



# COMMONWEAL



(FOR LAND RESTORATION—REAL FREE TRADE)

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## Compensation is Confiscation

One of the chief objections we meet in our advocacy of Land Restoration without compensation is the cry of "confiscation." This arises from that strong sense of justice, inherent in most people, which prompts to quick resentment of anything savouring of unfairness. Unfortunately, for want of clear thinking, that sense is inverted in many, and so we find sincere and honest persons mistakenly ranging themselves on the side of Land Monopoly, the greatest injustice ever inflicted upon mankind.

Rightly understood, the C.L.P. proposal is not to confiscate, but to stop present confiscation. Land, by which is meant the whole of the material universe outside man himself, is not the creation of man's effort. It is the gift of Nature. Nature is no respecter of persons, peer and peasant are the same in her sight, each is born with an equal right to life, and since man's life is not possible apart from land, it follows that land cannot rightfully be held as the private property of any person. That in practice it has come to be held in this manner is an act of confiscation committed by the few against the rest. It will not avail to plead that the confiscation happened away back in the past. A robbery is still a robbery, notwithstanding the passage of time. The land *is*—not was, or ought to be, but *is even now*—the property of the people, and it is not possible for them to confiscate that which already is theirs; they are bound to insist upon its immediate restitution, and the question of compensation does not arise.

But, it may be objected, "what of those who have purchased their land, have not they acquired a good title?" There is a maxim of English law which declares that "the buyer cannot acquire a higher title than the seller has to give." All the talk on the part of the defenders of landlordism, of confiscation, lawful transactions, rights, titles, etc., is just so much camouflage by which it is sought to conceal from the people the fact that "property in land rests only in human enactment, which may at any time be changed without violation of the moral law." Whenever any of these human enactments do not run with the moral law, it is incumbent upon all, if only in the interest of respect for law itself, to insist that they be brought into line or repealed. When once the true nature of landlordism is understood it will be seen that "it involves a continuous confiscation of labour and the results of labour."

The "hardship" that would result were the land restored without compensation to present holders is another "difficulty" that is raised by some. In their concern for the landholder deprived of his power to collect rent, these quite overlook the hardship *now being endured by those who are denied their right to life*. Like the little girl who, after her mother had explained to her the picture of Christians thrown to the lions at Rome, exclaimed: "Oh, mother, there is one poor lion who hasn't got a Christian," they suffer from inverted morality. No considerations of hardship to those now profiting from special privilege can be allowed to stand in the way of justice. It is the duty of the community to insist on this first. All proved cases of hardship could be dealt with on their merits, compassionate allowances being granted from the Communal Rent Fund in cases where applicants were entirely without

means. The Civil Liabilities Tribunals of the later years of the War afford a useful precedent. For the physically fit but untrained, reasonable maintenance while training might also be provided. Once the community was in possession of its own, the equality of opportunity resulting would enable the people quickly to adapt themselves to the new and better conditions.

It has to be remembered that the demand of the C.L.P. is based, not on expediency, nor on the advantage to be gained by any section of the people, but, on justice. This is the answer to those who fear that injustice would be done to some. It is not possible for injustice to result from the doing of justice. "The anti-slavery movement in the United States commenced with talk of compensating owners, but when four millions of slaves were emancipated, the owners got no compensation, nor did they clamour for any." At first compensation would seem natural and right, but as public discussion progressed the conscience of the community was awakened to the true nature of chattel-slavery, and the question of compensation receded into the background and was quickly lost sight of. So, here, as the searchlight of publicity is directed upon the evil of landlordism, any discussion on compensation will be as to what amount will be due from the Land Lords to their victims.

There is an aspect of the compensation question that is worthy of consideration by those who imagine that it would be easier and quicker to buy Land Lords out. Apart from the immorality of the suggestion that the people should submit to blackmail, it is impossible by any compromise to bridge over the radical difference between wrong and right.

To quote Henry George: "Just in proportion as the interests of the landholders are conserved, just in that proportion must general interests and general rights be disregarded, and if landholders are to lose nothing of their special privileges, the people at large can gain nothing. To buy up individual property rights would merely be to give the landholders in another form a claim of the same kind and amount that their possession of land now gives them; it would be to raise for them by taxation the same proportion of the earnings of labour and capital that they are now enabled to appropriate in rent. Their unjust advantage would be preserved, and the unjust disadvantage of the non-landholders would be continued."

A specious plea is advanced in Socialist circles that compensation be paid so as to buy off the opposition of landholders. The price does not matter, they say, since the intention is to levy special taxation to recover the money after we have obtained the land. This is sheer dishonesty. The landholders are to be tricked into parting with the land under false pretences. Those who make this suggestion seem to count on the money being there when they come to tax it.

Compensation, however it may be arranged, would be confiscation. The landholder now draws rent as a private tax on the industry of the producers. He takes from them wealth for which he makes no return. That is confiscation. After being compensated he would no longer take *rent*, but would take the same amount of wealth as interest. Again he would make no return for what he took. So that he still would practise confiscation.

J. W. G. P.

## WHAT ABOUT IT?

### Living To Die

In an earlier generation our pious forefathers lived with the thought of death constantly before them, kept there by the forms of religion they were taught to practise. To-day twelve million workers in this country go to work every Monday morning and work all through the week to earn enough to enable them to live and work another week until they die, but they are taught now not to think too much of death.

### Cost Of Living: Official!

There was no change during November in the cost-of-living figure of the Ministry of Labour, which reported that its figure for December 1 was the same as at November 1—43 per cent. above pre-war.

### A Popular Gift

A daily newspaper, rhapsodising about Christmas shopping, states in a headline that "something to eat is a popular gift." The public conscience always grows uneasy about poverty when times of feasting arrive. It is too easily salved by the distribution of crumbs of comfort to the starving poor. The touching humility and deep gratitude of the unfortunate is so flattering to those who patronise them. The orgy of festivity may rage without fear of unseemly riots on the part of the unemployed. There is much virtue in a little extra charity just now.

### Both Baffled!

"There is no material product that we are unable to multiply, and markets choked with abundance confront multitudes subsisting on a pittance. It is almost the supreme irony of human history, and neither economist nor statesman appears able to resolve the deadlock."

This appeared in Lord Astor's Sunday paper, *The Observer*. The "deadlock" will resolve itself when the Land Lord is removed from the path. It is he who brings about the serious condition described by our contemporary, and every move so far made by economist and statesman has served only to intensify the situation—for no move has been made to stop the robbery of the producer of wealth, which is the reason for those choked markets and for his being unable to buy out of his "pittance."

### World's Unemployed

According to a Report issued by the International Labour Office at Geneva, there are at present over 30,000,000 unemployed in the world, and the loss of wages arising from this state of affairs amounts to £4,000,000,000 a year.

The International Labour Office leaves it at that. No suggestion as to why "this state of affairs" exists, nor of any step (or steps) that might be taken to remedy it.

Representatives of all parties in the British House of Commons met in conference on the Wednesday before Christmas to discuss "Unemployment." The conference broke up without having in any way brightened the prospect for the "unemployed" in this New Year!

We have lost count of the number of such "conferences," but that does not matter—they all ended in the same fruitless manner.

### Brighton Brightens Land Lords' Lot

Nine hundred and seventy-eight miles of new electric track have been laid, at a cost of £2,750,000, for the service which will be the biggest suburban electric system in the world, and the first main-line system to be electrified in this country.

Twenty-three new six-car trains have been built, and three new all-Pullman trains of five coaches.

Every hour, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., there will be six trains to Brighton.

Inquiries from house hunters are pouring in on estate agents. A director of one housing syndicate receives 20 inquiries each week for houses—mostly from Londoners.

Here is the "Land Question" in a nutshell. Some Land Lords are going to get the cost of that new railway service over and over again—and it was not they who paid in the first place.

### What We Mean By Land Restoration

For the information of new readers, and to obviate possibility of misunderstanding, we put once more up record what we of the C.L.P. mean by "Land Restoration"

By "Land Restoration" is meant and intended—"Restore; i.e., to give back."

All Land Lords, i.e., holders of land, are to be *not* possessed of their fancied "ownership," but they *will* remain in possession as tenants of the people on payment into the Common Land-Rent Fund of the full annual rent of all land held. All tenants will be required to pay rent for *holding*, irrespective of the use, under-use, or non-use of the land held.

No compensation, pension, annuity, bonds, or any other form of consideration will be given to any Land Lords in respect of such dispossession. The land was never theirs. If they are wise, they will refrain from raising the question of "Compensation," lest the community should demand from them compensation for those now denied their equal right to use the earth.

### Government Co-operative Farming

It is not widely known that the British Government owns a co-operative farm at Amesbury, in Wiltshire, where 100 workers are employed at standard agricultural wages. The Government Director, who manages the farm, is paid a salary of £722 per annum.

During the past thirteen years the total loss incurred on this farm was £20,671. The loss during the past twelve years was £27,872, but in the year 1919-20, the great boom year for agriculture, a profit was made of £7,968. Since then profit has only been made once, of £187 in 1924-5.

The loss made in 1931-2 is shown as £3,199, made mainly of a "farming loss" of £1,574, and interest on farming capital of £1,009.

### Land Lords Borrow Public Money

Under the Improvement of Land Acts, a landholder is able to borrow money from the Government for the purpose of carrying out certain improvements, on the security of a rent charge which takes priority over most other charges, including an existing mortgage.

During 1931, Land Lords borrowed £79,794 for farm buildings, £17,516 for farm houses and cottages, £12,000 for water supply, £11,300 for mansion houses, £10,148 for electric light installations, £5,381 for hop drying installations, £3,178 for fencing and embanking, £2,478 for private roads, £1,751 for sewage disposal works, £1,524 for drainage, and £8,077 for other improvements.

It would be interesting to know the difference between the rent charge made by the Land Lords to their tenants and the charge made by the Government for these loans.

### Public Money For Land Lords

During 1931 the Ministry of Agriculture approved schemes of field drainage, rural water supply and claying of fen lands estimated to cost £94,802, and out of the revenue obtained by taxation imposed on the People the Government contributed £33,912 as a free gift to Land Lords toward the cost of the improvements.

On August 31, 1931, further expenditure of this kind was stopped owing to the necessity for economy forced on the Government.

At that date a further 60 schemes were under consideration involving a State contribution of £6,000.

Since the inception of these grants in August, 1929, the total gifts from the Government to Land Lords amounted to £91,953. This was the work of a Socialist Government.

### Famine In Russia

The produce of the Russian peasant has been taken from him at prices which mean confiscation. He has resisted theft by reducing production. The outcome is an acute food problem, especially in the towns. Probably the famine will not prove to be so bad as it is painted, because the Russian peasant has for centuries practised the habit of concealing his wealth. Whether under Czarism or Communism, the peasant will resist control and live, while the urban slave resists and dies, or obeys and dies.

## Land Lords Get Us Both Ways

Messrs. Scobold, Farmer and Sons, of Gresham Street, who specialise in the sale of factories, plant, and machinery, report that the year 1932 has been a very satisfactory one. The following extract from their review of the year will be of general interest:—

"There has been a considerable turnover in properties of an industrial character, as well as land for development, and there is no doubt that the influx of the foreigner, which started in 1931 as a result of the tariff wall, has proved a great boon to owners of properties throughout the country. It has also been an incentive to British manufacturers to enlarge their works or acquire additional premises."

The Tariff was to shut out that wicked foreigner. But it seems that it has brought him in. Being, like the native-born, a land animal, he had to have land for use, and so the Land Lords quite readily supplied it—at a price. As a result, the "tariff wall has proved a great boon to owners of properties throughout the country." Those British manufacturers who have enlarged their works will also have contributed their quota to the spoil of the Lords of the Land.

Another factor which has operated to the gain of the Land Lord is mentioned. "The embargo on new public issues having now been lifted almost in its entirety." It's all grist that comes to the Land Lords' mill.

### A Doleful Dame

Lady Denman, at a Birth Control meeting: "Can we hope that industry will in the future absorb our huge population? Shall we ever recover the whole of our export trade which we were beginning to lose even before the war?"

This lady is scared without reason. If only she will reflect on the matter calmly, it should dawn upon her that the more people, the greater the needs for industry to supply. Carry birth control to its logical conclusion, and soon there would be neither producers to engage in, nor consumers to absorb the products of industry.

But we do not contemplate a state of existence wherein industry shall be the main purpose of life. What we do look (and work) for is a world in which every normal inhabitant shall do his or her share of the necessary work, free to enjoy to the full the ample leisure, made possible to all through the elimination of the non-producing consumers at both ends of the scale, and the greater use of all forms of labour-saving machinery, whether now known or hereafter to be devised.

As for our lost export trade, that is not recoverable; but the land of Britain is equal to sustaining the population of Britain—if only that population is allowed to get to it.

### Boredom And Discontent

"But, perhaps, the most interesting fact about this book is its proof of the happiness that is to be derived from skilled craft. An immense amount of the discontent of our time is due to the boredom which masses of men and women feel in their labour. Millions of people daily do parts of jobs which would not be worth doing even if the whole operation were performed by one person. The mechanisation of mankind has robbed workers of any joy in their job, and the great value of such books as this, of such a place as Mr. Stevenson's *Smithy*, is that they do re-establish the worth of craftsmanship, the pleasure which is to be obtained from doing a whole job instead of a bit of a job. No one can read 'The Din of a Smithy' without becoming aware of the happiness of those who work at Whimble, and although Mr. Stevenson has not set out to teach sociological lessons to his readers, may not even know that he is teaching any, the fact remains that he shows beyond a peradventure where happiness in labour is to be found."

The quotation is from St. John Ervine's review of J. A. R. Stevenson's "The Din of a Smithy," in *The Observer*.

The monopoly of land—the only thing upon and with which man can employ himself—has robbed, and now is robbing, workers of all chance of self-expression through their craft. This it is which has given rise to that mechanisation, and all attempts to re-establish the worth of craftsmanship which do not have regard to the existence, and effect, of the Land Lord are foredoomed to fail.

## "Prosperity"

By The Film Critic

A few weeks ago a film entitled "Mad Masquerade" was reviewed in these columns. It was a Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer production. Now this same Corporation has brought another film to England in which a small dose of economic truth is administered.

The film in question is "Prosperity," with Marie Dressler and Polly Moran filling the chief roles. Any screen play with these two inimitable comedy actresses in it is bound to border on farce, but the truth is told about certain facts of life, all the same.

Briefly the story concerns the failure of the Warrener Bank, built up in a small town in the West by old man Warrener, carried on with even greater success by Ma Warrener (Marie Dressler), until she hands over the presidency to her son. The son uses his mother's private fortune as a guarantee in a building deal with the idea of making more money for her. The said fortune was in gilt-edged securities, and Ma Warrener's instructions were that the bonds were never to be touched, but always to be kept at the Bank as a reserve security for customers' deposits.

A run on the Bank brought Mrs. Warrener back on the scene prepared to mobilise her hidden reserve and save the situation, but the bonds were missing and the Bank was forced to suspend payment. Then followed a period of adversity during which the son made strenuous efforts to secure the erection of the building on time in order to redeem the bonds, while Ma Warrener went to work in a grocery store.

Owing to lack of credit, the building could not proceed fast enough. Unemployment increased, shopkeepers failed, and despair settled on the little town. Then Ma Warrener woke up. A customer, her son's mother-in-law (Polly Moran), refuses to pay cash for her week's groceries and is about to drive off with them in her car, when Ma Warrener annexes the spare tyre from the back. She explains to her astonished employer that goods are just as good as money, and that he wanted a new tyre anyway.

An amused crowd witnesses the incident, and Mrs. Warrener seizes the opportunity to give them a short but forcible lesson in economics. She tells them that money does not matter, that what they want to do is to exchange goods and services. She points to a cobbler in the crowd and suggests that somebody wants his boots mended. A tailor reveals dilapidated boots. She points to the cobbler's torn trousers and sends them off together to do a deal.

From that point the fun grows fast and furious. A woman explains that her sister-in-law is coming to stay with her and she has no bed for her, but that she has a pig. A bystander says he has a bed to sell, but that he doesn't want a pig. Mrs. Warrener promptly offers him groceries for the bed and sells the bed for the pig. She has some trouble in explaining the transaction to her employer, who is a little dense. He thinks the sister-in-law ought to figure in the deal somewhere!

Seized with her great idea, Mrs. Warrener proceeds to organise resumption of building operations. She pays the workmen with orders on the shopkeepers, due for payment on completion of the building. All goes well, but other complications set in and the bonds are stolen. The Bank is due to open as soon as the building is completed. Faced again with the loss of her fortune, Mrs. Warrener decides to commit suicide in order to release a very large sum for which she is insured. The bonds are recovered by her son and she is rescued in the nick of time. She had taken what she believed to be a bottle of rat poison, but it turned out to be a bottle of prune juice laxative!

Broad comedy, but the economic lesson is rammed home. Once more we congratulate the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Corporation on making good use of its great influence.

We invite this enterprising film company to go one better, and show that universal prosperity depends on the restoration of the land to common ownership and the abolition of all taxation by collecting the rent of land for public services.



The Offices of the COMMONWEAL viewed from the historic XVIIth Century gateway of Lincoln's Inn.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 1933

### Our Thirteenth Milestone

This is the 603rd issue of the COMMONWEAL, and its appearance marks the entry upon our fourteenth year of service. When our first number appeared on March 29, 1919, we were without a single subscriber. We had only money enough to see ahead for a few months, but we had unbounded faith in the justice of our Cause and in the strength of a moral appeal. That faith is, if possible, stronger than ever to-day.

In the midst of a world perplexed, and of peoples disappointed and disillusioned by the utter failure of all orthodox political parties to solve the grave problems confronting civilisation, the COMMONWEAL seeks to bear aloft the Banner of Justice and Freedom; to proclaim the equal right of each to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and, through our clear-cut Demand, to point the only way to the realisation of this objective.

On the threshold of this, another year of endeavour, we call upon all who love Justice and desire Freedom to share with us the joy of service.

### How A Massacre Was Averted

Styrian peasants, faced with distraint warrants for unpaid taxes, threatened to march on Graz. Troops were sent to Vorau last Monday to restore order. By ten o'clock in the evening the situation had become serious. One thousand peasants armed with cudgels prepared to attack the town-hall. Troops with fixed bayonets loaded their machine-guns with live rounds, donned their gas-masks and prepared to release tear-gas on the crowd. Then a telegram arrived from the Public Prosecutor, consenting to the demand of the peasants for the release of four ringleaders in a riot that had taken place four days earlier, and, satisfied with this partial victory, the peasants dispersed.

Austria is not the only country where Authority is prepared to massacre the people with machine-guns and tear-gas. Every "civilised" government is organised on similar lines, but there are ways of destroying the power of these governments better than by opposing wooden cudgels to fixed bayonets. Their desperate plight in their last efforts to oppose the will of the people is betrayed by the measures they adopt for their protection.

### "Technocracy"

A body of "experts" at Columbia University, headed by Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, has issued the results of a three years' investigation into economic conditions in America. The compilation of the report has cost £200,000. Half the money was supplied by the Rockefeller Foundation, the other half by the United States Government.

The result is as might be expected. The servants have obeyed their masters. Boiled down, the report recommends that present methods of control shall be substituted by more efficient methods of control—of the workers by their masters for their masters. The science of better control is called "Technocracy."

Under the present system the worker enjoys a little imaginary freedom in exercising his ingenuity to dodge control. If the experts are allowed to instal their plan, he won't have a chance. Then there may be trouble.

### Irish General Election

Mr. De Valera has thrown a bombshell into the camp of his opponents by dissolving the Irish Free State Parliament and precipitating a General Election before they are fully prepared.

The recent movement initiated by the Lord Mayor of Dublin to form a "National" Government has not been properly described in any Press reports. The embryo "national party" is really an effort on the part of the present Lords of Ireland to seize power.

The failure of the present Government to pay the Irish Land Annuities to the British Government has caused serious anxiety to the ranch owners in the Irish Free State who are buying their land by instalments. Their own titles of "ownership" have been placed in jeopardy by Mr. De Valera's action. Hence the anxiety to unite all who are in favour of the Treaty, and a resumption of payment of the land annuities.

In an attempt to conceal the character of this new movement in Irish politics, the *Daily Mail* has referred to it as the Irish *Commonwealth* Party. Its proper name is the Irish Land Lords' Party, and it should be clearly labelled.

### Glebe Lands

During 1931, sales of glebe land were completed on applications made by 29 incumbents, the total area being 578 acres and the aggregate purchase money amounting to £48,520, an average of nearly £84 an acre.

Since the passing of the Glebe Lands Acts, 1888, the sales have numbered 5,808, in respect of 133,914 acres, the total purchase money being £5,071,897.

The price obtained last year is the highest average price obtained during any period since the passing of the Act, and is principally due to the fact that a number of areas of glebe land formerly used for agricultural purposes have been sold for development as building land. In one case an area of 32 acres, producing a gross rental of £110 per annum, was sold for £18,500, which now produces an income to the benefit of more than eight times the net income formerly derived from the land.

In another case an offer of £1,000 for 5½ acres of glebe land was submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture for approval. The Ministry, however, considered the land had a much higher market value, and finally the land was sold for £1,500, the purchaser paying all costs.

The area of glebe land in England and Wales was estimated in 1887 to be about 660,000 acres, of which 10,400 acres was subsequently transferred to the Welsh Church Commissioners. After making allowance for this land and for sales it is estimated that there are now about 248,000 acres of glebe land remaining in England.

When the land is restored to the people, the glebe land including the thousands of acres which have been sold, will, of course, be included in the restoration. All traffic in land will cease, since it cannot in equity be either bought or sold, and its rent, whether it be used for agricultural or other purposes, will be collected for the use of the people, in place of the taxation now imposed on them.

# Landholding in England and Wales

We use the term "Landholding" deliberately, for there are no landowners.

Here are a few authoritative opinions:—

"The first thing that the student has to do is to get rid of the idea of absolute ownership. Such an idea is quite unknown in English law. No man in law is absolute owner of his lands. He only owns an estate in them."—*Joshua Williams, Real Property*, 12th ed., p. 17.

"All lands or tenements in England in the hands of subjects are holden mediately, or immediately, of the King. For in the law of England we have not any subjects' land which is not so holden."—*Coke, Institutes*, p. 488.

"I remember as a law student that the first thing I had to learn was that there is no such thing as private property in land."—*David Lloyd George*, in many public speeches during his several "Land Campaigns."

"However intricate the law of property has been allowed to become, the central theory on the subject has never changed."—*Land and the Nation (Lloyd George's "Green Book," October, 1925)*.

"Accurately and strictly speaking, there is no foundation in nature or in natural law why a set of words on parchment should convey the dominion of land. Alloidal (absolute) property no subject in England now has; it being a received and now undeniable principle in law that all lands in England are holden mediately or immediately of the King."—*Sir William Blackstone, "Commentaries," Vol. II, p. 106*.

This same authority reminds us that: "No laws are binding on the human subject which assault the body or violate the conscience."

Blackstone also says: "By the law of nature and reason he who first began to use the land, acquired therein a kind of transient possession, that lasted as long as he was using it and no longer; or to speak with greater precision, the right of possession continued for the same time as the act of possession lasted. But there is no foundation in nature or natural law why a set of words upon parchment should convey the dominion of land; why a son should have a right to exclude his fellow-creatures from a determinate spot of ground because his father had done so before him."—*"Commentaries," Vol. II, p. 3*.

Twice only in our rough Island's story has the land been surveyed—and the result made available to the public: 1086 (Domesday), to the order of William I; and 1876, by order of the Government following a motion by the Lord Derby of the time, made in the House of Lords. In the Table below we have set out the result of the second Survey, which should be studied in the light of the explanatory notes which follow:

422 peers held over one-seventh of the country.

Class 1. Holders of more than 1,000 acres:—3,810 persons held over one-third.

Class 2. Holders of 100 to 1,000 acres:—33,997 persons held nearly one-fourth.

The above 38,229 persons held nearly three-fourths of the country.

Class 3. Holders of 1 to 100 acres:—217,213 persons held under one-ninth.

Class 4. Holders of less than 1 acre:—702,549 persons shared between them less than a two hundred and forty-seventh (1/247th) part of the country.

Landless:—20,047,275 others did not possess one square inch of their native land.

Woodlands not counted:—As only land assessed to rates (local taxes) was taken into account, the total of the holdings in the first three classes is under-stated by some millions of acres. Some slight under-statement also has to be allowed for in Class 3 for the same reason.

The Church:—The total shown is that definitely returned as held by the Church of England as such, but there are some thousands of clerics (vicars, rectors and curates) whose names appear in the Return as individual holders, but who hold by virtue of their office only, the land being regarded as the property of the Church in whose service they are. These are here counted as individual holders, and so their number goes to swell the total of those who hold our land.

The totals of Classes 3 and 4 over-state the true position owing to copyholders and holders of leases for 99 years and upwards having been counted as "owners." These were tenants.

Duplication.—As the Return was compiled by counties, persons holding in more than one county were duplicated in the total. For example: the Duke of Buccleuch held in 14 different counties and so was counted as 14 separate holders. When all these errors have been allowed for, it is doubtful if the total number of holders would reach 750,000 instead of 957,991.

Landless:—Population having doubled since the Return was compiled, the number of landless Britons to-day is about 40,000,000, for although there has been some breaking-up of large estates in recent years, the age-old practice of adding field to field has not been abandoned—the Earl of Lonsdale, for instance, held 68,065 in 1876, but now holds 175,000 acres.

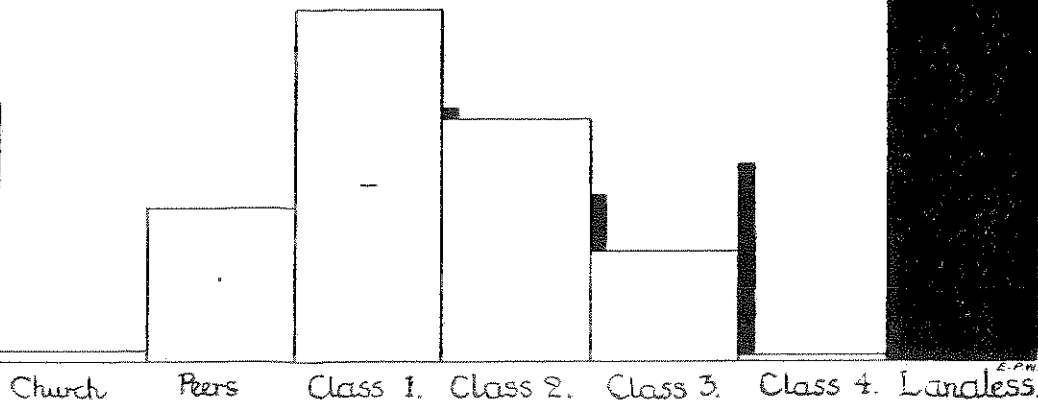
The first requisite of science and the prime necessity of education is to make people think, said the present Lord Chancellor (Lord Sankey), and a study of the interesting facts set out above ought to have that result. J. W. G. P.

The Church held  
317,833  
acres

Landless  
20,047,275

England and Wales.  
White represents Land.  
Black represents Holders.

| Land held by: |        |            |
|---------------|--------|------------|
| NO.           | CLASS. | ACRES.     |
| 422           | PEERS  | 5,647,907  |
| 3,810         | 1      | 12,894,833 |
| 33,997        | 2      | 8,927,815  |
| 217,213       | 3      | 3,958,556  |
| 702,549       | 4      | 151,156    |
| 957,991       |        | 31,580,967 |





## A New Game Wanted

Immediately after the War it became obvious that the then approaching unemployment problem would become the shuttlecock of politics.

The game reached its height in the General Election of 1929. The Liberal Party adopted the slogan, "We can conquer unemployment," and made the tactical mistake of publishing plans for doing so. As a result the Liberal vote dropped from over 5,000,000 to 2,320,310.

Socialist leaders told the public that the Labour Party alone had the remedy, and pleaded that "Labour should be given a chance." As the alternative was an already discredited Conservative Government, the Labour Party was given a chance.

Long before the General Election of 1929, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald had said that his first business when appointed to Office would be to search first for the cause of unemployment and then for the remedy. On assuming office he made good his promise by appointing a committee of economists to help him. Some months later he announced that "world causes" were responsible, and that the remedy lay in "international co-operation."

After the Labour Party's failure to stem the rising tide of unemployment, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald discovered that the causes were "cosmic."

Now a Government of all the talents, armed with a "free hand" and a "doctor's mandate," has failed to do what the three parties individually could not do, proving that three times nothing is equal to nought.

There is, of course, a reason for this failure. The cause of enforced idleness and involuntary poverty is not obscure, and the remedy is simple. The plain fact is that there has never been any intention of solving the unemployment problem.

It is time the game came to an end. Unemployment has been a useful whip for his Majesty's Opposition for the past fourteen years, but the ends of the whip have become so frayed that it has lost its sting. Nobody can accuse Mr. George Lansbury of not wielding it vigorously, but it refuses to crack.

Mr. Winston Churchill pleaded in the House of Commons a few weeks ago that the public should be told the truth. He was not referring specifically to the matter under discussion, but it certainly is time the public were told the truth. They badly need a change from the dope that has been administered to them so consistently for the past few years.

The truth is that so many people are interested in maintaining present conditions that nothing short of a revolution in thought will bring about the change necessary to abolish enforced idleness. Let us consider the interests concerned in maintaining the existing system.

First there is the well-known doctrine of the Federation of British Industries, that "a large floating population of unemployed must always be maintained in order to keep wages down to an economic level." That doctrine is subscribed to generally by the National Confederation of Employers' Associations.

Trade Union officials generally realise that full employment for all workers in their ranks would lessen their personal power and prestige in the political field. Their lust for politics has outgrown their zeal for the workers' interests. This is a severe indictment, but unfortunately it is true.

Sixty thousand Poor Law or Public Assistance officials are directly concerned with the maintenance of present conditions. Most of these people are enjoying comfortable positions, good pay and security. They are unable to visualise anything better for themselves, and so are at the least passive resisters to change.

In a lesser degree, prison and police officials, asylum attendants, doctors, dentists, and a huge inspectorate are also interested to keep things as they are. Thousands of Civil Servants employed internally and externally by the Ministry of Labour and other Government Departments would be aghast at the prospect of the entire abolition of unemployment, *except under war conditions, when alternative and more remunerative opportunities are presented.*

Lastly, we come to the unemployed themselves. rapidly increasing army of those who have grown or growing used to enforced idleness, and the not entirely buttered bread of charity, may be excused if they look askance at the prospect of being compelled to work some forty-eight or more hours per week for a wage very slightly in excess of the cash doled out to them on the express condition that they do nothing. They may argue, with some show of reason, that the wastage of energy, wear and tear of clothes, cost of transport and other necessary expenses involved in work for a living would not be reflected in the increased money they would receive.

With this tremendous dead weight of resistance to solution of the unemployment problem, is it to be wondered at that no very serious attempt has been made to tackle it? The public reception of the Russian plan embodied in the Liberal Party's proposals was seen in 1929. The Labour Party's present plans are but a variation of the same idea, and there is neither hope nor danger—according to one's point of view—of their acceptance.

No practical alternative is offered to the present Government's policy, which is to induce the public to accept existing conditions as inevitable and to make the best of them. He the "Social Service Movement" and the utilisation of the personal popularity of the Prince of Wales to make it a success.

The unemployed and underpaid employed are to be convinced that their condition is not abnormal but essential to the well-being of society, and that the proper thing to do is to enjoy leisure. A new age of culture is visualised, in which the enforced idleness now regarded as a curse will be seen as blessed leisure. The unemployed are to be taught to be content with simpler food and clothing, fewer artificial pleasures, more primitive and natural conditions of life. A new world is to be discovered in books, pictures, social intercourse under proper supervision, open-air exercise, and simple games, amenities to be made available to the poorest in the land.

It is interesting at this point to note that some misgivings are felt by those concerned with maintaining things as they are, lest this new game may work out differently from what is intended. On Wednesday, the 21st December, Lord Eustace Percy presided over a gathering of about 100 M.P.s of various parties, who met in the House of Commons to hear an address by Capt. Ellis, secretary of the National Council for Public Service, on its aims.

*Members present expressed anxiety lest the training of unemployed men in various handicrafts might induce them to enter into competition with workers engaged in various trades.*

No doubt assurances were given that every care would be taken to keep the unemployed in a thoroughly dependent position, and that they would be *amusingly* rather than usefully occupied—that this new game was but a modern version of the age-old "bread and a circus" device.

From henceforth, then, "Public Service" is to be the motto for all workers, whether employed or not. In this new Britannia is once more to be made the despair and admiration of her enemies, the cynosure of her friends, the exemplar of the civilised world, the potential master of worlds yet to be conquered.

The only question seriously exercising the minds of politicians is whether some form of coalition Government can be permanently maintained, so as to give all parties in turn a modicum of satisfaction to their aspirations, while maintaining a standard of poverty which will make it possible successfully to exploit the worker, keeping him in a state of gratitude. The consideration shown to him, perplexity as to the cause of his condition, and a buoying hope that one day things will improve.

Education is the chief danger, but under proper control, as heretofore, drugs may be safely administered, disguised as "knowledge" or "training." There is every reason to suppose that the great design of the master minds will prove highly successful.

Scanning the horizon for some sign of salvation for the workers, what is there to be seen? Revolution is be-

## The Creed of Freedom

WHEREAS all human beings are born with an inherent equal Right to Life, and

WHEREAS no human being can live apart from natural resources (Land), and

WHEREAS Land is not the product of any human effort, but is the free gift of Nature to all alike, the living and the unborn,

THEREFORE IT FOLLOWS that all human beings have an inherent equal Right freely to use the Earth for the sustenance of Life.

AND WHEREAS some human beings do now claim that they can own Land as their private property, thereby denying the inherent equal Right to Life of the rest of their fellows (involuntary poverty and economic slavery being the common lot of the disinherited), the COMMONWEALTH LAND PARTY taking their stand upon JUSTICE and in conformity with the MORAL LAW DEMAND THE IMMEDIATE RESTORATION OF THE LAND WITHOUT COMPENSATION and with that objective seek by all constitutional means to make public opinion in support of a DECLARATION OF COMMON RIGHT TO THE LAND to be made in the House of Commons that from an APPOINTED DATE the LAND SHALL BE DEEMED TO HAVE BEEN RESTORED TO THE PEOPLE such DECLARATION OF COMMON RIGHT to be followed by a FINANCE BILL (BUDGET) in which NO TAXATION shall be imposed but making provision for the collection from all holders of the Land of the ECONOMIC RENT (full annual rental value) of their holdings as the Natural Revenue of the Whole People and in lieu of ALL TAXATION.

preached at the street corners, but the British have little stomach for letting each other's blood. Blood and destruction are not in their gates. They seek the way of peace.

Is there no other way? Yes, there is one other way. The abolition of enforced idleness and involuntary poverty can only be accomplished by divesting Government of the power to raise revenue by imposing taxation or levying rates. This involves a revolution, but a perfectly constitutional one. It can be accomplished by the workers themselves through the ballot box, but they must nominate, finance and elect their own representatives who must be pledged to give effect to their mandate from the workers.

How is essential public revenue to be raised? Of course, that is important. The answer is simple. It can and must be raised by the collection into the public Treasury of the full annual value of all land held in private occupation. This is the natural and only true social revenue, and it is sufficient for its purpose.

It is a revenue which increases progressively with the growth and activity of population. Its amount determines yearly what may properly be expended on necessary social services. A grant would be made to local authorities of so much per head of population in their administrative areas for services best administered locally. The balance would be available for essential national services.

This revenue is just in its incidence. Everybody contributes to-day by the well-established law of rent the full payment due from them for their use of land, *i.e.*, of the natural resources of the earth from which all material wealth is derived by the application of labour. This rent belongs to the community. At present it is being confiscated by a few individuals who give no return for it except permission to the rest of us to live—on their terms.

When the people insist on the collection by Government of this rent for their own use in place of rates and taxes, the increase in their spending power will set everybody to work supplying the increased demand, the effective demand, that will be created.

This is the game for the workers to play.

ROWLAND ENTWISTLE.

## Enter, The Engineer

The mills of the gods grind slowly, but they finally reach and explore every alternative. This dictum would appear to hold as true of the economic world as any other. Prophets, preachers, professors, politicians, pressmen, philanthropists and philosophers have each in turn sought to solve for humanity that great riddle (increasing poverty with increasing progress) which the Sphinx of Fate puts to our so-called civilisation, and which "not to answer is to be destroyed."

True it is that a scientist in Economics solved this puzzle over 50 years ago, but the very equity of the solution was "to the Jews"—typifying all the commercial interests—"a stumblingblock," while its very simplicity was "to the Greeks"—signifying the intelligensia—"foolishness." Thus civilisation has floundered along either in total ignorance of or deliberately flouting the saving Law of Rent, while the resulting extremes of the vicious "trade cycle" have grown ever more violent, until to-day we are devastated by the most terrific economic cyclone that has ever rocked the world.

But despite the tragic failure of the professors and all those other blind leaders of the blind, there still remained, as it were, a last White Hope—the Engineer! Surely the man who had solved so magnificently all the intricate problems of the production of wealth, after all would be the one who best might guide us all to its equitable distribution.

That is why, to-day, everyone listens with bated breath while "Technocracy speaks"! This body of research engineers in New York have for ten years been quietly at work on "An Energy Survey of North America—being an Analysis of the Forces which Condition the Social Structure." Space does not permit a recital here of the astounding facts determined and conclusions reached by these experts of the plumb-line and test-tube. Nor is that needful. For the rest of us, the really significant part of the whole wondrous story is the way in which these technical men—highly specialised in physics, chemistry and mathematics—begin to grope futilely when they essay to relate their findings to Economics.

It is a situation which recalls to mind the words of Stuart Chase in "The Nemesis of American Business." He says: "The average engineer, as we know him, can hardly be said to have a mind of his own. . . . He is narrow and over-specialised, like his master, the business man. He has no more 'sense of State' than a rabbit." This thing, "sense of State" (H. G. Wells' phrase) is perhaps what Herbert Spencer calls "that last and finest product of education: the ability to relate things together." Their lack of this ability is the prime difference between these American engineers and their greatest countryman, Henry George, who possessed it to an almost uncanny degree.

One is left speculating as to whether it may be the Jewish or Grecian mote, as it were, which blinds these men to natural law in the Economic world, as elucidated by that greatest thinker of all time; which blinds them to the true science of Economics; which blinds them to the equitable distribution of our now super-abundant wealth. Can it be possible that we may have to add the engineer also to the list of those others in the discard?

J. R. D.

### Newcastle Toll

*Reynolds's Newspaper* gives these examples of what it terms "Newcastle Toll." But it offers no remedy.

"Newcastle, like other towns, is in the grip of the ground landlord—over its playing-fields!

"Byker Recreation Ground cost £500 an acre in 1927; its previous rateable value was 23s. 5d. per acre!

"Delaval Farm Housing site, bought in 1925, cost £600 per acre. Its rateable value was £1 per acre.

"When landlords are taxpayers, land values are low. When they are sellers, land values are high!"

**Land Rent, the Whole Rent, and not a Single Tax!**

# News From The Front Line

C.L.P., N.Z.

A long and interesting report is to hand from our friends in New Zealand, where propaganda work in favour of Land Restoration is being conducted on large scale lines. We shall be able to give the latest news from New Zealand in our next issue.

## The C.L.P. Badge

The overseas demand for this international emblem of Justice and Freedom is such that members of the C.L.P. in Great Britain wearing it will be in a minority very shortly, unless readers of the COMMONWEAL wake up. Passive assent to the C.L.P. Plan is only one degree removed from dissent. It is of no use crying: "Give us freedom in our time, O Lord, because there is none other that fightest for us." Those who want Freedom might fight for it themselves or for ever be slaves.

## West Cornwall

In this quiet corner of the earth, where England points a contemptuous toe to the angry seas, the C.L.P. message continues to radiate. Visitors to Cornwall from the other three corners and the wider spaces between receive the precious key to the solution of poverty and take it home with them. On New Year's Eve, at Woodcote, Lelant, a meeting was held, addressed by Mr. J. W. Graham Peace. The keen discussion that followed lasted till nearly midnight. New Year's morning was celebrated by the formal enrolment of a new member. A good beginning.

## Resolution

I will buy an extra copy of the COMMONWEAL every week throughout 1933 and personally give it away either to an acquaintance or a stranger. I will do this much at least for Justice and Freedom, for myself and for Humanity.

## Newcastle And Gateshead Branch

Mr. J. Guild, the Secretary of the Branch, sends New Year greetings to all colleagues in the Movement. He at the same time reiterates his determination that, so far as his area is concerned, the Movement shall move during 1933. You can't get or keep a good man down.

## Manchester

Steady progress is being made here. It is reported that members of the public at C.L.P. meetings fall over themselves for literature when it is distributed. And newsagents say that the public will not read serious stuff nowadays!

## Twickenham Division

C.L.P. workers in this Division are full of heart. They are increasing their active membership steadily. The spirit of quiet determination in this Branch is exceedingly good to see. One day it will be possible to say of Twickenham, "This is a Tory stronghold, that was!"

## New Year Prophecies

The annual crop of forecasts is as plentiful as usual, but more than usually silly. We are told that things will not be as bad as some people expect, nor as good as some people hope. They never are. We prefer the note of confidence struck by the Twickenham Division Branch of the C.L.P., which has issued an attractive little calendar on which the following lines appear:—

With our land again restored,  
Our right to life no more ignored;  
We'll forward march to greater heights,  
In common sharing life's delights.

## Man Did Not Make The Earth

"Man did not make the earth, and though he had a natural right to occupy it, he had no right to locate as his property in perpetuity any part of it; neither did the Creator of the earth open a land office from whence title deeds should issue."—Thomas Paine (1795).

## Not Necessary To Life

Lawyers, soldiers, and sailors may be necessary evils, but they are not necessary to life; the producer is the vital unit of the population.—Professor James Long.

# COMMONWEALTH LAND PARTY

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Commonwealth Land Party, Missouri.  
Commonwealth Land Party, Ohio.  
Commonwealth Land Party, Pennsylvania.  
Commonwealth Land Party, United States.  
The League of Justice, Denmark.  
Youth League for Social Justice (Retsforbundets Ungdom) Denmark  
Nederlandsch Verbond tot Afschaffing van Privaat Grondeigendom (Dutch League for Abolition of Private Property in Land) Holland  
Commonwealth Land Party, New Zealand.

### Journals:

The Commonweal.  
Pennsylvania Commonwealth Land and Freedom.  
Retsstatsbladet.  
Det Frie Blad  
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**TO ASSERT THE COMMON RIGHT:** *The Commonwealth Land Party demand that on the APPOINTED DATE the Land shall be declared to have been Restored to the People, and thereafter economic rent shall be collected by, and for the People*

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**The Rent of Land belongs to the People; the Duty of Government is to Collect it and Abolish All Taxation**

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