

HAVING THE MONEY COMPLEX

To the Editor, LAND & LIBERTY.

Sir,

I should have thought that the emergence of the Theory of Social Credit, bringing to a logical conclusion, as it did, all those queer notions which relegated orthodox finance to the realms of mystical hocus-pocus, would have been sufficient to cause leading spokesmen to exercise some degree of caution when touching upon financial matters. That this does not appear to be the case is evinced by the following instances.

Mr. Bevin, speaking recently on the conclusion of the Argentine Trade Pact, said that it was not simply a currency transaction, but an exchange of Argentine labour power for British labour power, or words to that effect. Now, does not all international trade resolve itself into the exchange of goods and services for an equal value of goods and services? Do not all currency transactions merely reflect such exchanges? Is there not, in fact, a close connection between the existence of money as something valuable and the existence of goods or services which it will buy? Mr. Bevin does not appear to think so. The Marxist term, "Labour power" gives us a clue as to his real views.

Socialists and Communists are chary of repudiating the principle of the International Division of Labour, so they have invented a form of trade which does not involve "Capitalist financial transactions." Here is Mr. Gallacher giving forth on the subject in his recent book, "The Case for Communism" (p. 105):—

"We shall not manufacture goods we hope to sell but only goods which are wanted and for which we will get other goods in return, thus removing entirely the speculative aspect from foreign trade. How shall we sell our goods? With Socialist countries, we shall not engage in buying and selling, as is the way with capitalistic exchanges. Our goods will be exchanged in the direct sense of barter."

Here we have the idea that money is an end and a power in itself, associated with "Capitalism," and it may be appropriate here to mention recent statements by Lord Boyd Orr.

I was glad to note that on two recent occasions Lord Boyd Orr has emphatically stated that the earth can supply more than enough to meet increases in population. However, on one of these occasions, when he was speaking over the air, he revealed that he, too, has a money complex. Dealing with India, he pointed out that the soil was potentially rich and that what was needed was capital in the form of tractors and other farm machinery. On being asked how he thought the problem should be solved he replied that the World Bank "should grant credits." With this money the Government of India would presumably buy tractors from elsewhere, but one wonders how other nations get tractors. They either produce them or produce goods to give in exchange for them. Now, why has India nothing to give? It is because the landlords of India, who think nothing of being weighed in gold, take all but a bare living. Take more than that, in fact; for at the first sign of drought, millions die who have lived only from day to day, putting nothing aside because taxes and rents will not permit it.

Land-Value Reform. By J. Dundas White, LL.D. Basic principles of a just land tenure, with the author's legislative proposals for their practical application. Land & Liberty Press, Ltd. Price 2s. By post, 2s. 3d.

Finally, I once found a Social Credit £ note in an old book. It reads: "You have the goods. You need only the goods-ticket." I agree that money is only a "goods-ticket," but I also know that the shortage of "goods-tickets" is due to the demands of landowners and tax collectors.

Yours truly,

E. G. POPPLEWELL.

RECLAIMING A MELBOURNE SUBURB

Fitzroy is one of the five inner-industrial cities which adjoin the City of Melbourne, Australia. It is very close to the centre of Melbourne, the most densely populated of all the Greater Melbourne municipalities, and enjoys excellent transport services. Yet in recent years it has shown a continuous tendency to become a slum. To seek the causes of this tendency was the object of a survey undertaken by the Land Values Research Group of Victoria* between March, 1947, and February, 1948, and we have recently received copies of the Report published in February of this year. It makes an elaborate pamphlet, comprising, besides the text, numerous tables showing all detailed, factual information that could be required in comparing the effects of levying the local rates upon site value instead of upon the composite subject (land and buildings taken together). Almost a hundred photographs of typical properties are reproduced. In compiling the information the Victoria architects, the Research Group, various valuation authorities, the Victorian Housing Commission and scores of public-spirited firms and individuals co-operated, and many of these assisted in defraying the heavy cost of publication so that the Report could be issued cheaply to the public.

Before this issue of LAND & LIBERTY goes to press we have not sufficient time to review this truly monumental work, but all those throughout the world who are concerned with the justice of the Site Value Rating system and this demonstration of its beneficent effects will owe a debt of gratitude to the activity, skill and enterprise of the Land Values Research Group of Victoria.

*Land Values Research Group, A. R. Hutchinson, Director, 32 Allison Avenue, Glen Iris, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. 2s. 6d.

FRANCE

M. Daudé-Bancel was present at the Socialist Congress at Dieppe on May 1 and was successful in carrying a resolution which called for "a campaign in favour of progressively replacing of existing taxes, especially indirect taxes, by taxation on the value of the land alone, rural and urban, whether cultivated or not, whether built upon or not"—and this is "particularly recommended to the municipalities as a *replacement tax* in substitution for the diverse and numerous municipal taxes." Two hundred delegates were at the Conference, half of whom voted for the resolution, one-quarter were against and one-quarter abstained. M. Daudé-Bancel had intended to speak for half-an-hour, but he was encouraged to continue for a whole hour and was repeatedly applauded. The successful outcome of the Conference has been further developed in the articles which M. Daudé-Bancel has been able to place in various French periodicals. M. Daudé-Bancel is to be present at the International Conference at Swanwick, and with him will be his colleagues, Pavlos Giannelias, J. A. Simonet and M. Cortvriend from Belgium.