

# The SINGLE TAX

THE ORGAN OF THE SCOTTISH LAND RESTORATION UNION.

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## Notes and Comments.

In reply to inquiries from subscribers and through the newsgagents for this month's issue, we have to say that we regret the holidays have put us a week behind.

The Scottish Land Restoration Union Lecturers are open for engagements at open-air or indoor meetings. Address—Secretary, 45 Montrose Street, Glasgow.—Enthusiastic open-air demonstrations have been held during July at Burnbank, Kirkintilloch, Kilsyth, Cambuslang, and Glasgow. The speakers were well received by large gatherings at all the meetings and warmly urged to come back again. Reports duly appeared in the local press. Several dozen copies of the *Single Tax* were sold at each meeting and other literature circulated. The fixtures for August include Hamilton, Maryhill, Springburn, Partick, Clydebank, Port-Glasgow, Yoker, and Coatbridge.

The usual monthly meeting of the Executive of the Scottish Land Restoration Union will be held at 45 Montrose Street, Glasgow, on Tuesday, 7th August, at 8 P.M.

In reply to a question put by Mr. Seymour Key in the House of Commons as to how much land had been taken up by the Scottish County Councils, Sir George Trevelyan stated "that the Act was not in operation in the majority of the Councils, owing to the absence of any demand for small holdings." Now, why this delay on the part of the Councils to give effect to the Small Holdings Clause? What is the price of the land available, and what organisation is there among the agricultural labourers to take advantage of this concession? These are questions the Radicals in the cities and towns will expect the various County M.P.'s to reply to. Mere passing of Acts is of little use. The real friend of the people is he who comes down among them and advises and encourages them to their duties and their rights, and no one is better fitted for such work than our Parliamentary representatives. This is Lord Roseberry's opinion, and it is ours.

In reply to the "Modern Inquisitor" of *Pearson's Weekly*, which we deal with in another column, as to the Cause of Poverty, the Rev. Stewart Headlam believes "that the condition of the poor is due (1) to the fact that while children leave the Board school fairly well equipped they leave too young, and that afterwards so few of them master any trade; (2) to the way in which men, driven off the land in the country, crowd into the towns; (3) to the fact that the great means of production—the land—in the town as well as in the country, is monopolised. Our duty, he considers, is to get the school age raised; to be followed by a compulsory half-time general and half-time technical education; to tax and rate land values; not to tax the industrious on account of their industry."

The *Clarion* notes Mr. Headlam's reply as an exceptional answer, but, true to the Socialist creed, fails to notice Mr. Headlam's method—"to tax and rate land values; not to tax the industrious on account of their industry."

The "Modern Inquisitor" says:—"General Booth sends an analysis made from 800 men on one evening who had availed themselves of the

hospitality of one of the famous penny and twopenny shelters. From this I gather that 93 of these unfortunates attributed their present state of destitution to ill-health, 213 to drink and gambling, 47 to old age, and 447 to bad trade."

Drink and gambling evidently account for some poverty; but this is voluntary poverty. Any man who need not be poor, but chooses to be poor through vicious habits, is to be pitied. But even these can only take from society what society has to give, and if society is corrupt through gambling and gin palaces, it only forces upon us more urgently the wider social problem. With the abolition of involuntary poverty healthier avenues to physical, mental, and moral development can be opened up; but to endeavour to make progress in these days, while bad trade is permanently with us, ill-health and old age continually bringing us fresh supplies, is, well, to produce but greater evils; for, to teach men morals who are condemned to take part in and witness the agony of making the most of our "chances" and mischances, is to make them both discontented and dangerous.

The Commissioners of Partick have assessed the owners of Partick property instead of the occupiers where the houses are let for a period of less than a year, and the landlords have replied by raising rents 15 per cent. Why can the landlords of Partick thus arbitrarily impose a rise of rent upon occupiers? Simply because of land monopoly. Partick has grown, and the vacant sites are held from use at fancy speculative prices, competition is shut off, the landlords fix their terms, and there is no escape. The taxation of land values would force this idle desirable land into builders' hands, new and superior house accommodation at reasonable rates would as a consequence spring up, and all taxes presently levied on occupancy could be abolished. This is the way, and the only way, to settle the question. London has partially adopted the principle; Glasgow and other towns are on the alert. As Treasurer Gray, of Glasgow, said, the question is a burning one, and cannot be much longer ignored. What have the Partick Commissioners to say about it?

A LABOUR GUIDE.—We have received from Mr. Joseph Edwards, 64 Carter Street, Prince's Road, Liverpool, a preliminary announcement of his desire to focus the work of all schools of Reformers in the form of a *Labour Annual*. The chief work would be to chronicle the doings of all parties in the Labour movement. "Under its covers," says Mr. Edwards, "might be presented the aspirations and principles of the brotherhood of Labour; each division placed impartially in sight of all others; and, without emphasising temporary expedients, and half-hearted or mere party measures of reform, the main outlines of social progress might be mapped out for future conquest. The book would prepare the way for the coming reign of Labour. It would add consciousness of aim and strength of will to the exertions of the New Party, and help to realise the vision of the federation of the world." Mr. Edwards is brimful of sympathy for the cause of labour in this idea, and no doubt there is room yet for organising the forces of labour. But we should never forget that the labour problem must be settled on the principles of political justice. The unemployed and depression of trade are the

questions pressing for immediate solution. Let us, as politicians, seek the cause of these phenomena, and we shall discover the remedy. Privilege must go by the board: to compromise is to fail; and inasmuch as the production of wealth is but the application of labour to the raw material of land, the solution of the labour problem outside the solution of the land question is an impossibility. The *Labour Annual* at present is the *Financial Reform Almanac*. Its pages are teeming with the most useful information on all that affects the world-wide labour problem, and the simple remedy they propose is FREE TRADE IN PRODUCTION, and to this end advocates the complete destruction of land monopoly.

THE "ECHO" HITS THE MARK.—In an editorial recently, the *Glasgow Echo*, in criticising Sir William Harcourt's Budget proposals with regard to the Death Duties, speaks out in the following bold and uncompromising manner which must be gratifying to every true land reformer. "Every year the Budget will get into a more and more hopeless muddle, so long as we turn away our eyes in search of revenue from its natural source. How many millions a year go into the pockets of landowners and mining royalty owners? If our memory serves it is somewhere about £160,000,000. Every penny of that of right belongs to the nation. If the nation had got its rights from generation to generation, all the rent from the land and the mines should have gone into the Treasury. Because the nation has been wronged in the past, that is no reason that it should submit to wrong in the present. Continuance of wrong cannot cure wrong. We do not plead for confiscation, though the land and the mines have been confiscated too long by private persons. But we do think that the Chancellor would have been wiser if he had with more boldness struck at the landlord and the royalty owner. Then he could have done justice between man and man. Then he need not have roused the threatening ire of the colonies. Then he might have started on the road to give that absolute right to every man to the property of his own creation which justice demands, and which, when it operates aright, will do more to silence the insane demands of extreme men than all the arguments of all the pseudo-philosophers now on the front opposition bench."

Mr. Auberon Herbert says, "I dislike the representative system, which has become the means of entangling us in useless and bitter faction fights, and of accustoming us to the untrue idea that the process of voting gives one set of men the right to dispose of the faculties and property of another set of men." And, again:—"As I am a most resolute defender of the open market, Free Trade, and private property—believing that no man is free unless he has absolute control over his faculties and his own property—I should require Ireland to raise a loan to buy out landowners who wished to be bought out; and I should require a plebiscite larger than a majority (say two-thirds) to sanction these great changes in her position." But if the process of voting which gives one set of men the right to dispose of the faculties and property of another set of men is "untrue," by what process of reasoning does the virtue of a two-thirds majority to buy out landlords come in? and at what ratio does untruth become truth? and, if "no man is free unless he has absolute control over his own

faculties and his own property," and if he can only exercise his faculties on land, and create property by labour on land, what freedom has he to "exercise his faculties and create property," if he is compelled to purchase land before getting access to it? Verily, Mr. Auberon Herbert's economics, ethics, and philosophy are first a little too "Pickwickian."

ANOTHER PICKWICKIAN ITEM.—Lord Salisbury speaking on the constitutional right of the House of Lords to reject a finance bill, said:—"The difference between the legal rights and the moral rights of the House of Commons were very great. The legal right of the House to affirm or reject a bill was equally strong whether it was exercised by a single vote or by 100, but in the moral right there were definite differences. There were circumstances under which the moral force exercised by the House of Commons was irresistible, for no resistance could be offered to the national will, but when the House of Commons did not represent the national will, the moral force which it exercised was greatly diminished." And of course the House of Lords are to decide when the House of Commons fail to represent the national will.

### GLASGOW POLICE COMMISSION AND THE UNEARNED INCREMENT.

At the Ordinary Fortnightly Meeting of the Police Commissioners, held in the Council Chambers, on Monday, 30th July.

Mr. JOHN FERGUSON moved, in the terms of notice given—"That, in order to lighten the rates upon labour and capital, and extend the advantages which the Commissioners have conferred upon the citizens by improvements and control, powers be sought in the usual way from Parliament to appropriate, by rating, the future unearned increment of the city to municipal purposes." It would be admitted, he said, they were on the eve in the City of Glasgow of an expenditure so large, in order to make the working-classes comfortable, that they all shrank from the contemplation of the increase in rates necessary for that expenditure. Where were these rates to come from? Those who studied nature's laws, whether in the intellectual or physical world, would find answers to these questions. They had a fund lying ready for use, intended by Almighty God for the service of the producers of wealth held by idlers and loafers—that was to say, unearned increment. He did not ask them to tax the unearned increment of the past; he asked them, as Mill suggested, to tax it in the future, leaving the unearned increment of the past to those in possession. This unearned increment at which he aimed belonged of right to the citizens, springing as it did from the improvements which they as Commissioners had made upon the city, and the facilities they had given for the expansion of labour and capital. He asked that the unearned increment created by the Corporation, created by machinery, created by society, and bestowed upon men like Campbell of Blythswood and others, who took £50,000, some said £100,000, out of the city for no reason or other but some ridiculous story that about the time of Cromwell they lent a thousand pounds to save the city from being sacked, should be held by the rightful owners—namely, the people. If the story were true, he would say by all means give him back his thousand pounds; but Mr. Ferguson denied that he, or any one else, had a right to levy blackmail on the City of Glasgow.

Mr. BATTERSBY seconded the motion.

Treasurer GRAY, urged that there should be some attempt made to deal with the question seriously.

Bailie PRIMROSE said Mr. Ferguson had, in speaking to the motion, made general statements. How did he propose to assess the unearned increment? (Mr. Ferguson—Easily). Well, he had said nothing to give them any light on the subject.

Mr. W. F. ANDERSON said the question should be faced seriously.

Mr. ANGUS CAMPBELL, in seconding the amendment said, Mr. Ferguson had stated his views clearly and succinctly, and had not dwelt in generalisations. He would like those gentle-

men who differed from Mr. Ferguson, to get on their feet and say something in the way of controverting his arguments. Was the evil to be eternal? Were their investments to be seized by a class who "toil not, neither do they spin?" He held that they should discuss the question dispassionately, and give up the attempt to shelve it.

Mr. WM. STEVENSON moved the previous question.

Mr. PIRRIE seconded.

Mr. BURT remarked that the Council on a former occasion did appoint a committee to deal with a kindred question, and a large majority of the Council voted against it, but the question had grown a good deal since then, and the Council could do itself no injury, and might get some information if they agreed to the appointment of this committee.

Mr. J. R. PATON adopted Mr. Ferguson's preamble, and moved that there should be added the following—"That a committee be appointed to consider the whole question of how the future unearned increment of the city may be dealt with."

Mr. FERGUSON—That will do.

All the amendments were withdrawn, except Mr. Stevenson's, while Mr. Ferguson adopted Mr. J. R. Paton's proposal in place of his own.

The house then divided, when there voted:—For Mr. Ferguson's motion as amended—Bailies Morrin, Brechin, Bilsland, Primrose, Chisholm, Alexander, Pettigrew, M'Kellar, Murdoch, M'Phun, and M'Cutcheon; Messrs. W. F. Anderson, Battersby, Burt, Campbell, Ferguson, Fife, Finlay, Garey, Graham, Gray, Hamilton, Hope, A. J. Hunter, Jack, King, Martin, Mitchell, John M'Farlane, George Macfarlane, M'Kenzie, Neilson, Oatts, J. R. Paton, Starke, D. M. Stevenson, Stewart, Thomson, and Waddell.—39. For Mr. Wm. Stevenson's motion (the previous question)—Bailies Guthrie and Murray, Deacon-Convener M'Lennan, Carswell, Cassells, Cleland, Cuthbert, Langlands, A. Murray, Osborne, Walter Paton, Pirrie, Shearer, and W. Stevenson.—14.

Mr. FERGUSON moved that the following be appointed the committee:—Bailies Chisholm and Primrose, Councillors Waddell, Burt, Osborne, Colquhoun, Angus Campbell, Richmond, W. F. Anderson, Alex. Murray, J. W. Dick, King, Crawford, and Fife, and Treasurer Gray.

Mr. SHEARER seconded, and the motion was adopted.

### THE SOURCE OF THE LIVING WAGE.

To the Editor of the Single Tax.

Benburb House, Lenzie.

SIR,—As my motion for powers to impose a special tax upon the ground values of all land, whether in use or not, in the city of Glasgow has now passed into committee by a majority of 29 to 21, and as Bailie Crawford—a man of caution, method, and expediency—in supporting it against the "previous question" declared his belief that within two years we should have legislation upon the subject, and more particularly as the question has now a force behind it, not only in this country but in the United States and the British Colonial States, which society cannot and dare not ignore, I ask permission to state as clearly as I can what the "question" really means.

The burden of taxation is growing too great for labour and capital to bear, yet the requirements of civilization are daily demanding greater expenditure, and will continue to do so. Labour must have a larger share of its own product, and capital finds it difficult to meet all demands. I am of those who hold that upon all subjects there are educated authorities. That these lay down the science of subjects, and only badly educated people ignore such authorities. Herbert Spencer points out how a merchant who would hesitate to meddle with the mainspring of a watch lest he might destroy a few shillings' worth of property, will not hesitate in a Chamber of Commerce to meddle with a social problem enormously more complicated than the watch, of which he knows scientifically much less and upon which an error may cause the loss of life and property. This arises from presumption begotten by commercial success and an old world ignorance that assumed intellectual principles to be of

little or no value compared with material.

All economists from Smith to Marshall have taught the following undisputed truths:—All taxes paid out of wages of labour or profits of capital of necessity retard production by increasing its cost. It is a benefit to each individual and to the whole nation that each individual should be able to obtain every article he requires at the lowest possible price; or, in other words, in exchange for the least amount of his own labour or capital. Mill puts it that taxation should be upon *unearned* rather than upon *earned* incomes, so as not to interfere with production, and in order to increase comfort by enabling people to obtain all products with the least expenditure of labour or capital. There are two kinds of unearned income. One, the product of individual exertion, accumulation, and legitimate investment; in other words, "economic interest." Taxation of this kind, though not calculated to retard production, and much less injurious, is still injurious, inasmuch as it is a tax upon prudence and industry, and should not be used till the legitimate source of taxation is exhausted. But the other kind of "unearned" income is not the product of individual exertion. It is the product of the exertion, invention, expenditure of the whole community. It belongs to the whole community by the same right that the individual has had his product. The term "unearned increment" is applied to this. All economists agree that this should be appropriated by the community. Some would not go back upon the past, but, like "Mill," refuse to allow private individuals to appropriate this in future. Others would, in words of Herbert Spencer, go back appropriating it "as equity sternly demands, however difficult the operation." This unearned increment, ground rents, mining royalties, rents of rivers and lakes, amounts to between two hundred million sterling per annum and three hundred million, about one-sixth of the entire wealth produced in Great Britain and Ireland. Every improvement in machinery and modes of industry ultimately finds its way into the pocket of the owner of the land. For a time the wages of labour and profits of capital feel the benefit of the "spinning jenny" or the "power loom," but a Bolton, a Manchester, or a Glasgow springs up, and land worth 30s. per acre has to pay £1,000 per acre, per annum, and this must come out of the wages of labour and profits of capital employed upon that acre. Give me the ownership of the natural agent—land—and, speaking reverently, I can frustrate the efforts of God and Nature to make the workers better off than they are. Let science aid them in production, till wealth pours from above or below upon the land. I'll, in due time, discover by competing man against man to take £1000 or £10,000 per acre per annum for the right to use my land. All this unearned increment, after leaving the living wage and living profit, should go to the community for the benefit of the whole people who created it. When we are told profits cannot afford a living wage, the right reply is—Quite true, so long as labour and capital have to support a set of economic loafers who contribute nothing to production, and who take a sixth of the whole product. We impose income tax upon profits out of chattel property itself, the honest product of brain and hand work—pure private property by the laws of God and man—and we start in horror from the idea of imposing a special tax upon income which is simple plunder taken from those natural agents—land, mine, water—which are not private property, not chattel property, but which are by the constitutional law of Great Britain the inalienable property of the nation, resumable at pleasure by the people, and that, too, as the late Lord Coleridge said to the Juridical Society, without any compensation being due in law, whatever might be in expediency or charity!

The people know where to look for the living wage. Capitalists should not take the side of the loafers against the workers, lest the latter might forget what science and religion both teach, that labour and capital are natural friends and allies, and should work, not against each other, but against those "who gather where they have not scattered, and reap where they have not sown."—I am, &c.,

JOHN FERGUSON.

### By the Way.

The *Scottish Co-Operator* recommends the *Single Tax* to its readers as a fresh champion in the arena to do battle with injustice.

Mr. A. J. Balfour, M.P. stated recently, "he did not believe there was a single man of real talent for politics, who had ever found himself for very long excluded from the political arena by the difficulty of finding a constituency to elect him." Of course the inference suggested need not be drawn, that all present M.P.'s are men of "real talent for politics."

Professor Blackie avows that in all questions between the tillers and the lords of the soil he has always taken part with the former.

Mr. Keir Hardie says, "he has had some experience of electioneering, but Attercliffe bears the palm for the amount of unblushing lying and misrepresentation done from Liberal platforms. The speakers seemed as though they fairly revelled in their work. One night I stumbled across a Liberal meeting in full swing, and heard Tom Mann described as a thief and a swindler, Ben Tillet as a fitting colleague to Tom Mann, and myself as a cross between a sybarite and a glutton. My cigars cost from 9d. to 2s. 6d. each, and I returned a dozen of champagne at 8s. per bottle, as my brand was 12s."

Mr. J. Burns asks—"Why, when Mr. Keir Hardie wants support, does he not follow the custom of circularising the other labour members, and why does he always want to be the last rose of summer, blooming politically alone?"

Says Mr. Hyndman in *Justice*, "Labourism, in short, is a sorry attempt to 'dish' Socialism. It will not succeed in the long run. But, in the meantime, notwithstanding the admirable resolution carried by James Macdonald and Peter Curran at the Belfast Trades Union Congress, it may give us some little trouble and deceive the ignorant."

The Glasgow and Suburbs' Co-operative Conference have decided in favour of co-operators taking part in public affairs as such, but not in conjunction with the Trades' Council and the Labour Party, and that candidates should pay their own expenses.

The *Scottish Co-Operator* commenting on the above, suggest the following simple and radical programme:—(1) That all candidates (preferably co-operators, but not necessarily so) should be in sympathy with the co-operative movement. (2) Temperance Reform—thorough. (3) Land Reform.—The recognition of the principle that values created by the community should be acknowledged as the property of the community. (4) A liberal wage and reasonable hours of labour to all public servants.

Mr. John Burns says, "when he entered Parliament two years ago, he was inclined to kick against the pricks and to view with disfavour and disgust the endless and needless talk, degenerating into sheer destruction, but he came to the conclusion that the English House of Commons left seven centuries of history and tradition behind it, and that no impulsiveness or impatience would get rid of it. He therefore settled down to his work."

The Duke of Devonshire thinks "that workingmen have a perfect right to use that great power which, combined, they possessed to obtain for themselves by every method short of intimidation and violence—short of interference with the rights of other people—to obtain for themselves the largest share they could of the proceeds of industry."

Says Mr. Keir Hardy—"Every time we look at Mr. Benjamin Pickard, M.P., presiding over a meeting, the words of the poet, 'one wonders how the devil he got there,' recurs to us every time."

The Trades' Council of Edinburgh has decided not to appoint a committee to act with the Scottish Labour Party in selecting a candi-

date for the Central Division, as the selection of a candidate was a privilege belonging entirely to the community.

70,000 miners are on strike throughout Scotland for a living wage, and appeals for aid are daily appearing in the press, to keep their wives and families from starvation.

The men who claim ownership of the Coal Mines of Scotland obtain annually as Royalties and Wayleaves about £643,418.

The average sum paid to colliers in and around Airdrie for cutting out a ton of coal, loading it in trollies, and taking it to the weigher at the pithead is one shilling and tenpence, and in one pit only one shilling and fivepence is paid. Two tons is a good day's work for a man, which means that the earnings of a collier in the Airdrie district when working single-handed, never exceeds *three shillings and eightpence a day*, or 18s. 4d. per week of five days.

Coals are retailed in Glasgow to-day at 20s. per ton—*i.e.*, 1s. 10d. for the collier, and 18s. 2d. for—who?

So far back as 1679 a resolution was carried by the House of Commons in strong and decided language which has controlled the practice of Parliament for the past two hundred years. That resolution says:—"That all aids and supplies are the sole gift of the Commons, and that it is the undoubted and sole right of the Commons to direct, limit, and appoint in such bills the ends, purposes, considerations, conditions, limitations, and qualifications of such grants, which ought not to be changed or altered by the Lords."

"The fact is," says Mr. Cunninghame Graham, "we will find in the mining districts of Pennsylvania and Ohio as real, black good old staring misery and poverty under Protection as we will find in any part of the glorious British Empire on which the sun never sets nor the taxgatherer goes to bed."

Lord Tweedmouth says, referring to the Attercliffe Election—"In his judgment there was no person or party to be congratulated on the result of the election. That election was useful and important as an object lesson, but as a source of congratulation to every party it could not be considered. Could they wonder that the working classes, looking upon their present conditions, should adopt opinions and methods which were considered extreme and violent? Let them beware how they met those opinions with mere hostility and contempt."

Councillor Ferguson writes to a contemporary:—"The Town Council of our city contains men of the very highest order of administrative abilities. A sense of public duty has firm grip upon the minds of nearly all its members. It is safe to say no Corporation in the empire surpasses it in capacity or purpose. I regard it individually and collectively with admiration in these respects. But I distinctly warn the workers—*i.e.*, the majority of our citizens—that the Town Council of Glasgow in its principles and modes of thought is simply 'bourgeois.' It knows nothing of the social problems of our age upon which the highest minds of the world have delivered themselves, but these half truths of economics which are whole and dangerous lies." Bailie Primrose, he says, "has spoken brave words of a general character last week at the Congress on Public Health about 'Municipal bodies being invested with large powers to control land and give healthy animal existence,' but the bold Bailie voted down, in the Glasgow Town Council, my motions upon these subjects, and is just as serious an enemy to any real scientific reform on the lines of Mill or Marshall as any member of the Council."

Says a writer in the *Labour Leader* in an excruciating attack on trade depression—"We must look to the *private monopoly of steam power as being the great cause, in fact, the greatest present cause of the present depression of trade*, which to prevent this "we must obtain the collective ownerships of steam-power

machinery; and the party to secure this is the Independent Labour Party." If this party, or the Government, had control of said steam-power and the land was held as private property where would the emancipation of labour come in?

### From Over the Border.

The Bill to purchase land from the Duke of Bedford for the purposes of the British Museum has crept through the House of Commons without a single protest from any Radical or Labour Member. The price of the ground is £200,000.

The Scotch Grand Committee has adopted Mr. Seymour Keay's amendment to the Scotch Local Government Bill making provision for Parish Councils acquiring land for the erection of workmen's dwellings.

Thanks to energetic workers, Somersetshire is becoming thoroughly aroused to the situation. A great meeting of the labourers is to be held at the "Frying Pan," near to Yeovil, on Bank Holiday, at which Mr. W. Saunders, M.P., Mr. J. Keir Hardie, M.P., and other prominent speakers are expected. Mr. G. Mitchell, who is organising the demonstration, is endeavouring to secure the co-operation and support of all classes of thought, politics, and creeds in the common end of the bettering of the rural workers and their access to the land which they have rightfully inherited from their forefathers.

From Plympton, Devon, comes the following:—"The meeting held on the Castle Green here last Tuesday was fairly successful. About 300 attended, mostly men. The speeches by the agent and Mr. Ambrose were good, and their hearers were evidently interested in the well-working of the Parish Councils' Act. We were advised to send good workingmen to the Councils in November, but I am doubtful if we could do this in sufficient numbers to produce much good effect for a few years to come. The employers are all Tories, and the men terribly afraid of retaliatory measures should they come prominently to the front. I am convinced however, that they approve of the policy of the New Labour Army, and that presently they will be working in its ranks."

The Bedfordshire Van of the English Land Restoration League has now entered the northern division of the county after a triumphant march through the southern division, where it has left behind it many large, enthusiastic, and *growing* branches of the Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire Land and Labour League. Lidlington, the first place visited in the northern division, gave the Van a splendid reception. The meeting began punctually at half-past seven, and resulted in the enrolment of forty-five members in the union. The men stood round the Van till ten p.m., singing Red Van songs and cheering "everything and everybody" connected with the movement. The Wiltshire Van is now working the Chippenham division. In Warwickshire the Van is just passing over from the Tamworth to the Nuneaton division, among the miners. Another Van leaves for Norfolk, passing through Herts, Beds, and Hunts, on Monday. Twenty-four meetings are now being held each week in as many different villages.

Mr. Joseph Hyder, secretary of the Land Nationalisation Society, informs us that the Yellow Van Crusade has been extended to the holding of three meetings every night, and they are expected to continue until the end of September.

TWO LANDLORDS.—It is so refreshing to come across a radical M.P. who acts up to his professions that I cannot forbear to add that Mr. G. P. Fuller, M.P. for West Wilts, and lord of the manor of Atworth, &c., is very popular with the small holders and labourers on his estate. But the big farmers dislike him, because he will not let the land in such big quantities as formerly, and because he is taking the cottages out of their hands. But his lordship, the absentee owner of Middleton, is quite another sort of person. The secretary of the new branch started there informed the lecturer that he was never so astonished in his life as when he saw the men hold up their hands for the resolution proposed from the Van.

# The Single Tax.

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May be had from Robert Stewart, 242 Main Street, Anderston; R. A. Aitkenhead, 13 New City Road; James Simpson, Saltmarket; William Love, Argyle Street; A. M'Kendrick, Jr., 111 Canning Street; D. Campbell, 201 Stirling Road and 180 Parliamentary Road; William Barr, 62 Sauchiehall Street, and 42 Dumbarton Road; Holmes, Dunlop Street; Thomson, 4½ St. Enoch Square; William Hood, 229 Argyle Street; Hunter, 205 Crown Street, S.S., and Eglinton Street, S.S.; Luby, Muslin Street, Bridgeton; James Maguire, 532 Springburn Road; James S. Smith, 149 Quarry Street, Hamilton; A. Pettigrew, 54 Main Street, Coatbridge; A. Dickinson, 128 Fountain-bridge, Edinburgh; T. Rodger, King Street, Kilmarnock.

All Communications to be addressed to the EDITOR, *Single Tax*, LAND RESTORATION OFFICE, 45 MONTROSE STREET, GLASGOW.

*"To raise and maintain wages is the great object that all who live by wages ought to seek, and working men are right in supporting any measure that will attain that object. Nor in this are they acting selfishly, for, while the question of wages is the most important of questions to labourers, it is also the most important of questions to society at large. Whatever improves the condition of the lowest and broadest social stratum must promote the true interests of all. Where the wages of common labour are high, and remunerative employment is easy to obtain, prosperity will be general; where wages are highest there will be the largest production and the most equitable distribution of wealth. There will invention be most active, and the brain best guide the hand; there will be the greatest comfort, the widest diffusion of knowledge, the purest morals, and the truest patriotism. If we would have a healthy, a happy, an enlightened, and a virtuous people—if we would have a pure Government, firmly based on the popular will and quickly responsive to it—we must strive to raise wages and keep them high."*—Henry George, "Protection or Free Trade."

## THE BUDGET BILL.

AMID general congratulations from friends and foes, and much miscellaneous rejoicing, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has piloted his "popular" budget through the House of Commons. The House of Lords, also, has passed it through unmangled. The political economist and the agitator have done their work well. The public mind has been thoroughly ripened on the absolute necessity of throwing overboard our old time fiscal fetters, and the politician has had an easy beginning. The equalisation of the "death duties," the most radical part of the budget, invading as it does the exclusive privileges of the landed interest, instead of meeting with any serious opposition seems rather to have astonished the country at the moderation of the Government's proposal. The moderation of the Bill, in this regard, must be a matter of regret to Land Reformers, but the reception this first attack on the landed interest has received from the radical and industrial sentiment of the country amply compensates for any other drawback. Let us be quite clear. The equalisation of the death duties is hardly a commencement in the matter of correct taxation, but it is a clearing of the ground. There can be no going back. Industrial development means increased taxation, both imperially and locally, and industry cannot afford to meet much longer the consequent ever increasing demands of the taxgatherer.

Nor is it necessary. Such progress brings with it the fund out of which provision ought to be made for public needs namely, the "unearned increment," or land value, which comes and grows with the country's growth, and is sustained by the very expenditure of the public rates. The value of land, it is computed by authority, amounts to no less than between £170,000,000 and £200,000,000 per annum. This is due to the presence, growth, and industry of the people. It belongs to the people. At present a class confiscate it for their own behoof, by law, and the people are forced to levy their taxes on industry and the processes of industry, and every effort at improvement in trade, or socially, but raises the rates and adds greater value to the land. Now, if social progress brings with it and sustains these land values it is surely clear to the meanest apprehension that this is the fund from which should be taken the cost of that government which is necessary to social progress. The Liberal Party are fully pledged to the taxation of land values. The Prime Minister approves of the principle and anticipates that we shall soon arrive at a workable means of giving effect to it. Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT has told the landowners plainly that their day of exemption from taxation is over, and the Scottish Liberals, in National Conference assembled, have unanimously declared "that the values of land belong to the people and should be taken for public purposes only." But, apart altogether from the consideration of the financial aspect of this question, the taxation of land values means an extension of economic freedom. The landowners' power to appropriate land values is simply a special privilege they have to tax the wealth produced within the country, and to prevent wealth being produced unless the tax is paid. It is a burden the masses have to bear constantly and continuously. The hurt is not so much what has been taken, but what is being taken, and what is demanded for access to land. Why should the landowners be vested with such taxing powers? As landowners they render no *quid pro quo*. There is no reason whatever in permitting them to confiscate the fruits of others' toil, and giving them license to stand before society as absolute owners of the fountain-springs of industry. They could not keep land out of use if its value was taxed. This is the superior virtue of this principle of taxation—it not only draws upon the fund that social growth provides for society's needs, but it forces the "dogs in the manger" to loosen their grip of the natural opportunities to employment that alone are in the land. We have Free Trade in exchange; we want Free Trade in production. And when every man can have equal access with all others to the land by paying its full value into the public Treasury, industry will be freed from the burden of all taxation, and perfect freedom of trade will be secured. The Government have a long way to go to redeem the pledges of the Liberal party on these

lines. But they must go. There is nothing to prevent them applying to land values next year and freeing the breakfast-table duties. The danger is not in going forward too fast, but in not going at all, or going in the wrong direction. The organised advanced sentiment of the day in political circles, outside the domain of State Socialism, is bent on having the "unearned increment" of land taxed. The commercial and the industrial world have everything to gain by it. They have only to see this clearly, and have the justice and expediency of the proposal brought home to them, and the landowner's power as a tax-gatherer will come to a speedy termination. Mean-time we would urge upon Liberals, Radicals, and Land Reformers the duty incumbent upon them to continue to spread the light yet awhile. The question is simple, but it needs advocacy. The Government and the Liberal leaders must have support if they are to make headway, and they have certainly, in the equalisation of the death duties, to say nothing of their several pronouncements on the subject, indicated their willingness to proceed when they receive the necessary mandate from the constituencies.

## THE CHURCH AND THE CAUSE OF POVERTY.

"The Modern Inquisitor" in *Pearson's Weekly* has been asking the clergy for their frank opinions as to the cause of poverty. Most of the replies typify the attitude of the church generally to the social problem of the day—"Laziness and Intemperance," every bad habit and custom that are the direct outcome of poverty as set down as the cause of poverty, and in their haste to condemn the vices of the poor, these accredited apostles of the poor "Nazarene" fail to see and point out the connection between poverty and riches. It will not do to stand by and see little children and helpless women suffer through want, and blame their natural supporters, if they happen to have any, with "Intemperance and Laziness," while others are positively surfeited with too much. "Intemperance and Laziness" is not characteristic of the needlewomen or the mill-girl, nor of the thousands of our unemployed. Their principal weakness is the desire to secure work at any price; content to live on in the midst of the most vicious surroundings, provided they get a living at all. The surfeited ones on the other hand; what do they do? "They neither toil nor spin." They are both lazy and corrupt. They have their living and their enjoyments out of the labour of those who do toil and spin. Yet the church has no word of condemnation for such social injustice. No words of human sympathy for the oppressed—nothing except to lecture them on their vices. The cry of the children for bread is met by the church with charity. But charity cannot repair the consequences of injustice, and, while here and there relief is given, and such relief too often means moral degradation, the streams of inequality are hard at work and the dependent poor become the more numerous, while the independent rich pass from luxury into debauchery. Carlyle tells us truly—"we have dethroned our spirit God, and supplanted him with that brute god, Mammon." Why this idolatry? When calmly looking round on the mass of the poverty, sin, and misery of the world, we are tempted to think sometimes that we are God-forgotten and God-forsaken. But if we have forsaken God and his righteousness it surely accounts for our misery. If we worship the golden calf at heart, we mouth our praises to our Creator in vain. The divorce court will corrupt our press, the thief and the false witness and the unjust judge will dwell among

us, and the outer walls of our churches will be smeared with the slime of drunkenness and prostitution. Nehemiah cried out to the oppressor in his day, when he saw the poor despoiled of their inheritances and their belongings—"Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their olive-yards, and their houses." The owners of the people's vineyards—the land—to-day take from the people enormous revenues, and lock them out from all access to the unused land, save on terms of the utmost extortion. The people so dealt with, crowd each other into towns and cities in a swinish scramble to procure a job and a hovel to live in. Forced into such unnatural and unhealthy lives, and idleness through lack of employment coming upon them, vice and crime are speedily begotten. To prevent all this it is necessary to open up the land of the country; and the first step to this end is the destruction of the present landowners' privileges, and assert the equal right of all men to the use and possession of the land. This may seem a severe remedy, but nothing else will suffice; as John Ruskin says—"This healing is only possible by means of justice; no love, no faith, no hope will do it—men will be unwisely fond, vainly faithful, unless primarily they are just: and the mistake of the best man through generation after generation has been that great one of thinking to help the poor by almsgiving, and by preaching of patience and hope, and by every other means, emollient or consolatory, except the one thing which God orders for them—Justice." What has the church to say to the Government, to the Parliament, and to the nation, on this land question, this bottom wrong of private property in our natural God-given inheritance—that is the cause of divorcing the bulk of the people from the healthy, happy, moral lives they might, and ought to be leading were justice done?

### THE COLONISATION OF HIGHLAND CROFTERS.

The fifth report of the Her Majesty's Commissioners for dealing with the colonisation in Canada of crofters and cottars from the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland has been presented to Parliament, and is signed by Sir George Trevelyan and his colleagues upon the Commission. The report speaks of the success of the scheme and contrasts their present position with that when in the Hebrides, and yet it shows that in the Killarney Settlement the crofters have been unable to pay the first instalment of the money advanced to them, which was due in November, 1892. The condition of affairs in the Saltcoats Settlement is not satisfactory either, and the various families are considerably in debt. Forty-eight families have vacated their farms and turned to other work. Says the *Oban Times*, 21st July:—"Sir Charles Tupper, agent general for Canada, conducted a personal inquiry into the situation, and advises that the crofters should not be pressed to meet their financial obligations, and predicts that in a year or two hence they will be in a much better position. The hope of improvement and profitable success is accordingly held out, but how long is the present state of affairs going to last? The colonisation scheme, says Sir Charles, can, in no sense, be described as a failure. Twelve months ago Sir George Trevelyan declared that money allotted for emigration, under the circumstances in which the Saltcoats Settlement was conducted, could not have been worse spent. Sir Charles Tupper regards the Killarney Settlement as a success; but, unfortunately, there appears to be only too much reason for his recommendation that the crofters should not be pressed for repayment of their loans. Another year has passed and the settlers are still struggling in the same slough of despond. The condition of the crofters in Canada is said to compare favourably with their position in the Hebrides, but would the results of the settlement scheme, as so far witnessed in Killarney and Saltcoats, justify its extension on similar lines? A solution of the crofter question has not, we fear, been found in this Canadian experiment; nor will it be found in any scheme of emigration. The problem must be solved at home." The *Oban Times* is right. Our Scottish Highlands must not be denuded altogether of

its population. There is plenty of land in the north suitable for the wants of all. What of Winans' Deer Forest, of Druidaig Shootings, five miles from Balmacarra, on the west coast of Ross-shire, which extend to 6,000 acres; what of Inverlael and Glenbeg Shootings, in Ross-shire, of 20,000 acres; of Glenaron, in Mull, with about 2,000 acres; what of the thousands of other acres, lying idle, throughout Scotland? Yes, this problem can be solved at home, and the way to solve it is to migrate the people back upon the land. To do this it is necessary to destroy the power of the landowners to keep cultivable land out of use, and to prevent them allocating such land for purposes of deer forests and large sheep farms. Deer forests exist because they yield the owners a bigger return. But the crofters' and the country's needs must be the first consideration. It is better to see, say, 10,000 families on the land, paying little or no rent, but producing £60 or £70 worth of wealth per family, per annum, than one of the Winans tribe in occupation, paying the landowners a rent, and the land lying out of cultivation. A Tax on the values of land, whether held as deer forests or from the crofters, out of mere caprice, would quickly lessen the evil. Just so soon as the nation makes up its mind that the revenues of land belong to the people and resolves to take them in the interests of all, just so soon will "the greatest burden on the land"—the landowners—shift their moorings. They must emigrate. Their privileges as rent collectors can be scientifically attacked by the simple canons of taxation, and when these are invaded their interests as landowners will vanish, and then, and only then, will justice be done to the crofters—and the land. We cannot buy the landlords, nor turn them out, but we can gently tax them out. That is their method of dealing with the people. It is a thoroughly efficient one and has served them well. They cannot complain if we turn their own machinery to our account.

### Single Tax Items.

Mr. Bernard Eulenstein, the leader of the Single Tax movement in Berlin, has secured the right for the translation of "The Story of my Dictatorship," a review of which appears in another column. Mr. Eulenstein sends fraternal greeting to all Glasgow Single Taxers.

BETTERMENT IN THE ISLE OF MAN.—A correspondent writes:—"Under the title of the 'City Improvements Bill,' a Bill passed the House of Keys here recently. It has, however, been since rejected by the Council (or Second Chamber of the Island), which, like other second chambers, is true to its traditions as a Conservative force."

CREWE AWAKENING.—An interviewer of the *Spy* has interviewed Mr. C. H. Pedley, Mayor of Crewe. In the interview the Mayor declared himself in full sympathy with the "betterment" principle. It is, to quote his own words, his "pet subject." He says:—"The question has still to be debated before the whole Council. There has been a good deal of prejudice to fight against, but I am strongly convinced of the justice of the principle of betterment, and I hope, by carrying my report, to give it a chance of becoming law."

The Glasgow Police Commissioners have, by 39 to 14 votes, appointed a committee of 15 to consider the whole question of how the future "unearned increment" of the city may be dealt with.

Some years ago a certain public-house in Shaftesbury Avenue, London, was leased for £75 a year. The lessee subsequently purchased the freehold for £1,400. It has now been bought by a firm of brewers for £15,000, who also agree to pay a ground rent of £250 a year.

The Corporation of Glasgow have had to pay £40,000 for the land occupied by their car stations. The money has been borrowed at probably 4 per cent., which means that the cars have to earn £1600 per annum for ground superiors before there is a penny to spare for working expenses. "The landlord sleeps, but thrives."

Says the *Clydebank Press*:—"The Commissioners' feu opposite Hillview Terrace cost them some five years ago some 5s 2½d per square yard. Now ground in the immediate vicinity is selling at 16s 4½d per ditto. Trade depression has dealt severely with Clydebank during the recent spell. People have left the place by the thousand in search of work; houses have been emptied, debt has been contracted, and charity has been at work among the poor; but the rise in ground rent goes on, like the poet's brook, "for ever." Improvements go on at the expense of the rates; the groundowner pockets the nett result, and the tax-gatherer passes him by and drops on the wage-earner every time. Mayhap the wage-earner will wake up some day and realise the on-sidedness of the arrangement."

ABERFOYLE.—A FARM SEVEN MILES LONG.—The extensive pastoral farm of Ledard, on the Duke of Montrose's estate, has been let to Mr. William B. Scott, Ashley Bank, Langholm. The farm is about 17,000 acres in extent, and is about seven miles long.

BERWICK.—ALLOTMENTS.—The allotment scheme has been carried out at Whitsome. The lots vary in size from half-acre to six acres. The field lies to the south of the village, on the farm of Lectside. The rent, we believe, is £2 15s per acre, and the tenants run their own fences.

LET GLASGOW FLOURISH.—Said Bailie Primrose, of Glasgow, at the Congress on Public Health held at King's College, London, last week:—"Above all, they believed that salvation in the future lay in Municipal bodies in towns being vested with large and drastic powers for the control of land. (Applause.) Landowners must be taught that they had responsibilities which they must discharge; and while the Corporation would proceed in no arbitrary or tyrannical spirit, they would lay it down that the conditions of a healthy animal existence must be guaranteed to every inhabitant of Glasgow." (Applause.)

Referring to Mr. Seymour Keay's action in raising the question in the Scotch Grand Committee on the Local Government Bill of taxing the "unearned increment," the *Mail* says:—"The main principle involved in the amendment is one of great importance, possessing very wide interest, and it is only to be regretted that the Government were unable to secure for it a much fuller discussion and a more favourable reception. The arguments advanced for its behalf are exactly those which are impressing themselves more and more upon the minds of social reformers who see our growing towns and villages hemmed in by rings of land, the value of which is artificially increased through the labour of the community, to the benefit of the landlords and to the detriment of the very people who have created that value. . . . If (Mr. Keay argued) his amendment were accepted the result would be that landlords would not be allowed to sit quietly, possessing their souls in patience while towns and villages were growing, and withhold their land purposely until the time should arrive when they could get an exorbitant price. The Lord Advocate put forward the legal view of the subject clearly enough, but unfortunately the legal view begs the real question at issue. What is the prospective value? The creation of the community. Then why should an individual be allowed to confiscate what the community has created, or why should this product of the community be allowed to stand in the way of public needs?"

*Engineering* has had a correspondence on "Capital and Labour," in the course of which land values have come in for a fair share of attention. The following "tit-bits" are culled from the letters of the various correspondents:—"The agricultural rent paid means £2 per head per year in the hire of male and female toilers that reap down the fields of Dives."—"In Glasgow some years ago a portion of the land was sold by the then Town Council for £1200 to the ancestors of the present owners. The ground has now become valuable—worth £50,000 per annum. . . . I do not propose to take this betterment product from those who have hitherto succeeded in wheedling it out of the hands of

the producers of it; but what I do wish to do is to prevent them from continuing this wheedling process in the future."—"A village within a few miles of Glasgow where the landlord let out 50 acres of land for building purposes. No feuing took place till a railway was made which passed close to the village, when *the feu duty rose 150 per cent.*"—"In Dulwich, five miles east from Charing Cross, London, and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the nearest railway station, the fee-simple for ordinary building land is £140 per acre. The value of the buildings is £5,000, which must be handed over to the landlord in good repair after the 99 years' lease has expired. The rateable value in this district is about £450 per acre, and I do not think I am far out in saying that the total 'economic' rent is about £225 per acre."

PROGRESS.—The House of Lords has adopted the report of the Select Committee on Betterment. The Committee reported in favour of taxing Betterment—the increased value attaching to land through public improvements—for communal purposes.

### THE LAND.

#### TO THE LAND, YE IDLERS.

BY JOHN MURDOCH.

Depression in trade is felt everywhere, and all sorts of explanations are propounded, but nothing is really being done towards reviving it. Agriculture is depressed, and hardly any attempt is being made to get the two great departments of business to shed light on each other. How can trade flourish when a large portion of the money which ought to be in circulation among traders and manufacturers at home goes away to other countries for food which could be grown at home? Wages are low, and thousands are out of employment. How could it be otherwise, when 800,000 men have been dispensed with by the farmers and sent into the towns to compete for employment and under-bid each other in the labour market? Another result of this dropping of so many farm workers is that immense stretches of land are not tilled at all, and most of the rest is not more than half worked.

Take another set of figures. There are 48,000,000 acres of arable land in these three kingdoms—i.e., land which has been under crops—not any of which is merely estimated as capable of being made to yield. There are, of course, millions which have not yet been reclaimed. Of the 48,000,000, we know, from the annual Agricultural Returns, that there have been  $27\frac{3}{4}$  millions let down in permanent pasture, leaving only  $20\frac{1}{4}$  millions actually being tilled! In other words, there is of good land put out of tillage an area equal to the whole surface of Scotland, with seven of the Northern Counties of England added. This calls up the spectacle of a fine rich island, one third larger than Scotland or Ireland, standing out in the Atlantic, with not a spade or a plough, and not a grain of seed going into the ground, and yielding nothing but what unaided nature calls forth.

Put these  $27\frac{3}{4}$  millions in another form. They would afford a farm of  $27\frac{3}{4}$  acres to each of a million families, or five million souls. But, of such good land farms of half that size—namely,  $13\frac{3}{4}$  acres each—would suit better, and thus afford holdings for two million heads of families, or ten millions of people—more than the entire population of Scotland and Ireland put together! These millions of farms are much better situated for the purposes of trade and agriculture, of employment and income, than if in an island in the Atlantic or stretching along the banks of the Ohio or the Nile. They are lying in patches in every county in England, Ireland, and Scotland, just where they are wanted. If these  $27\frac{3}{4}$  million acres were in an island or on a distant continent, ships and railways and innumerable equipments would be required to transport the people to them, and, after the money required for emigration had been spent, there would be further sums required to build houses and to buy seed, manure, and implements. As those millions of acres are at present distributed there need be no expenditure in transporting the people to them. All that is required is an authority in every parish to redistribute the land among the people on the spot.

Supposing these millions of acres brought into cultivation according to the rules of approved farming, there would be of grain, of potatoes, of milk, butter, and cheese, of beef, bacon, vegetables, &c., what would keep in the country the greater part of the money now sent to other parts of the world for agricultural products. This money would go to the villages, but it would not remain there. The tillers of the soil would distribute it among the tradesmen and dealers around them; the tradesmen would send it off to the towns and cities, where it would pay for the goods now lying on the shelves and in the stores of grumbling merchants and manufacturers.

The year before last £144,000,000 sterling were paid away for imported articles of food which could be raised at home. There was a talk of giving a spur to trade by expending £7,000,000 on ships of war. These £7,000,000, put where it would promote the cultivation of the ground, would be reproductive, and would go on for generations yielding and returning more and more. The money spent on gun-boats is spent unproductively. And what are £7,000,000 to £144,000,000?

These £144,000,000, expended at home, would give so much employment on the land and so much in the towns that in a very short time trade would revive and improve to such a degree that manufacturers could not meet the demand. They would call in more men until the labour market was drained, and still the supply would not be equal to the demand. Masters would then begin to compete for men, so that wages would rise and hours could be reduced to what the workers thought proper to stipulate.

### GOD SPEED THE SPADE.

There are plenty of living witnesses (says a contemporary) who can testify that, while the agricultural returns give, as the country's average, 29 bushels of wheat to the acre, the spade produces 40 and 50 and 60 bushels; and General Sir Arthur Cotton, by very deep digging, has recently been realising the enormous yields of 100 and 140 bushels to the acre. It is, therefore, principally a question of cultivation, of which there are now three recognised systems—the old plough system, which skims the surface and goes about six inches deep, is called extensive; the free use of artificial manures, stimulating heavy crops, but quickly exhausting the soil, is called intensive; but that which, like the spade and the new steam-digger, goes deeper down, is called thorough—it turns up part of the subsoil, and the invaluable phosphates along with it, and when that subsoil is well broken and thoroughly exposed to the light and moisture of the atmosphere, with its treasures of ammonia, and well manured, the best possible conditions of great fruitfulness are secured. It is an astonishing thing, but no man in the kingdom has ever proved what six acres can be made to produce irrespective of cost. We have no such data, and we want to provide them. Land is the honestest thing in the world—the better we treat it, the more we are rewarded. Moreover, it is one of the settled things in husbandry, that the spade will always beat the plough.

### Highland Notes.

On Saturday, 21st July, a meeting of the Executive of the Highland Land League was held in the offices of Mr. John Macrae, solicitor, Dingwall, to make arrangements for the forthcoming conference and demonstration at Bonar-Bridge. There were present, Mr. J. G. Mackay, Portree, President of the League; Mr. Myles Macinnes, Portree; Mr. G. G. Macleod, Ardgay, treasurer; Mr. J. Macleod, Dingwall, late of Brora; Mr. W. Ross, ploughmen secretary; and Mr. Macrae. The meeting provisionally fixed upon Wednesday, 5th September, at 1 p.m., for the conference, and the demonstration for the following day at 3 p.m. It was agreed to invite Messrs. Michael Davitt, John Burns, Tenant, Munro-Ferguson, Dr. Wallace, Sir Charles Cameron, Sir John Leng, and other Liberals and land law reformers to the meeting. It was arranged that the President, Mr. J. G. Mackay,

would preside at the conference, and Mr. Angus Sutherland, M.P., at the demonstration.

We understand that Mr. Donald MacRae, of Balallan, has resolved to contest the County of Inverness at the next general election as an advanced Radical and Land Law reform candidate.

Until the beginning of the present century all the arable land and pastures of the island of Iona were held in common; the inhabitants had their dwellings either in the village of Balimore or its immediate vicinity. They were like the Jews of old, having had to watch their sheep and cattle all night on the hills during summer and harvest time. However, about 80 years ago all the arable land on the island was divided into 30 separate small farms or crofts; but about 47 years ago, owing to the failure of the potato crop and other circumstances, a considerable number of the crofters emigrated to the Colonies, and their vacant crofts were then joined and put into three ordinary-sized farms. The tenants of these three farms are entitled to keep 15 cows with their followers, a pair of horses, and about 120 sheep. At present there are three farmers and seventeen crofters on the island, who are divided into two townships. As a rule the crofts consist of about fifteen acres more or less, eight acres of it being arable land and the rest pasture. Each crofter is entitled to keep six milch cows with their followers and one horse, with a share of the large hill common, which extends to over 1600 acres, for grazing their sheep and cattle. The rents vary considerably, but the average is about £11.—*Oban Times.*

### Foreign News.

A Single Tax Member of the New Zealand Parliament writes to Mr. Michael Davitt *inter alia*:—"I am in communication with the editors of the *San Francisco Star* and the *St. Louis Courier*. They assure me that George's ideas are making wonderful progress and Mr. George himself, in a letter to me, says 'The Single Tax idea will shew itself shortly in our politics in great force.' In the neighbouring Australian Colonies also equally cheering news is heard. There are three papers there specially devoted to advocating the principle, and in Sydney recently the land grabbers have become so alarmed that they have formed a Defence League to fight the Single Taxers."

The General Election just over in New South Wales has resulted in a Free Trade victory. The Ministerial Protectionists have secured 39 seats, the Labour parties 28, and the Free Traders 58. Some sweeping Constitutional changes have been made in the Colony. Formerly there were 74 districts returning 147 members; now there are 125 districts, each returning one member. All property qualifications for electors have been abolished, and one man one vote, with a three months' residential qualification, obtains. There were no less than 527 candidates for the 125 seats.

The attempt at Hyattsville, Maryland, U.S.A., to exempt improvements from municipal taxation, having been declared unconstitutional, a new charter has been drafted and introduced into the Maryland Senate, reincorporating the Town of Hyattsville, and permitting the reformed method of taxation.

Judge James G. Maguire has introduced to Congress a Bill "to provide increased revenue by a direct tax on the value of land in the United States."

Henry George has been asked to explain the Single Tax before the Legislature of New York State.

"Free Land League" is the title of a new organisation, formed in New York, with the following platform:—"America is fast becoming the property of a few. All men have a right to live without paying some one else rent. We would abolish this system of landlordism, which is killing American manhood, by concentrating all taxes on land values, thus making cheap land and high wages."

## Dives and Lazarus.

According to the *Glasgow Echo* the Sheriff has granted a warrant for the eviction of an old woman named Mary Mundie, 104 years of age, who resides in a "wretched little room" in Dobbies Loan, for which she hitherto paid 6s. 6d. per month. The eviction is for non-payment of rent.

On Monday, 2nd July, the Glasgow Town Council unanimously agreed to raise the salaries of twelve of the staff in the Master of Work's Office by £190, and also recommended that the salaries of the eight assistants in the City Engineer's Office be raised by £180, and that the assistant Master of Work's receive an advance from £300 to £350.

On the same day as the above took place the Statute Labour Committee recommended the Council that 21s. should be the minimum wage in their department, and the Council overturned this decision by 28 votes to 26.

About ten o'clock the other Sunday morning a woman died in the Glasgow Western Police Office. Death was due to destitution. She had been found sitting on a chair.

We understand that the accounts in connection with the entertainment to the officers and men of the channel Squadron, on the occasion of their visit to Glasgow, have been made up, and the total amounts to £892.

**AN OUT-OF-WORK'S SUICIDE.**—An inquest was held by Dr. G. D. Thomas, at St. Pancras, on the body of Charles Francis Orger Cotier, aged 57, a brass finisher, lately residing at 48 Burton Street, Euston Square. The widow of the deceased said the latter had been long out of work, and was worried and depressed in consequence. The jury returned a verdict of "Suicide while of unsound mind."

**COST OF THE CARNOT WREATHS.**—It is estimated by the *Telegraph* that a sum of £120,000 was expended on floral emblems for the funeral of the late President Carnot. The coronals sent by the Czar, the City of Moscow, and Admiral Avellan cost 30,000f.

Edward Brenchley, of Chatham, was starved to death, so said a local jury. He had been out of work owing to ill health. Not a particle of food was found in the house when the place was visited.

**A VALUABLE PICTURE.**—Constable's famous landscape painting, "White Horse," was sold by auction in London on Saturday, and fetched sixty two hundred guineas, Sir G. Agnew being the purchaser.

The *Society Press* informs us that Miss Rockefeller, the American heiress, has five million dollars, and this year will be one of the belles of London Society.

It came out at an inquest this week that Miss Brenchley, an English seamstress, lives in a garret, for which she pays 3s. 6d. per week. Her brother died through starvation. The poor girl had not had her clothes off for a fortnight at a time.

Lord Francis Hope, a brother to the Duke of Newcastle, succeeded in 1887 to estates producing annually over £16,000. This not being a sufficient income this young scion of the nobility mortgaged his estate to the extent of £159,000.

Lord Francis has become bankrupt. The gross liabilities are £657,942, and the assets about £174,000.

**DEATH FROM DESTITUTION.**—Janet Ferguson or Torrance, a widow, 60 years of age, having no fixed residence, died at the Western Police Office, Glasgow, on Sunday morning from destitution and general debility. A woman had allowed her to pass the night in the lobby of her house in Carrick Street.

## Current Literature.

"THE STORY OF MY DICTATORSHIP."  
London; Bliss, Sands & Foster, Craven Street, Strand. 1894. (3s. 6d.)

"The Story of my Dictatorship," an anonymous work, published by Bliss, Sands & Foster, and dedicated without permission to the Liberty and Property Defence League, is a short account of the dream of a Single Taxman, who, having been elected Dictator or Protector, puts in force, during his tenure of office, the remedy for social ills known as the Single Tax. The dream begins with a scene in Trafalgar Square, where the author is elected Lord Protector of the realm. A constitution is drawn up on the spot, which runs as follows:—"Every individual to have equal and inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." The constitution is briefly explained to the crowd as only a genuine Single Taxman could explain it, and the newly-elected Protector forthwith enters upon his official duties. His first act is to issue a proclamation to the effect that all taxes, whether direct or indirect, are from that moment abolished. He then explains how revenues are to be raised—namely, by each person paying to the community the value of the natural opportunities he uses or pre-empts. The scene then shifts to the Protector's audience-chamber, where deputations from the various interests that consider themselves injuriously affected by the Protector's policy assemble to interview him on the subject. These are answered in turn by the Lord Protector himself. The arguments they use are typical of the arguments used by such interests or individuals in real life against the Single Tax to-day. These arguments are very appropriately distributed among the various objectors to the scheme, and this distribution is itself a very clever piece of work.

Foremost amongst the interviewers is a loafer, who, as he says, has come to claim his piece of land. The Protector answers him by pointing out that division of land into minute pieces is not contemplated in the constitution. He also shows how the land has been made public property by the mere fact of collecting the annual values. The loafer is not satisfied, however, and at last the Protector shows him how he can become possessed of a piece of land. The loafer rejoices exceedingly, having in his mind the idea of getting hold of a piece of land and letting it out to others to cultivate, becoming a landowner, in fact. It is shown to him that he will have to pay the annual value of his land to the State. He thinks this is nothing, as he is under the impression that he can raise the rent on his tenants, and so recoup himself for the tax. A lesson is then read to him on the impossibility of shifting this tax. Then he elects to go to the poorhouse. These have been abolished. He thinks prison the next best place. But it is shown to him that he would be worse off there than anywhere else. He is ultimately convinced that under the new constitution it is utterly impossible to be a loafer, and he goes out from the presence of the Lord Protector with the full intention of becoming a useful member of society.

The next petitioner is a small shopkeeper, who with his hard-earned savings has purchased a piece of land and built a house upon it. He is fearful lest it be taken away from him. The Protector tackles him upon the fiscal side of the question, which is the only side from which the shopkeeping class can be appealed to, and shows him quite plainly that his taxes *now* will be much less than they were under the old system, the only difference to him being that the selling value of his land will have disappeared. This man had been an industrious man all his life, and as soon as he is convinced of the beneficence of the change accepts it gladly and goes away. He is, in this, typical of the class he represents.

These petitioners to the Lord Protector are of course intended to be representative of the various types of opponents of the Single Tax existing in our midst to-day, and each of them gives arguments from his own point of view against the Protector's method of raising revenue.

The next to enter the Audience-Chamber is a Socialist, and he gives very forcibly the arguments usually produced by Socialists

against the Single Tax philosophy. The Protector in his reply does not fully satisfy him, and keeps him alongside while he interviews the others.

A deputation of Railway Directors are next introduced, and after them a string of deputations representing various vested interests. These Directors are at first very boisterous, and seem as if they wanted to overawe the Protector. "We have come," said they, "to demand the repeal of these disastrous proclamations which are working the ruin of the country," etc., etc. The Protector is not in the least affected by their bullying attitude, but calmly asks them to state explicitly how they had been hurt by the new law. They explain to him that the revenue they formerly derived from their land had been taxed away, that their employees were demanding most exorbitant wages, which, if paid, would eat away all their profits. "Then don't pay them," was the calm reply. "But what are we to do?" they asked. "Replace them from the unemployed," said the Protector. Then it turned out that there were none such, and the Directors are made the medium of explaining how prosperous the country now is.

Various other deputations are introduced, but space forbids anything further than a mere enumeration of their grievances. The Directors of the New River Company, who appear next upon the scene, complain that the value of their stock has been depreciated by the opening up of new opportunities, another Company having simply gone and tapped the supply of water of which the Company represented by the deputation had formerly held the monopoly.

A group of landlords and officials of the Liberty and Property Defence League are next put through the Protector's mill, they being answered completely from the writings of their own particular champion, Herbert Spencer: "Equity therefore does not permit property in land." "But Mr. Spencer has himself renounced this utterance of his." "Yea, verily, but he has not yet *disproved* it."

A discussion with a lawyer follows, and in it the question of legal and natural rights is thoroughly thrashed out.

A bishop and a capitalist also have their innings, and in the course of these interviews all the possible arguments against the Single Tax are stated and met. The churchman and his peculiar style of dealing with thorny questions are drawn to the life, the avowed sympathy, the ambiguous sayings, and the reluctance to call things by their right names are well and thoroughly portrayed, and the dream ends with an account of a conversation with a personage who is evidently intended to represent Mr. William Morris. The conversation covers the points of difference between the two schools of thought, and ends abruptly by the Socialist pointing out one small inconsistency, namely, the existence of a Dictator in a democratic community. He is unwilling to resign, and while they are taking measures to compel him, the dreamer is awakened and the vision ends. The moral of the vision is given at the close, that moral being that all sections of Reformers should bury their differences and unite on the common platform of **THE LAND FOR THE PEOPLE.**

"Property in land differs in its origin from property in any commodity produced by human labour; the product of labour naturally belongs to the labourer who produced it, but the same argument does not apply to land which is not produced by labour, but is the gift of the Creator of the world to mankind; every argument used to give an ethical foundation for the exclusive right of private property has a latent fallacy."—*Right Hon. Justice Longfield.*

"These (our land laws) might be for the general advantage, and if they could be shown to be so, by all means they should be maintained; but, if not, does any man with what he is pleased to call his mind, deny that a state of law under which such mischief could exist, under which the country itself would exist, not for its people but for a mere handful of them, ought to be instantly and absolutely set aside."—*Lord Chief Justice Coleridge.*