

flag. Only a week or two before the election campaign began the Sydney Trades and Labor Council, which is the outspoken champion of Mr. McGirr, decided to affiliate with the Third (Moscow) International, which was especially established for "the overthrow of Capitalism, the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of the International Soviet Republic, and the realization of Socialism, as the first step to Communist society."

One obstacle to the carrying out of the Communist ideal in New South Wales is the Legislative Council, and this obstacle will almost certainly be removed should the Labor Party be returned. It has opposed extreme legislation of all kinds, sometimes to the benefit and sometimes to the injury of the community, but the members being appointed for life it is out of touch with current politics, and the pernicious habit of overcoming its opposition by swamping it with party members has made it almost a farce. Its constitution will have to be very seriously amended to make it of any practical use. The Labor Government favors the substitution of a revisionary committee to review legislation before it is finally passed by the Legislative Assembly. This is mere camouflage. What is wanted is a real live second Chamber, composed of men experienced in affairs who would act as a check to the revolutionary tendencies of the times.

Meanwhile an important conference is being held in Sydney, attended by leading representatives of Capital and Labor from all over Australia, presided over by Mr. Hughes, but as it has hardly got beyond the opening stage, it would be premature to deal with it till something definite has been done. A conference between employers and the employed can hardly fail to do good, but it is useless to expect much from a body, one half of which regards the other half as its bitterest foe. The Labor Party in Australia lacks the sanity of the Labor Party in England which recognizes Capital as a natural adjunct of Labor, and which has just declared that the whole of the land value apart from improvements should be taken for public revenue.

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CATCHING UP

County Auditor John A. Zangerle says England has a worse tax system than the United States. But remember, John, England is much older than the United States. Give us time. We'll catch up. *Cleveland Press.*

SIX days shalt thou labor, on the seventh turn over the proceeds to the landlord.—H. M. H.

ORATOR—And speaking of work. . . .

VOICE FROM REAR—Landlords do the leased!

—*Wayside Tales.*

A Town That Takes Rent for Public Purposes

SINCE many otherwise observant people are constantly confronted with the phenomenon of ever-increasing land values with little or no idea of its importance as a factor in our social and economic problems, it may be of interest to your readers to tell something of the history and growth of the village of Arden, Del.

In 1900 a tract of some 160 acres of farm land was acquired in a naturally attractive and favorably located section of northern Delaware, within easy commuting distance of Wilmington and Philadelphia.

After taking the necessary legal steps to guarantee the security of tenure the building and garden plots were thrown open to anyone willing to sign the lease, the terms of which extended for a period of 99 years, with privilege of renewal annually, thus effecting the equivalent of perpetual possession.

The conditions of the lease require the payment of an annual rental into the village treasury, the same to be determined by a board of assessors appointed by the town meeting in which every adult resident has a vote whether a leaseholder or not.

All rents are used exclusively for public purposes, among which are the payment of such taxes (except personal taxes) as are levied by the State and county.

The only salaried officer is the town clerk, whose fee is hardly of sufficient importance to cause a scramble for the place. The services of three Trustees, who handle all transactions regarding the collection of rents and transfer of plots; three Townsmen, who carry out the mandates of the town meeting and seven Assessors, who adjust rents annually, are rendered without charge.

The last report of the Assessors, made on March 25th, 1922, shows a total of 141 plots under lease, averaging about 25,000 square feet each, and producing an annual aggregate rental of \$6,341.48, which sum capitalized at five per cent. would make the leased land alone worth \$126,833.60, or showing an increase of about 1400 per cent. over the original purchase price of what was a badly run down farm. The town also includes two large pieces of forest land with streams and a large tract of commons, all for public uses and which are not subject to private possession.

One of the most interesting effects of this process of constantly absorbing the increased land values is shown by the alacrity with which the tenants, who have taken up more land than they can make proper use of, have given up their excess holdings, making way for others who will put them to their best use, building homes and cultivating gardens.

A recent article by "special correspondence" in the *Sunday World* pronounced the experiment of the Single Tax in Arden a failure. The writer does not claim that we have made a 100 per cent. test of our principles, since

we are hedged about with restrictions and limitations over which we have no control. We believe we have demonstrated the essentials of our philosophy and that the principle is applicable anywhere and at any time.

The success of Arden must be judged by the extent of its public and private improvements, the beauty of its homes and gardens, the prosperity of its workers and the minimum of friction involved in the administration of its public affairs, all of which show a decided advance.

EDWIN S. ROSS.

Gerrit Johnson Writes to the Governor of Michigan

IN resigning the office of member of the State Institute Commission of Michigan, Gerrit Johnson has addressed a letter to the governor. In it Mr. Johnson says in part:

When I accepted this position I really thought something could be done for "The Least of These," but after "getting under the surface" I soon realized that any attempt to do anything worth while was a waste of time. Then I visited other States to try to learn what they were doing with public charity institutions. To my amazement I found them about on a par with our own. In talking with people experienced in this line of work I found this state of mind: That public charity institutions are only intended to be charitable on the surface. And the reason that we preach and cannot practice charity is because State charitable institutions as bad as they are, feed and house their inmates better than probably fifty per cent. of our citizens who earn their bread by the sweat of their brow.

Just so long as there are some who eat food they do not earn, there must be others who earn food they do not eat. In some heathen lands, chiefs do not eat until they are assured that every member of their tribe has something to eat. In our own civilized country we have rich Roman Catholics and Protestants who are perfectly contented to sit down to well-filled tables knowing that this very day there are millions of other Roman Catholics and Protestants without work and many with nothing to eat. So why pretend charity when we seem to be on such strange terms with charity! When Jesus said, "Who is My mother and who are My brethren" I wonder if He did not mean that all who had social consciousness were His kin!

Today there are more men than jobs. That is the cause of our present agitation for new prisons and asylums. When there are more jobs than men, we do not crowd our charity and penal institutions.

I am going to work for the Anti-Poverty movement, whose sole aim is to remove the cause of poverty. When our government opened up land to homesteaders it did not only make jobs in that new territory but it took the surplus labor from the surrounding territories. The Anti-Poverty Society would open up every State in the Union and give every man and woman the right to settle on vacant lots

and idle lands. This can be done by simply taking all taxes off our homes, buildings and other improvements and instead, tax the vacant lots and idle land just the same as the lots and land in use.

In the last fifteen years the land values created by people moving into Detroit amount to more than all the wages paid by Ford and other automobile manufacturers in Detroit during that time. If the untold millions of dollars worth of land values, created by all the people, had been received by all the people instead of a few, there would not now be a business depression. Michigan pays good money year after year to its University to study political economy, and the only remedy as yet is rummage sales, bread lines and charity institutions.

An American Peasantry

SENSITIVE ears have been surprised and somewhat shocked of late by the phrase "an American peasantry." The Secretary of Agriculture warns of it as a perilous possibility. From Chicago came two months ago a proposal for the importation of coolies from China to furnish cheap farm labor. "Company" farming has appeared not merely in the far West, but as well in the older States of the East. A student of American problems suggested in conversation some years ago that the solution of the race problem in the South might be found in the creation of a negro peasantry.

Through all this talk has run the conception, not of a land-owning peasantry such as France has, but of peasant-hired laborers cultivating the land of others, corporations or individuals. Wholesale production at low cost would be the hope of those looking to the full fruition of such a system. The result, of course, could the thing be worked out to its logical conclusion, would be the expropriation of the small holder by ruthless competition, his reduction to the state of a peasant laborer, or his immigration to the cities in such numbers as to create an urban "proletariat" fed by means of the "corn dole," and howling for "bread and circuses." All that smacks of Rome, 22 B. C. rather than America, 1922, A. D., yet there are perhaps some persons in the United States who would hardly find the idea shocking, though possibly no one so hardy as to believe it realizable.

When the slaves were freed the cry was "forty acres and a mule," the American equivalent of "three acres and a cow." Now "forty acres and a mule" connotes the so-called "smoke house system" of cotton culture, which prevails today in parts of the South, notably in the Yazoo Delta of Mississippi, a survival of slavery. In simplest terms this system involves the division of a large plantation into areas of from forty to one-hundred-and-twenty acres, upon each of which areas is settled a negro family, large or small. The owner supplies tools, stock, seeds, and from the smoke-house staple food and some other things, and the negro family "makes" the crop. The owner sells the product, and if the charges against the head of the negro