

The document emanates officially from the International Union for Free Trade and the Taxation of Land Values of which Charles O'Connor Hennessy of this city is president. A committee representing the Union consisting of Messrs. A. W. Madsen and F. C. R. Douglass is present at the Conference at Geneva. The Memorandum was posted to three hundred delegates in English, French and German, and the English Committee has called for immediate translation by members of the committee in other countries for their publicists at home.

## The Single Tax City of Canberra

THE April number of the *Atlantic Monthly* gives an account of Canberra, the Federal capital of Australia. The article is by John Reay Watson.

The writer tells us that it is to be the most beautiful garden city in the world. "It lies in an amphitheatre of hills, with an outlook toward the North and the Northeast . . . The chief eminence has been named Capital Hill, and there, in imitation of Washington, the Parliamentary buildings will be erected."

The Federal capital will be moved from Melbourne, and 600 new houses will be ready for the influx of population. Over 600 civil servants will be transferred to the new capital as soon as possible. The Federal Capital Commission has built twenty-seven standard types of houses. The rents will range from \$4.50 per week for a four roomed cottage suitable for a workman and his family up to \$15 a week for a better house suitable for civil servants who have incomes of upward of \$4000 a year. The purchase price of these standard houses built by the Commission will range from \$4,500 to \$9,700.

The ownership of 900 square miles of Federal territory is vested in the government and not a foot of it will be alienated. The land is put up at auction and the bidder pays an annual rent of five per cent of his bid for twenty years after which the value of his land is subject to a periodical ten year re-appraisal.

How well the Commission has guarded against the exactions of greedy landlords whose land is wanted for federal sites, the writer informs us as follows:

"In order to avoid having to pay an extravagant price for the purchase of private lands within the selected territory, it was fixed by statute that the price paid by the Commonwealth Government to private owners must not exceed the value of the land on the date that the Act was passed. The highest price thus paid as compensation to private landowners within the Federal territory for the resumption of land has been \$15 an acre. For some of this land within the city site, which has been leased by the Federal Capital Commission to private persons for building purposes, rents aggregating \$4000 an acre per annum are being received by the Commission. It will be seen that the building of the capital promises to be a very profitable enterprise for the Commission as trustees of the nation."

"Some of the business blocks in the centre of the city—which for the most part is still unbuilt—realized at auction \$400 per foot frontage. The bidding for some of the best corner blocks, consisting of one-sixth of an acre, reached \$18,000. This represents the unimproved value of the land, and the bidder pays the Commission an annual rent of 5 per cent of his bid. Eventually the Commission will have an annual income of millions of dollars from the rents of business and residential blocks in the new city. This income will wipe out the cost of construction, including the cost of many large public buildings, and will eventually provide a surplus that will be paid into the national treasury."

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"Steps have been taken to prevent land speculators from making money out of the Federal Capital. The fact that not a foot of land can be sold outright by the Commission eliminates the speculator to a considerable extent, but it is also desired to eliminate the speculator in leases. There is a provision in every lease that building operations must be begun within twelve months of the purchase of the lease, and completed within another twelve months. No lease can be sold by the original purchaser until the building conditions have been fulfilled. But so rapid has been the increase in land values that some original purchasers of leases have been able to sell out at considerable profit."

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"The remainder of the Federal territory outside the city area—with the exception of 150 square miles reserved as a belt of open country round the city, and 170 square miles forming the catchment area of the chief river providing the city water supply—is being leased as farms and grazing areas."

The writer thus summarizes this great and unexpected advance in the direction of the practical application of Henry George's teachings:

"The leasehold system with regard to land at Canberra gives the nation, instead of the individual, the unearned increment arising from increased values of land."

And he says again:

"Blocks of land cannot remain vacant while leaseholders wait for a rise in values; nor can huge unsightly buildings of many stories be erected in the business quarter. It is doubtful if Canberra will ever become an important industrial city, but the design provides for an industrial area, separated from the business, governmental, and residential districts.

It was in 1911 that the Australian Commonwealth government instituted a world-wide competition for the design of a model city. The first prize was won by a Single Taxer, Mr. Walter Burley Griffin, well known architect of Chicago. The second prize went to Mr. Eliel Saarinen of Helsingfors, Finland, and the third prize to M. Agacha of Paris.

And in May of this year the new capital was formally dedicated by the Duke of York.

## America in The Dock

AMERICAN democracy is on trial. From many quarters and from many authorities come accusatory voices. Viscount Bryce, surely no unfriendly witness, recanting from his earlier enthusiasm for American democ-