

# Extracts from Our Contemporaries Showing the Growth of Public Sentiment

## TAXES STILL A PROBLEM

We never did find out what Our Folks wanted done about Federal Tax, as called for several months ago on this page. Of course, the Single Taxers were on the job, as they always are, and sent us quantities of letters urging the tax on land, or land values, or site values, or whatever name the particular writer preferred. The Single Tax people know exactly what they want, which is a great advantage, but most of our correspondents do not seem very sure what they do want, except that they all believe taxation should be based on "ability to pay." In other words, the rich should be taxed and the poor exempted, and not under any circumstances the other way 'round! *Farm Journal, Phila., Pa.*

## TRIMMING THE FARMER

Farm products of which we produce a surplus are priced for us in the world's markets and no conceivable tariff on imports could possibly raise their price here.

When we produce less than our home supply, as in the case of sugar, the tariff adds to the price of sugar, that we the consumers pay.

And even if we could make all farm products dearer by law, it would merely raise the rents of farm lands, already too high in most localities, and *the whole advantage would be capitalized in a higher average range of farm land values to be enjoyed very largely by nonworking landlords.*

Such an artificial state of false prosperity would be founded on a law which would be against the interests of most of the people, and would, after a short trial, be repealed.

And yet, the congressional majority is offering the farmers these counterfeit "protections" in exchange for their votes. Even the celebrated "farm bloc" is falling for it—and, as it always has been at such times, the farmers are getting trimmed again. *Cleveland Press.*

## A REAL VOICE FROM IRELAND

A system of government may intensify poverty, but is not its cause. No matter what the system of government in any land, there exist involuntary poverty and unemployment. There is, therefore, perhaps, a common cause. I suggest that the common cause lies in the land and taxation systems. Land is withheld from use, and therefore the number of jobs available are limited. Rent extracts too much from the earnings of workers and business men. Rates and taxes impoverish them still further. The British system, hitherto enforced in Ireland, has encouraged grazing ranches. The taxation system meant the more one toiled the more taxes one would have to pay, and the lazier a person is the lighter his taxes. The rating system in towns and cities penalizes those who build houses; the

more substantial the house the higher the rates, while the man who keeps ground idle almost escapes paying any rates to cover municipal expenditure.

The business of the ideal State ought to be to see that all God's gifts to man in the soil are fully utilized. In Ireland's, as in Great Britain's untilled soil, and undeveloped mineral resources, there are means of employment—work for all willing to perform it. The business of the ideal State lies not in State management, State control, State regulations, State directions to State "gaffers" directing everybody what to do and what not to do, but in the simple sovereign expedient of levying rates and taxes on the value of all ground and by penalizing the holding of valuable land kept idle. All valuable land, suitable tillage ground, mineral land, building sites, etc., would then be forced into use. The demand for workers that would ensue would speedily solve the involuntary poverty and unemployment problem. Freeing the countryside and the towns of an unemployed class would speedily send up wages.

What would ensue from forcing by taxation God's gift to His Children—the land—into its fullest use, one can only dream of. In a State where workers could obtain free access to land, no one need be idle who is fit to work, and in a State of that character no one need work for an employer for less than he himself can secure from the fruit of his own labor. To the writer it seems new conditions of life will be created when the ideal State alters the laws which A. J. H. Duganne described in the lines:

"Who hath ordained that the few shall hoard  
Their millions of useless gold?  
And rob the earth of its fruit and flowers,  
While profitless soil they hold?  
Who hath ordained that a parchment scroll  
Shall fence round miles of land  
When millions of hands want acres,  
And millions of acres want hands?"

In Ireland and equally so in Great Britain there is plenty of land to produce food and "gladsome flowers." The Irish Free State has all the powers necessary to realize these ideals. To waste time on other purposes seems criminal folly. J. O. D'DERRICK, in *Irish Weekly and Ulster Examiner*.

## NOT PERFECTLY UNDERSTOOD

A news-sheet of the National Catholic Welfare Council, which has just reached us, remarks an increased interest in the Single Tax even among those hitherto opposed to it, and gives an excellent exposition of this doctrine. It then says that "the economic objection to depriving individuals of an income from land values arises from the probable