

MUNICIPAL JUSTICE; *the Case for Land (Site) Value Rating*, by E. J. Craigie, Adelaide, South Australia. 1952. 36 pp.

Reviewed by MARSHALL CRANE

The Henry George School owes its existence, it seems to me, largely to the fact that so many converts to the social philosophy of Henry George have felt the urge to pass the good work on to others. Apparently the proselyting spirit is a regular accompaniment to conversion. Most of us commence our missionary careers even before we complete our first basic course.

And I imagine that even the most persuasive of us feel surprise and some discouragement as we come to learn what a stout resistance preconceived ideas and opinions can put up. Some of us react by adopting the strategy of the limited objective. If we can, we persuade the prospect to read *Progress and Poverty*, and then just hope for the best. We are often disappointed, of course, but not always. There is a magic of some sort in the author's great exposition of his "remedy" which seems to charm some very tough customers.

This method is far from perfect, though. It is useless with the many who read nothing but the tabloids and the racing form, and not much better with those who are satisfied to keep abreast of contemporary literature with the aid of a digest magazine. And often even those who regard themselves as serious readers are inclined to shy away from books which are over five hundred pages long. When we encounter such characters we pray for a good, snappy Georgist comic book to appear on the newsstands.

Who has not wished many times for a short, sufficiently comprehensive statement of the Georgist position, explaining its general principles and answering the more common objections. I am sure that all those who have will be delighted to learn that Mr. E. J. Craigie, of Adelaide, has come up with just what they have been waiting for, a thumb which really fits the prospect's buttonhole.

The author is a prominent Georgist, a former member of parliament whose name will be familiar to all who have followed the progress of land value taxation in Australia. His little pamphlet is supremely practical. It does not scamp general principles, but it does place greatest emphasis on direct benefits, to the community and to the individual. He takes care of all the usual objections, capably and effectively but in the fewest possible words. Simplicity is the keynote throughout, but the work is surprisingly thorough, stating its case powerfully and well.

It should be especially valuable to us in that it comes from a country in which site value taxation has actually been on trial for many years, in some places since Henry George's time. The "just a theory" objection, which all of us have faced, is more than adequately disposed of.

It is available from the author, at 8 Grant Avenue, Rose Park, Adelaide, South Australia. It might be a good idea to enclose a dime or two for postage.