejoice in this spirit of sympathy and liberality on the part of our people; we would not have it otherwise, but nevertheless we feel constrained to remind them of the movement which has had in the past their constant and abiding care, the movement which they believe in as one pregnant with hope for the future. We do not intend, we do not require, to argue the case with our friends for their consideration. The movement is theirs as well as ours, and our faith in it is no greater than their own. We are persuaded that as an agency to advance our common cause the United Committee and the Associated Leagues have been fully justified in recent years in what they have striven to accomplish to arouse sentiment in the country for our practical policy and to bring it to its present position in Parliament.

But we rest our claim not on past effort, but rather on the task which is ours in the future, let us hope in the near future. The war cloud will pass away in due time, but our ideas of how to establish enduring peace will remain, and we must not slacken in our zeal and enthusiasm to make these ideas quickly ripen into action. The sentiment is heard on every hand that this war must be an end of all war. So may it be. But we Single Taxers, we who stand for an equitable distribution of wealth as a means to peace and progress, know that such wars will come again and again if the social problem be not solved. The war on the battlefield, with all its passion and hatred seems, nay is, the very essence of human folly and cruelty. But it cannot endure. Not so the war in the slums against poverty, the war with hard times, the war with disease and death which spring from chronic unemployment and low wages, the war with consumption which is the daily lot of millions condemned to live in the overcrowded sections of our towns and cities, the war against selfishness, apathy and ignorance. This is the war which, always present, will remain with us in all its hideousness, when the last gun has been fired and the last man has fallen on the blood-stained fields of Europe.

This is the war we are out to end, for we know that only as it ended can we be assured of an advancing civilisation.

When this titanic struggle between the armed forces of the Continent is over, and reason is once again at her difficult but never despairing task of engaging enthusiasm in the bloodless campaign for freedom and justice, we must see to it that our voice shall be heard and our influence felt in the market place and in the senate. It is for this purpose, for the task which is ours and which we are called upon to complete, that we ask our friends and supporters everywhere to join in the effort being made to keep our forces together at this time.

J. P.

### COTTON TRADE CRISIS

By ARTHUR H. WELLER.

The President of the Local Government Board has issued a statement in which he says "The fears of a deep and widespread dislocation of trade have happily not been realised, and except in a few particular trades unemployment has proved to be much less serious than was anticipated." Another authority, Mr. Chiozza Money, has also on several occasions assured the public that the expectation of great distress and unemployment was a delusion, and he explained what may have appeared to some people to be neglect, by writing in the *DAILY NEWS* of October 7th:—"I did not take the trouble to advise governing powers how to cope with an enormous and unprecedented amount of unemployment for the simple reason that I did not believe that it would occur." Equally comforting, but misleading, are the Board of Trade returns for September, which show that unemployment had fallen by 1.5 as compared with the preceding month. These figures, however, only refer to total unemployment and give no indication of the great volume of partial unemployment due to works running on short time.

In Lancashire, besides a high percentage of unemployment, the short time worked is estimated to be equal to a complete stoppage of 50 per cent. or more. It is not likely, therefore, that these views of trade experts will bring much comfort to the people engaged in the Lancashire cotton industry. The outlook here is decidedly bad, even if the cotton trade be considered only one of the "few particular trades" which were excepted in the Local Government Board's statement. In any case the following opinions of practical men are interesting, if only by way of contrast. Sir Charles Macara, a man of wide experience whose opinions carry weight in cotton circles, says:—"The complete closing down of the mills in Lancashire in a short time is certain. That will be a national disaster of such magnitude that practically every industry of the country will be adversely affected." Mr. William Tattersall, another well-known authority on Lancashire's staple industry, wrote to the *DAILY NEWS* on October 3rd to the effect that the outlook in the cotton industry was very black. He believed that 75 per cent. of the weaving machinery would be idle before the end of November.

Many mills in Blackburn are still working out orders which were on the books before the war began, but a prominent manufacturer of that town is of the opinion that not a single day's work has been booked in Blackburn since war was declared. The position of the Trade Unions is serious, and this is recognised by the Government's decision to make emergency grants to voluntary associations which provide benefits for their unemployed members. It is stated by the *LABOUR LEADER* that the textile unions paid out during August and September ten times as much in unemployment