

Owners of the Earth Own the Wealth

By LEE FRANCIS LYBARGER

As I have said "the ruling classes" of all countries possessed the wealth. Why should this be so? Because they also possessed the land. And this is no less true of the ruling classes of America than of Europe. Princes, lords, dukes, earls, kings and barons have always been landlords—always. They have always owned the land—and could have existed in no other way. Whoever heard of a landless aristocracy? There is not a nobility or privileged class on the earth today that does not own the whole of its power and privileges and wealth to the ownership of the land from which all the people must live—if they live at all.

And this is the most important and startling truth which human history can furnish. No other fact in the record of the race is fraught with such tragic import. Mankind has never had the intelligence to spell out the awful significance of private property in land. And yet this truth—this tragic truth—controls the destiny of the human race.

And all over this country great minds are being roused from their hypnotic slumber, produced by our forms of freedom, and are wondering whether after all, we have not permitted feudalism to be established in this country. And, that too, in a form more potent, subtle and dangerous than ever existed in Europe. In the days of feudalism agriculture was about the only use made of land. But owing to the onward march of civilization, the feudal system exists not so much in reference to farm lands as in reference to public franchises and "natural resources."

One group of our great landlords own the coal mines, another the ore mines, another the oil and gas fields, another the municipal franchises, another the railroads, etc. And what is still infinitely worse, the same group of landlords owns them all.

And so the great feudal lords of today are our lumber barons, mining barons, copper kings, coal kings, oil kings, cattle kings, diamond kings, railroad magnates, princes of finance, etc. These—our Rockefeller, Morgans, Harrimans, Ryans, and the rest—are the mighty potentates of modern feudalism, and compared to them the lords, kings, dukes and kings of ancient feudalism were but idols of the clay.

Landlord and Tenant

How can there be equality of opportunity to live if one child is the heir to a landed estate, while another inherits not one square foot of earth?

The one child can live in luxury a whole lifetime—free from want and fear of want—and yet never perform a single day's labor. His fields will be tilled for him, his barns stored with grain, and his cellars filled with fruit and wine.

The other child has before the disheartening prospect of begging of others even a place to stand, begging of others the leave to toil that he may live. Burns saw the tenant begging and exclaimed in pity:

"See yonder poor, o'er labored weight,
So abject, mean and vile,
Who begs a brother of the earth
To give him leave to toil;
And see his lordly fellow-worm,
The poor petition spurn,
Unmindful though a weeping wife
And helpless offspring mourn."

And even after the most continuous, slavish and laborious toil this abject beggar for a place on earth to stand and a chance to live, will realize less income per year than will the first obtain, and without working at all, in a single day. Is this equality of opportunity to live?

Duke of Westminster

The Duke of Westminster, one of England's rich landlords who recently died in London, had an income of \$7,200 per day, derived from ground rents. This makes \$300 an hour, or \$5 a minute. And yet think of the millions of families in the United States who have not an income of \$300 a year. He gets this much in an hour. This man gets more in a minute than thousands of laborers in a

week. He gets as much in a day as does the average American laborer in 16 years. He gets as much in a single year as would any one of the families named in 9,793 years. And all this without performing a single hour's labor. In fact it would require the work of 3,600 men—earning \$4 a day over and above all expenses—to make this income possible. And all this vast sum is paid to him simply for giving them the mere privilege of living on this planet—on this which belongs no less to them than to him. Is this equality of opportunity to live?

The landlord is so born that he can demand and take the wealth which the toil of others produce. The tenant is so born that he must be one of the toilers the first can demand and take. The one consumes what the other produces.

No two things in this entire universe are more widely contrasted than the condition between these two individuals, the Landlord and the Tenant. Instead of equality here is the greatest inequality which it is possible for the imagination to picture. The one gets tribute from the other for granting him the opportunity to live. The other not only lives from his own labor, but labors to support others in order to get access to the land that he may support himself. It is in the relation of Landlord and Tenant that injustice and inequality find their fullest expression. The one lives; the other labors. The one acquires wealth without producing it; the other produces wealth without acquiring it. The one has enjoyment without toil; the other has toil without enjoyment. The one gets wealth which he does not produce; the other produces wealth which he does not get. The one is fortified by the abundance his labor did not create; the other is starved for lack of the abundance his labor did create.

Who Gets the Wealth?

Such is the potency of a title to land. Such is the defenselessness of the landless man. And every advance in science and art will accrue to the one, but not to the other.

Increase the productiveness of land a thousand fold and who will get the whole benefit? The Landlord. Increase the productiveness of labor a thousandfold and who will get the benefit? The Landlord. Both the increased productiveness of land and the increased productiveness of labor will always go to the landlord. The wages of the one born to no estate save that of the toiler, will remain the same as ever. Contradictory as it may seem, yet it is none the less true that to increase a thousandfold the productiveness of land or the productiveness of labor, is only to increase a thousandfold the huge volumes of the streams of wealth pouring annually into the pockets of the Rockefellers, Astors, Carnegies and Morgans—the great landlords of high civilization.

The general profits of capital and the wages of labor go on practically unchanged even in the midst of all our progress in mechanical inventions. Work as they will and plan as they may, there are wily plotters above them who get the cream. The margin above "bare subsistence"—the "bread line"—is all absorbed by the unearned increment in the form of royalties and rents. No power, no invention, no economy or skill can help the landless man. Nothing but a free access to nature can save him. Otherwise his doom is fixed from birth. Here are chains he cannot break, writhe and twist as he will. Neither Science, Art nor Religion can alleviate his condition. And so, I repeat, that equality of opportunity to live will remain everlastingly a myth without equality of access to land.—From "Land, Labor and Wealth."

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS

Readers of The Guide will unquestionably be interested in what other Canadian publications think of the farmers' organizations of the West and of the various reforms that they (the farmers) advocate. The farmers' movement received quite a lot of attention

Manitoba Grain Growers Attention!

The Manitoba Federation for Direct Legislation beg to announce to the local Grain Growers' Associations and other organizations that are interested in the promotion of good government that they have secured Mr. Frank E. Coulter, of Portland, Oregon, to act in the capacity of organizer. All organizations who wish to have addresses from Mr. Coulter should apply at once for allotment of time. The Federation will not charge anything for Mr. Coulter's addresses, and posters and advertising matter will

be mailed free to those who undertake to organize meetings. The only obligation you assume is to have a large audience in attendance to assist Mr. Coulter to enroll members for the Federation.

Mr. Coulter is an eloquent and forcible speaker. He knows his subject and has been associated



with that band of pioneers who secured the Initiative, Referendum and Recall for the State of Oregon since the inception of the movement in that State and down to the recent victory (Nov. 8) when the emissaries of privilege were put to flight by the forces of progress and democracy.

The Federation have opened headquarters at the address given below and would be glad to have all the friends of the cause call at their convenience. If you are in sympathy with the movement send in a dollar and become a member. This will help on the good work both morally and financially. All members will receive a membership card and free copies of all literature which the Federation will circulate. We now have in the press a comprehensive booklet and several folders of unusual interest to those who believe with us that Direct Legislation is the cure for governmental inefficiency, incompetency and dishonesty.

MANITOBA FEDERATION FOR DIRECT LEGISLATION 239 CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE, WINNIPEG

Hon. Pres., J. H. Ashdown; President, Dr. J. N. Hutchison; Vice-Presidents, Donald Forrester and John Kennedy; Treas., Robert L. Scott; Secretary, S. J. Farmer.

even before the great delegation to Ottawa, but since then has been receiving more than ever. While the delegation was at the capital, the daily papers gave a greater part of their columns to reports of the affairs. Besides the news items bearing upon the movement, many papers have given much editorial space to backing or disparaging the demands of the organized farmers. Besides this, articles and editorials from The Guide have been reproduced from coast to coast. In order to bring our readers in touch with these friends and foes we herewith give extracts showing the feeling of some of these papers.

"The policy of the Western farmers is sound. It is not revolutionary and there is no attack upon the manufacturing institutions of the country. Realizing that in this Western country particularly, and in all parts of the country, Canada would benefit materially by lower tariff, they are pressing their claims upon the government and they pressed them with great force."—Calgary Albertan.

"There is nothing to suggest The Man With The Hoe about the men who thronged the chamber of the House of Commons the other day. As a matter of fact the Western farmer has come to regard himself as quite on an equality with men in other callings and quite as much entitled to the good things of life as anybody else."—Edmonton Journal.

"The Herald does not believe that

the West will be satisfied with the statements of Canada's first minister to the farmers' delegation."—Calgary Herald.

"The Canadian farmer is not a free trader, but a protectionist. That has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of everybody time and time again."—Winnipeg Telegram.

"The Western farmer undoubtedly leans toward free trade. They are trying, not to break up the British Empire, but to break up tariff monopoly. They are not mere theorists, but practical, energetic men of business."—Toronto Star.

"Among all the associations that have been organized on this continent, the Grain Growers' Association has done more solid business and become a greater power than any two."—Fletcher, Ont., Advance.

"The Grain Growers' Associations of the West are the most aggressive and effective organizations of farmers in Canada."—Canadian Farm.

John Kellert, of Knights, Cal., was told that he could make a lion yawn by tickling its chin. He lost three fingers.

According to late returns Minneapolis has the lowest death rate of any city in the United States. Milwaukee is in second place.