

## LAND VALUES

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### "OUR POLICY."

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

## THE EUROPEAN WAR

(Translated from EL IMPUESTO UNICO, Malaga, September, 1914.)

Public misfortunes and corruptions of government spring from ignorance, neglect or contempt of human rights.

Civilisation, as it progresses, requires a higher conscience, a keener sense of justice, a warmer brotherhood, a wider, loftier, truer public spirit. Failing these civilisation must pass into destruction. It cannot be maintained on the ethics of savagery.

HENRY GEORGE.

Bloodshed, fire, pillage, outrage, heaps of corpses and the whole train of horrors which follow the barbarism that is called by the name of war are outrageous cruelties and acts of savagery which provoke righteous indignation in honourable and truly Christian minds. Hence, the universal outcry, surprise and stupefaction at seeing the slaughter of mediæval times re-enacted in the full twentieth century, when our civilisation was thought to be sufficiently advanced to make such horrors but the nightmares of the past.

Yet for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear this calamity of war, outrageous as it is, is but one more calamity in the terrible drama that humanity must go on enduring until it is successful in adjusting the foundations of society to the supreme law of justice which is the moral law. More havoc is caused in the ranks of mankind by poverty and the fear of poverty, with its consequences of vice and crime, than is wrought by all the guns and cannon. No invading army will cause more suffering than consumption fostered in our wretched slums; no pillage can be compared with that inflicted by tariffs and unjust taxation; no disaster can be more terrible than unemployment and death from starvation, to see one's fellow creatures compelled to die of hunger in the midst of plenty.

These terrible plagues which slay millions of victims without shedding blood, which kill slowly but surely,

which wound and sear the most delicate fibres of the soul more cruelly than the most dreadful torture, are witnessed day by day all over the world with the greatest indifference; and now there is excitement and indignation at the outbreak of a war for which all these things have helped to pave the way.

Let us be logical and admit that none of these calamities should cause us surprise so long as this so-called Christian society does not comply with the precepts of Christianity.

Christianity teaches us that all men are brothers, that their true interests are harmonious and not conflicting. Its fundamental rule of life is that we should do to others as we would have them do to us. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not kill. How are these commonly interpreted? Take care not to tumble into a garrison for "Thou shalt not kill" is not understood to apply to soldiers. A society which so adulterates its fundamental precepts can reap nothing but misfortunes.

Listen once more to the words of the Prophet of San Francisco:—

Nor should we forget that in civilised man still lurks the savage. The men who, in past times, oppressed or revolted, who fought to the death in petty quarrels and drunk fury with blood, who burnt cities and rent empires, were men essentially such as those we daily meet. Social progress has accumulated knowledge, softened manners, refined tastes and extended sympathies, but man is yet capable of as blind a rage as, when clothed in skins, he fought wild beasts with a flint. And present tendencies, in some respects at least, threaten to kindle passions that have so often before flamed in destructive fury.

The evils that begin to appear spring from the fact that the application of intelligence to social affairs has not kept pace with the application of intelligence to individual needs and material ends. Natural science strides forward, but political science lags. With all our progress in the arts which produce wealth, we have made no progress in securing its equitable distribution. Knowledge has vastly increased; industry and commerce have been revolutionised; but whether free trade or protection is best for a nation we are not yet agreed.\*

With what wonderful ability and constant sacrifice Henry George devoted his whole life to making known his discovery of how to cure the most frightful of social ills, and replying to those who dubbed his remedy a panacea, he said:—

Let me not be misunderstood. I do not say that in the recognition of the equal and unalienable right of each human being to the natural elements from which life must be supported and wants satisfied, lies the solution of all social problems. I fully recognise the fact that even after we do this, much will remain to do. We might recognise the equal right to land, and yet tyranny and spoliation be continued. But whatever else we do, so long as we fail to recognise the equal right to the elements of nature, nothing will avail to remedy that unnatural inequality in the distribution of wealth which is fraught with so much evil and danger. Reform

\* SOCIAL PROBLEMS, Chap. I.

as we may, until we make this fundamental reform our material progress can but tend to differentiate our people into the monstrously rich and the frightfully poor. Whatever be the increase of wealth, the masses will still be ground toward the point of bare subsistence—we must still have our great criminal classes, our paupers, and our tramps, men and women driven to degradation and desperation from inability to make an honest living.\*

The world now seems to be beginning to listen to the words of Henry George and perhaps the sudden outbreak of this war lies in the fact that powerful interests and mighty forces have much to gain both materially and in the putting back of the era of social justice by exciting evil passions which always cause a reaction in favour of despotism and tyranny.

By way of public debts and indirect taxes, labour, and the products of labour will pay all the enormous costs and indemnities of the war. Protectionism will be strengthened and encouraged to raise the tariff barriers still higher, as happened after the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, when the triumphant wave of protectionism surged all over the world, and the wedge which divides society into two castes of terrible poverty and gross riches was driven still further home, making the rich richer and the poor poorer.

Unless the catastrophe be so great as to demand new methods, and the people seeing more clearly press on to the true remedy and do what justice commands, and if so there will commence for mankind a new era.

### INCLOSURE ACTS†

By J. W. Graham Peace

*"Our fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,  
And e'en the bare-worn common is denied."*

"When a man gets into Parliament he can do things," remarked an American visitor to the present writer a short while back. We had been looking through the now famous White Paper (119), published at the instance of Mr. R. L. Outhwaite. Since then Mr. C. E. Price has been the means of getting a similar return for Scotland (144), and now another member of the Land Values Parliamentary Group, Mr. J. S. Higham, is responsible for the publication of a most interesting "Return in chronological order of all Acts passed for the Inclosure of Commons or Waste Lands, separately, in England and Wales" (Blue Book, 399).

It relates, in 93 pages of colourless official language, the story of the commons so far as it can be told, for, unfortunately, owing to the omission from the earlier records of all particulars relating to the area of land enclosed by the several Acts, it is not now possible to complete the tale. Nor is this all. As Dr. Gilbert Slater says:—

"Early in the eighteenth century there began the great series of private acts of enclosure, of which 4,000 in all, covering some 7,000,000 acres, were passed before the General Enclosure Act of 1845. During the same period it is probable that about the same area was enclosed without application to Parliament." (THE LAND, vol. 1, p. lxxii.)

\* SOCIAL PROBLEMS, Chap. XVIII.

† INCLOSURE ACTS. Parliamentary Return, 399 of 1914. Price 9d.

According to the Return now issued, 5,328 Acts were passed. Of these, eight only bear date prior to 1700. The area enclosed is not stated in respect of 3,067 of these Acts, while for the remaining 2,261 it is given as 2,520,684½ acres. The following table summarises the Return by counties:—

### ENGLAND.

Name of County.	No. of Acts.	Acres not stated.	Acres stated.	1796-1815	Acres Enclosed.
Bedford .. ..	91	63	28	55	38,409
Berks .. ..	124	65	59	64	62,534
Buckingham ..	128	86	42	44	48,659
Cambridge ..	129	83	46	73	69,215
Chester .. ..	60	20	40	21	15,755
Cornwall .. ..	19	1	18	1	7,229
Cumberland ..	115	22	93	45	211,700
Derby .. ..	146	87	59	37	67,139
Devon .. ..	66	8	58	19	23,630
Dorset .. ..	90	33	57	40	48,453
Durham .. ..	47	33	14	14	14,446
Essex .. ..	68	12	56	23	29,887
Gloucester ..	191	130	61	57	35,466
Hampshire ..	161	64	97	44	64,924½
Hereford .. ..	67	34	33	32	8,306
Hertford .. ..	61	26	35	28	31,192
Huntingdon ..	76	45	31	39	56,927
Kent .. ..	32	4	28	11	6,739
Lancaster .. ..	88	46	42	35	37,673
Leicester .. ..	153	142	11	20	28,016
Lincoln .. ..	343	248	95	98	228,186
Middlesex .. ..	42	20	22	25	28,567
Monmouth .. ..	12	2	10	3	11,132
Norfolk .. ..	321	260	61	193	44,773
Northampton ..	217	162	55	48	85,510
Northumberland ..	74	32	42	17	83,829
Nottingham ..	143	107	36	45	37,424
Oxford .. ..	164	103	61	42	55,477½
Rutland .. ..	30	23	7	6	9,582
Salop .. ..	74	26	48	22	38,929
Somerset .. ..	163	91	72	74	52,686
Stafford .. ..	111	63	48	40	47,914½
Suffolk .. ..	111	57	54	54	22,958
Surrey .. ..	81	25	56	35	38,552
Sussex .. ..	77	16	61	24	27,658
Warwick .. ..	154	112	42	31	22,458
Westmorland ..	78	26	52	26	71,198
Wilts .. ..	179	114	65	76	60,785
Worcester .. ..	124	85	39	39	21,541
York .. ..	684	417	267	229	397,096
Total .. ..	5,094	2,993	2,101	1,839	2,292,555½

### WALES.

Name of County.	No. of Acts.	Acres not stated.	Acres stated.	1796-1815	Acres Enclosed.
Anglesey .. ..	10	3	7	4	4,209
Brecon .. ..	21	3	18	3	3,859
Cardigan .. ..	17	1	16	3	51,686
Carmarthen ..	30	7	23	12	19,830
Carnarvon .. ..	17	10	7	11	23,525
Denbigh .. ..	32	15	17	16	36,697
Flint .. ..	24	12	12	12	7,109
Glamorgan ..	10	1	9	1	7,421
Merioneth ..	11	6	5	8	4,571
Montgomery ..	18	7	11	6	27,530
Pembroke .. ..	10	3	7	3	4,561
Radnor .. ..	34	6	28	7	37,131
Total .. ..	234	74	160	86	228,129
Grand Total ..	5,328	3,067	2,261	1,925	2,520,684½

What their commons meant to the villagers will be readily gathered from a perusal of Mr. and Mrs. Hammond's description of the three kinds of common:—

"The arable fields were divided into strips, with different owners, some of whom owned few strips, and some many. The various strips that belonged to a particular owner were scattered among the fields. Strips were divided from each other, sometimes by a grass band called a balk, sometimes by a furrow. They were cultivated on a uniform system by agreement, and after harvest they were thrown open to pasturage.