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Henry George and Dr. McGlynn

The communication from Mr. John B. McGauran that appears in the Open Forum of this paper today, requires comment only on two points:

This paper did not misrepresent the doctrine of **Henry George**. This theory is built on the principle that private property in land is unjust.

His own words are: "The truth is, and from this truth there can be no escape, that there is and can be no Just title to an exclusive possession of the soil and that private property in land is a bold, bare, enormous wrong, like that of chattel slavery." Progress and Poverty, Book 7, chapter 3, first paragraph.

And Dr. McGlynn, In one of his letters of defiance to Archbishop Corrigan, wrote on Dec. 20, 1886: "I have taught and I shall continue to teach, in speeches and writings, as long as I live that land is the rightful property of the people in common, and that private ownership of land is against natural Justice, no matter by what civil or ecclesiastical laws it may be sanctioned; and I would bring about instantly, if I could, such a change of laws all the world over as would confiscate private property in land, without one penny of compensation to the miscalled owners."

In view of his declarations that he would not go to Rome when summoned by the Pope and that he would teach the injustice of private ownership of land, no matter by what laws of Church or State it may be sanctioned, the Archbishop, saying to him, "it would be manifestly wrong to permit you to exercise the holy ministry," prolonged the suspension of Dr. McGlynn until further instructions from Cardinal Simeone. Therefore, as this paper stated, the basic principle is that private ownership in land is unjust and that the present owners should be deprived at least of the so-called "unearned increment" without any compensation. These two principles are indefensible for Catholics.

Dr. McGlynn did retract his "radical" doctrines. After being excommunicated for six years, he repented to Msgr. Salotti two [unreadable] cuts of the Henry George theory. One was written by himself in Italian and English, and the other was made in Latin by Dr. Burtzell. Both of them skimmed on thin ice. The two men veiled their Idea in a cloud of words. They toned down the rude terms in which the doctrine had previously been stated. They did not say out loud: Private ownership of land is unjust and the present owners are to be despoiled without a cent of compensation. No, Indeed. Dr. McGlynn had declared that he would not accept private property in land, no matter if Church and State sanctioned it.

Now he wrote: "The limits of private possession have been left to be fixed by man's own industry and the laws of individual peoples." He wrote also that to Pope Leo's encyclical "Rerum Novarum," which Mr. George had denounced, "I give and have ever given a full adherence: and If whatever word may ever have escaped me which might seem not entirely conformable to those teachings, I would like to recall it or interpret it in a sense conformable to them."

He expressed his regret for any lack of respect on his part for the authority of the Holy See. He offered to go to Rome within three or four months, "if the matter be not otherwise determined by the Holy Father." To end a great scandal and save the soul of a high-spirited priest, the Church went to the very limit In letting the cloudy statement of the **Henry George** doctrine go by as not contrary to Catholic

doctrine "as it was explained by Dr. McGlynn." The Church, on the other hand, in Pope Leo's encyclical, so antagonized the doctrine as it was explained by **Henry George**, that the latter wrote a long and bitter reply.

Archbishop Corrigan, Archbishop Lynch of Toronto, Bishop Chatard, Rev. Dr. Brann, Rev. R. Holand, S. J., and other eminent Catholic teachers denounced those principles of the **Henry George** theory — that private property in land is wrong and that the present owners could be robbed of any part of their ownership. The little treatise of the last-named author, "Ownership and Natural Right" Is commended to the attention of all students of the **Henry George** single-tax theory.