

America they had at hand a solution that was higher and truer. As Lamas well understood (and experience has confirmed his opinion) the modern pseudo-science of political economy in Europe, whether posing as conservative or advanced, cannot be accepted as a proper and safe guide.

Down through the years the message of those great men reaches us, preserved and disseminated by the prodigious invention of the printing press. The greatest mission of the present generation is to bring it to pass. And the example of Canberra, a decisive experiment of world-wide importance, is a call to study and to action on the part of all men of heart and intellect, since our glorious constitution and the providential Law of Saenz Peña place within the hands of the people the possibility of bringing it to pass, with ease, in order and in peace.

What the people have first to learn is to hold as treason to the nation the sale to private persons of another inch of Argentine land still remaining public property.

—C. VILLALOBOS DOMINGUEZ.

Catholics and Housing

IN reply to "Chartered Accountant," may I state the taxation of land values is not a proposal to make "the State the universal landlord"! It is a proposal to untax say, all buildings and food stuffs and substitute a tax on the selling price of land apart from improvements. Idle land pays almost no local rates, and taxing the rental of buildings makes buildings dear and expresses itself in all the higher rents. All urban effort is handicapped by ransom prices for ground.

In agricultural districts, also, land suitable for tillage is withheld from use, and here in Scotland the price paid for land expresses itself in all the higher annual rent or annuity the small-holder, etc., has to pay, and therefore worsens his position. It would seem as if a brick would need to accompany this idea in relation to many land-buying jobs in order that the effects might dawn as to the burden-bearer.

Under the existing system all demands for land enhance its price. I suggest therefore, the first business should be to break monopoly prices. If that viewpoint is wrong where is the error?

Is the principle acceptable that all the valuable land should be in fullest use?

The parents of 11,000 Catholic children in Glasgow were last year unable to feed their children mainly through unemployment, according to statistics furnished by the Education Authority.

The solution of unemployment is the pressing immediate problem. A Budget can be passed irrespective of the views of the House of Lords. A favorable House of Commons could impose a Budget tax on the capital value of all land apart from improvements, so as to make it unprofitable for useful land to be idle.

Millions of acres of useful ground are lying idle or only partially used. The enormous demand for workers which would follow this taxation policy would solve unemployment, and so much land coming into the market for use would break monopoly prices.

The people are sick of cod reformers. Road-making schemes put thousands in the landlord's pockets and enhance land values along the new road, petty housing schemes, such as those in Glasgow, in five years involved paying £565,406 for sites for houses, and the unthinking wonder why rents are high.

These and other pettifogging devices are time-wasters. All of God's land for the use of God's children ought to be the slogan, especially of members of God's own Church who are not thrilled to privilege, and more concerned about the interests of landlordism than they are about the thousands of jobless men and women, condemned to a life of idleness, through the withholding of land from use.

The taxation policy suggested will bring about a great distribution of the land of the country, and thousands wanting small holdings will readily obtain land at a cheap price. Just now the farmer's improvements are taxed. No land value disciple that I know of proposes in any way to interfere with the producer of improvements, owning them, and with them free of local rates as in some parts of Canada, improvement making would be encouraged. In Manitoba and in the rural districts of Alberta the local revenue is solely derived from land values.

Why waste time fishing for a sprat when you can catch a salmon?

Thirty-six years have passed since his Holiness Pope Leo XIII said "some remedy must be found and found quickly, for the misery and wretchedness pressing so heavily and unjustly *at this moment* on the vast majority of the working classes."

With sorrow I write it, we have nothing in Great Britain from our Catholic public men (except Rev. Vincent McNabb, Q.P., and a few others, very few) but time-wasting expedients, the hackneyed devices of political tricksters in all parties, and no great public effort for the legislative enforcement of God's design—"The earth he hath given to the children of men". The taxation of land values, I urge, will accomplish that purpose.

Pope Leo XIII wrote: "To defraud any one of wages that are his due is a crime which cries to the avenging anger of heaven". For a bit of idle land in Glasgow I have witnessed £50,000 being paid before houses could be erected. There are thousands of similar instances all over Great Britain. Paying these sums means high rents and taxes. In essence the initial wrong is a step in the defrauding of the worker of his earnings.

What position have the Social Study Clubs taken on this question? Some Catholic public men on local boards in Scotland have spoken out magnificently on the taxation of land values, and carried resolutions demanding power

from the Government to rate land values. Is there any similar activity amongst Catholic public men in England and Wales?

Personally, I believe that if public opinion was aroused and demonstrations organized in every center, demanding all the usable land of the country must be put into its fullest use, emphatically pointing out the way, no State management, no Socialism, no more petty devices, but a good stiff tax on all land values, a year's active, strenuous work would compel the government to act.

Are the pettyfoggers to go their old road, direct attention to scholastic subjects, not discuss even the elementary point—is there a right and a wrong way of raising local and national revenues, and play the game of hush and wheest-on the L. V. policy and its economic effects? If Land Value Taxation is not the right policy to force the closed earth into use, let any other remedy have the light of day. Truth is mighty and will prevail.

Who is going to help to force the supreme issue in public life, the taxation of land values?

BOOTAGH-AUGHAGOWER.

In *Catholic Times*, (Leading Catholic paper of England)

The Land Question in China

NEVERTHELESS, the land question is beginning to appear in China, owing to the enormous increase in land values in the neighborhood of foreign settlements. For instance, the value of land in the neighborhood of Shanghai and of Canton has increased ten thousandfold in the last sixty years. Sun tells the story of a Cantonese who, in a fit of drunkenness, entered an auction mart and bought a piece of land for \$300. The next morning he had forgotten the transaction, and when the deed of sale was brought to him, he was forced to ruin himself in order to raise the money. But in ten years' time the value of the property had increased to such an extent that this drunkard found himself a millionaire, the richest man in Kwangtung.

Now this method of acquiring huge wealth is manifestly unfair. The landowner has never schemed or toiled for his gain, as the merchant and capitalist are bound to do. The value of the land is increased by the fact of other people coming to live and carry on business in the neighborhood. The increase of wealth is produced by the community, and not the individual; consequently it ought to belong to the community. In order to remedy this evil Dr. Sun proposes a tax of 1 per cent. upon all land. The value of the land is to be declared by the owner himself, and the State is to have the option of purchase. By this means the landowner will be compelled to quote a fair price for his property: for if he quotes too high he will be taxed proportionately; if he quotes too low the State may demand to purchase his land at his own price. After this Sun would confiscate to the State any subsequent increase in

value. Thus the profits derived from social progress and commercial enterprise will be reaped by the community instead of by private individuals. For the revenue thus collected by the State will enable it to dispense with all other forms of taxation. There will be no rates for water and electricity, and no levies to pay for repairing of roads and policing. This settlement of the land question will solve one-half of the problem of "The People's Livelihood." It should be added, however, that improvements made by the landowner himself will be exempt from taxation. Such improvements may consist in buildings, trees, embankments, drains.

It is noteworthy that, in outlining the above proposals, Dr. Sun does not condescend to mention the name of Henry George, just as in the preceding lecture he ascribes to German initiation reforms which are usually associated with the name of Robert Owen. It seems to be his set policy to ignore, as far as possible, all contributions which British Socialists have made towards the solution of these problems. But he is not ashamed to pluck the fruit, even when he despises the tree.

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Having had one more fling at the foreigner, Dr. Sun returns to the much more vital question of agriculture. The development of agriculture, as he quite rightly insists, is China's most pressing need. Eight or nine-tenths of her population are farmers. The way to encourage food production is to protect and stimulate the efforts of the farming class. First they should own the land which they cultivate. At present a great many of the small farmers are crippled by having to pay rent for their land. In Kwangtung it is reckoned that six-tenths of the farmer's produce goes to enrich the landowner, only four-tenths to the cultivator of the soil. In passing we may say that it is questionable if Dr. Sun's statement is correct regarding China as a whole. In most of the inland provinces, at any rate, the small farmers do own their own land, which is handed down from generation to generation. But if Dr. Sun is correct regarding the position in Kwangtung, then the land question must be more acute than he has admitted in the previous lecture.

—REV. IVAN D. ROSS in the *Nineteenth Century*.

[EDITORIAL NOTE: The writer is noticeably unfriendly to Dr. Sun Yat Sen and to the reforms he stood for. But what he says, which is a free rendering of a translation of a part of Sun's economic philosophy, will interest our readers. It appears more and more that a great deal of good seed has been sown in China which will yet bear fruit.—Editor LAND AND FREEDOM.]

TRADE unionists among the image makers of Ephesus used, it is said, to drive out from among them the artist whose work excelled that of the others. Had they thought of an income tax they might have adopted that method of lowering the level of excellence.