

payments for benefits which result from the presence of population and social activities, as these conditions are affected by the desirabilities of particular sites, whether the latter be agricultural, mining, industrial, commercial, or residential.

I suggest the following as food for thought:—rent of land is payment for social services—social services are in greatest demand where presence and activities of population are greatest—presence and activities of population are greatest on lands having highest capacity for production, i.e., on lands of highest productivity or greatest fertility—therefore, rent of land depends upon and varies with the different degrees of productivity.

A Significant Prophecy

ONE of the French officers, young Henri de Saint-Simon, who served in America during our War of Independence, was so impressed by the fine promise of our national life and character—as contrasted with the corruption and venality in Europe—that forty years later, in 1817, he wrote that the Americans were on the way toward “the best and simplest social order which has ever existed.”

Yet with amazing clarity of vision he foresaw the dangers in our path and described them as follows:

“Feudalism no longer has a head in North America; but it still possesses a very robust body. The body may be quite capable of growing another head in certain circumstances of which we shall presently speak, unless it is entirely destroyed before such conditions come about.

“By saying that feudalism no longer has a head in the United States, we refer to the well-known fact that all the citizens of the Union are equal in the eyes of the law, that no one of them enjoys any title, privilege, or hereditary right. When we say that feudalism still possesses a very robust body in America, we wish to point out this state of affairs: the Americans have not yet erected a code of civil laws designed to favor productive labor as much as possible. The civil laws enforced there have been brought from England, and were originally framed in the interest of the nobility, of the idle landowners, and especially of those who administer justice; from which it results that the *légistes* (lawyer-legislators) are still today of a great deal too much importance in America, from which it results that the technicalities of the law tend uselessly to prolong legal proceedings, from which it results that the costs are too large. In a word, property is not arranged in America in a manner any more rational or conducive to the public interest than it is in England; and America is devoured by its *gens de loi*.

“Finally we make the remark that the body of feudalism, which still exists in the United States with *légistes*

for its organs, may send forth a new head . . . unless this species of intestinal worm is destroyed. . . . When population of America shall have reached the same relative degree (of density) as in Europe, the landowners will cease to be active producers (industrials); they will cease to cultivate their lands, they will become landlords, and they will find in the civil code all the necessary regulatory arrangements for reestablishing the nobility, that is, hereditary rights and privileges; in a word, a governmental regime in which the workers will find themselves under the direction of the idle.

“The sole means by which the Americans can protect themselves from the danger which we have just pointed out consists in the drafting of a new civil code which shall have as its object the greatest possible assistance to enterprises of positive and direct utility . . . in which the owners of movable property shall be distinctly favored as against the landowners.”

As Harold A. Larrabee points out in the *Franco-American Review*: “In the light of what was being written by others in Europe about the United States in 1824, Saint-Simon’s diagnosis of the coming replacement of aristocracy by plutocracy through the inevitable consequences of the English law of property, with its accompanying plague of *légistes*, shines forth as almost miraculously accurate. Born an aristocrat himself, and ever a leader, though often without followers, Henri de Saint-Simon strove to replace an aristocracy of privilege by one of competence, in order that all men might be free to develop their highest potentialities.”

The above forecast, written one hundred and fifteen years ago, will, I hope, be of interest.—EMILY E. F. SKEEL.

The First Liberty

FREEDOM to speak, if it is to mean anything at all, must mean liberty to speak the most odious and asinine errors as well as the sublimest and soundest truths. Thus when Mayor Maury Maverick of San Antonio, Texas, gave permission to the Communist Party to hold a meeting—an affair subsequently broken up by a howling crowd which demanded Maverick’s recall—he was following the honored American traditions of freedom of speech.

Communism is not apt to win many converts in America, and apparently few enough in Texas. Best answers to Communism or Fascism are those which appeal to men’s minds in showing how superior is a system of free opportunity to one which makes all the slaves of the State.

—*Christian Science Monitor*.

CYNIC: “I could make a better world than this.”
Sage: “That’s why God put you here. Go and do it.”