

Even if we take the return as it stands we see that the imposing total of "over one million land holders" is chiefly composed of small landlords whose average property is only a little more than a fifth of an acre each. The Duke of Sutherland has seven times as much as the whole of the 852,438 holders of less than one acre. Now add the first two classes together.

1,105,163 landlords hold	5,099,136 acres
61,978 " "	67,018,175 acres

The average holding in the first case is a trifle less than five acres, and in the second case it is 1,100 acres.

THE HOUSE OF LORDS AND THE LAND. (FROM THE RETURN OF 1876)

	Separate Estates.	Acreage.
28 Dukes	158	3,991,811
33 Marquises	121	1,567,227
194 Earls	634	5,862,118
270 Viscounts and Barons	680	3,780,009

Mr. Shaw Lefevre (now Lord Eversley) shows from the return itself that there are no more than 166,000 owners of more than one acre, and that 2,250 persons own nearly half the enclosed land of England and Wales. Nine-tenths of Scotland are owned by 1,700 persons, and two-thirds of Ireland by 1,942 persons.

The overwhelming majority of the people do not possess a square inch of the soil of their native country, and are simply tenants-at-will and residents on sufferance, and not by right. It is surely impossible that such a fundamental inequality as this state of affairs indicates should much longer remain unaltered.

GREETINGS FROM A CONSERVATIVE STATESMAN OF REPUTE—MR. THOMAS GIBSON BOWLES—AND OTHERS.

(For the Review)

By **WILLIAM REID.**

Although Mr. Bowles is not of us, he, like a good many other "orthodox" people, has said a good deal in justification of our principles. In a speech delivered before the Liverpool Reform Club on April 27th, he detailed step by step the facts regarding taxation and land tenure in Britain which he had gleaned from history. He told his audience that "In Anglo-Saxon times the law of promotion was that any man who had five hides of land, that is five hundred acres, became what was called thaneworthy—he ceased to be a churl. If he had forty hides of land he became an earl, which was the highest rank in the country."

Land was not given to these people for nothing, however. "The possession of land conferred not only rank, but it gave power and it imposed duties; the landlords bore the whole burdens of the State." Included in these burdens were forts, bridges, roads and military services.

The revenue of the King was got from all the land of the Kingdom, besides the revenue secured direct from Crown lands. There were other small sources of income, "customs, dues, tonnage and poundage," which, according to Mr. Bowles, rarely amounted to more than 5 per cent.

Sometimes there were extraordinary sums required as when a King had to be ransomed, his daughter had to be provided with a dowry, or he needed funds for war purposes.

One of the principal secretaries to Queen Elizabeth—Sir Thomas Smith—writing in 1589, said: "The land doth bring a certain kind of servitude to the possessor. For no man holdeth land simply free in England but he or she that holdeth the Crown of England; all others hold their land in fee—that is upon a faith and trust and some service to be done to another lord of a manor, as superior, and he again of a higher lord, till it come to the Prince and him that holdeth the Crown."

It was to such people that the King looked for his revenues—ordinary and extraordinary. If he wanted a bit extra he called Parliament together, and Mr. Bowles informs us that "Edward IV called his Parliament together only six times in twenty-two years." If there was no excuse for calling Parliament together and the King was a bit short of ready cash he had to resort to some such method as pawning his crown. Edward III and Henry V both did this. By such methods, Mr. Bowles shows, the nation was kept out of debt. If we note the steps by which the landlords transferred their burdens to other people, we shall get ample evidence from an opponent of our principle that we will be traveling in the right direction if we retrace these steps and turn back to the point which was left behind in the time of Henry VIII. This was the gentleman who earned the title of Defender of the Faith, this title being conferred on him by the Pope, on account of a book which he wrote on "the sanctity and indissolubility of marriage." Unfortunately he did not—like Jean Jacques Rousseau—present us later with his confessions, or we might have had his excuse for departing from the high principles he had formerly preached. Henry VIII, no longer an obedient member of his Church, and in somewhat reduced circumstances, began to look round for some means of increasing his revenue. He had been urged to confiscate the Church lands and "to devote them to public purposes." In the language of Mr. Bowles he "did confiscate the lands of the Church, or at any rate, the lands of the monasteries, but he did not devote them to public purposes." After some delay due to the Members of Parliament having no very high opinion of their sovereign, Henry got his Confiscation Bill passed by warning the members that "he would have it passed or he would have some of their heads." The revenues of the monasteries were gifted or sold to the King's favorites and the funds which had formerly been used for education and the care of the poor were used

to found some of our existing "noble families." Mr. Bowles remarks: "As the monasteries of that day possessed one-fifth of the land of England, so we have recently been told the House of Lords still possesses one-fifth of the land of England."

"The result was that in the next reign the first Poor Law was passed and the first poor rates were imposed upon the country, which have lasted from that day to this." Such was the first step in the new arrangements for raising money.

The second step took place in the reign of Charles the First. He tried to raise money from the right source, but he went about it in the wrong way. "The mistake he made was in endeavoring to levy it without the consent of Parliament." According to Mr. Bowles, "The lords of the land refused to bear the tax of ship-money, they repudiated any such direct levy on themselves, rebelled in arms, procured the substitution for the direct tax on land of an indirect tax or excise upon the whole community, still mainly landless, and in this cause there arose the beginning and the carrying through of that rebellion which ended in Charles's death and in the substitution of an indirect tax on all for the direct tax on land that he would have imposed." On the morning of his execution Charles said, "I desire the people's liberty and freedom as much as any man whomsoever, but I must tell you that their freedom and liberty consists in having of government those laws by which their life and their goods may be most their own. I tell you that I am the martyr of the people." On this declaration Mr. Bowles comments as follows: "Fine words, touching words, true words, were those last spoken by Charles, for from that time the landless people at large were to bear the burden of taxation hitherto mainly borne by the land."

These are the first two steps in the wrong direction. First the poor rate, second the excise. After the Restoration Charles II gave up his feudal rights and revenues, and the excise invented in 1643 became permanent in 1660. As Mr. Bowles says, "So permanent that to day we have to pay something like £40,000,000, under that head."

In the next century America gained her freedom and Britain lost her American colonies. The reason was that the landlords wanted a remission of a penny in the £ on the land tax and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had to tax something else, so he fixed on tea.

This land tax was perhaps the only good thing that came in with William III. It is not described by Mr. Bowles, but the following paragraph from "Land and the Community," by the Rev. S. W. Thackeray, M.A., LL.D., sums up the history of sinful evasion and subterfuge.

"We see, in fact, as the final result of the struggle, that the landowners have converted their possession of the land, originally conditioned on the performance of important duties on behalf of the community, into an absolute ownership, independent of any duties or obligations whatsoever. Obviously they had here gone very far beyond what was either reasonable or just. And we see the Crown compelled to admit in substance that the theory by which

it was aforesaid regarded as the champion and representative of the rights of the community, must henceforth be regarded as an obsolete and exploded theory, no longer to be seriously regarded in the future relations of the parties. To complete the irony of the situation, the personal interests of the crown which had been somewhat over-ridden in the heat of the struggle, are compensated for in the new compact by the imposition of excise duties, a new and ever-growing burden laid upon the back of the community, and, in addition, at a later period, in the reign of William III by a small land tax of four shillings in the pound, which is assessed even to this day on the same low valuation as in 1692."

Richard Cobden, the great apostle of Free Trade, was called to fight against further encroachments on the people's rights. Not content with contracting themselves out of taxation, the landlord rulers of the early years of the nineteenth century put taxes on the public not for the upkeep of the State, but in order to line their own pockets. First they shut the ports against foreign corn in order that home corn might be dear and agricultural rents high. Later as Mr. Bowles shows, they put taxes on foreign grain for the same purpose. By this time, 1815, the Waterloo year, a big proportion of the fraudulently assessed land tax had been commuted in order to raise capital sums for European wars. Thirty years later Richard Cobden, speaking in the House of Commons, said: ". . . . Honorable gentlemen claimed the privilege of taxing our bread on account of their peculiar burdens in paying the highway rates and the tithes. Why, the land had borne those burdens before Corn Laws had been thought of. The only peculiar State burden borne by the land was the Land Tax, and I will undertake to show that the mode of levying that tax is fraudulent and evasive, an example of legislative partiality and injustice second only to the Corn Law itself For a period of 150 years after the Conquest the whole of the revenue of the country was derived from the land. During the next 150 years it yielded nineteen-twentieths of the revenue—for the next century down to the reign of Richard III it was nine-tenths. During the next seventy years to the time of Mary it fell to about three-fourths. From this time to the end of the Commonwealth land appeared to have yielded one-half of the revenue. Down to the reign of Anne it was one-fourth. In the reign of George III it was one-sixth. For the first thirty years of his reign the land yielded one-seventh of the revenue. From 1793 to 1816 (during the period of the Land Tax) land contributed one-ninth. From which time to the present (1845) one twenty-fifth only of the revenue had been derived directly from land. Thus the land, which anciently paid the whole of taxation, paid now only a fraction, or one twenty-fifth, notwithstanding the immense increase that had taken place in the value of the rentals. The people had fared better under the despotic monarchs than when the powers of the State had fallen into the hands of a landed oligarchy, who had first exempted themselves from taxation, and next claimed compensation for themselves by a Corn Law for their heavy and peculiar burdens."

While the great landlords were passing their rightful burdens on to the com-

munity, and adding taxes to food for their own enrichment, they were not idle in other respects. By means of legislation passed by landlords some 4,000 Enclosure Acts were passed. Two thousand of these appear to have been passed between 1801 and 1845. They would no doubt receive the ready assent of the House of Lords which existed to prevent hasty legislation. This is a stinging comment on the type of man who had the brazen effrontery to refer to the doctrines of Henry George as doctrines of confiscation. Henry George compared their ancestors to Captain Kidd, and the only complaint that can be made against the comparison is that it was unfair to Captain Kidd. The industrial revolution introduced machinery and steam about the time that George III came to the throne. This no doubt has hastened the later enclosures, for coal was becoming a valuable commodity, and it seems to become more valuable to the landlords as generation succeeds generation.

With the widening of the franchise, the landowners no longer hold the field. They can only gain small privileges now by soft words, in place of the great privileges they formerly took by force. According to Mr. Bowles the Liberal Death Duties Act, called the Finance Act, 1894, was more favorable to agricultural landowners than it should have been. Two years later the Tories passed the Agricultural Rating Act. It was a disgraceful piece of legislation which could only be designed to put money into the pockets of the agricultural landowners.

Such is the sinful progress of landlordism. Statesmen and teachers know it as well—or better—than those who seek the remedy. This remedy is not far to seek. When the burdens are replaced on land, labor will be free.

MEN OF THE SCOTTISH MOVEMENT.

PETER BURT.—The leading men of the Scottish movement are undoubtedly Peter Burt and John Paul. The departure of Mr. Paul to London left Mr. Burt without a rival. It would only be the simple truth to say that there are many men in Scotland who might have led the movement, had these two not been to the front. Being there they left only the back seats for the others. As this sketch leaves no room for analysis no attempt will be made to explain the reason for this state of affairs. Whether it is accounted for by their untiring devotion, by exceptional ability or by both together, the fact itself is indisputable.

As in the earlier crusade Peter was an apostle before Paul. Among the repudiators of the Master this Peter will not be found. While others are talking down the Single Tax as a thing which it is unwise to mention in "polite society," he is talking it up as the one and only thing worth mentioning. His activities have been prominent in the counsels of the Scottish Liberal Party, the original and present Scottish Land Values League, the United Committee and the Glasgow Town Council. He it was who led the