

Bishop Nulty on the Land Question.

THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE TO THE LAND.

Speaking in Mullingar last month Dr. Nulty, Bishop of Meath, referring to the Irish Land Bill at present before Parliament, said:—

The principles on which he had based his objections to the Bill are novel to the common ordinary principles of landlord literature.

The land of every country belongs of right to the people of the country, and not to any class or fractional part of them. God was perfectly free in the act by which He created the people of every country; but when He was pleased to create them He bound Himself by his own voluntary decree to provide them with the means, at least necessary and sufficient, to preserve and enjoy the gift of existence. As a matter of fact that provision is found nowhere but in the land, and there it is to be found abundantly. It is only on the fruits of agriculture and productive industry that society can subsist, and that man is enabled to live in any country, and as on the other hand the operations of productive industry of every kind are impossible without society, the right of every community of free access to the land, and to the free, and untrammelled use of the land of their country is incontrovertible.

THE RIGHT OF EVERY INDIVIDUAL

in the community to the use of the land is equally clear and unquestionable. Every man who comes into this world carries in his hand the great national right or charter to the free and undisturbed possession and enjoyment of the existence with which the Creator has endowed him. On the other hand, he also carries with him into this world wants and necessities and requirements which must be provided for, and satisfied, if not abundantly and generously, at least sufficiently. Hence, it follows that the absolute necessities of life, if not prepared and actually at hand for his immediate use, must, at least, be within his reach, and actually within his power. . . . He must at least have the power of providing himself with them by producing them by his toil and labour. But, as the production of these commodities is impossible without the land, his right to the use of the land is clear and indisputable. To deny

HIS RIGHT TO THE USE OF THE LAND

would be to deny his right to live, and would be tantamount to pronouncing a sentence of death on him, for no other crime except the crime of claiming a right to live. There is no power on earth competent to deprive a man of his natural right of free access to the land. Less than this could not guarantee to him the full, free, and independent enjoyment of life and existence which his Creator had conferred on him. But landlordism—at least as it has existed in this country—not only ignores, but positively abolishes and destroys this great natural right of property which every man holds in his fair share of the land; and it is only out of the ashes and on the ruins of the sacred edifice of property which the Creator himself could not withhold, and which the Creator himself cannot abdicate, that landlordism has sprung up, grows, and flourishes. It has wrested the land and the ownership of the whole land out of the hands of society and of all the members of society on whom its Creator had formally and undeniably bestowed it. It has appropriated it all, and vested it to the last inch as private property in itself exclusively.

The question of the land was the fundamental question in every country. Home Rule is a great gain; education is a great gain; but after all we can only live by the land. Therefore, the rights which God Almighty has given us in the land are sacred and inalienable, and if we preserve them we will have plenty, peace, and prosperity in our land.

America.

The Single Tax movement in America is sailing on to victory all along the line, acquiring a momentum as it goes that is at once amazing and inspiring. The fight at Delaware is being well sustained. The latest achievement for the Single Taxers there was the arrest of George Frank Stevens and William Horan at an open-air demonstration in the town of Dover, for obstructing the pavement. They were summarily sentenced to pay a fine, or suffer imprisonment for 30 days. They took the 30 days, and the result was a national advertisement for the Single Tax and the cause at Delaware. The excessive zeal of the local "beak" was severely sat on by the Mayor the following day setting the crusaders at liberty, saying he would release every man who was imprisoned for public speaking.

The Hyattsville Experiment.

The Single Tax was tried a few years ago in the little town of Hyattsville, Maryland, but only for a year. The landowners won in the Court of Appeal on the ground that the Single Tax plan of collecting taxes was contrary to the constitution of Maryland. Mr. J. H. Ralston, one of the Hyattsville Commissioners who imposed the new assessment, writes to the *Delaware Star*:—

As a matter of fact, the practical workings of the Single Tax in Hyattsville were favourable to the Single Tax. During the year of its existence more new

houses were constructed than during any similar period in Hyattsville. Labour was more generally employed, and at the same time the taxes upon all who used land productively or for home purposes were reduced from one-half to two-thirds on the average. The deficiency was made up by a corresponding increase of the amount of taxes paid by speculators who held the land out of use. This very increase made them more willing to part with their holdings for the purposes of town development. There is every reason to believe that were the Single Tax adopted by Delaware, where your constitution interposes no obstacle, the state would increase in prosperity to an unexampled degree. Such certainly is the inference to be drawn from the Hyattsville experiment.

In the town of Wilmington there are now twelve Single Tax Clubs, with an aggregate membership of 1,000.

The *San Francisco Call*, a leading daily, gives the Single Tax a constant supply of favourable attention.

The Hon. Joseph Leggett has just written an admirable essay on "The Rise and Growth of Landlordism in England," which has been issued in pamphlet form. It has already been widely circulated, and the *San Francisco Star* recently gave it as a supplement.

Chicago Land Values.

The *New Age* has favourably reviewed, in a leading article, the Eighth Biennial Report of the Bureau of Labour Statistics of Illinois.

"It is a happy coincidence which" (says the *New Age*), "in the midst of the debates on the 'Landlord Relief Bill,' brings to our table the results of one of the most complete and searching investigations into the relations of land and taxation which has ever been attempted. This is the Eighth Biennial Report of the Bureau of Labour Statistics of Illinois (E. F. Hartman, state printer, Springfield, Ill.).

"In no great city, probably, can the nature and growth of urban land values be studied so easily and so profitably as in Chicago. Within little more than half a century a frontier military post has developed into one of the greatest commercial centres of the world. The 'raw prairie land at the mouth of the Chicago river,' which in the thirties could be bought in quarter-acre lots at less than £5 a lot, is now covered with massive 'sky-scrapers,' and luxurious residences, with busy saloons and teeming slums. The population has grown from a few score in 1830 to considerably over a million and a half. The growth, the industry, and the expenditure of this population are reflected, here as anywhere else, in the enormous growth of the value of land.

"An astounding table, given in the report (p. 277), traces the growth in value, year by year, of a single quarter acre lot from 20 dollars in 1830 to a million and a quarter dollars in 1894. Yet even this is not the most valuable site in Chicago, for in March of the present year, a block of land 90 by 91½ feet, the site of a newspaper office, changed hands at a figure which represents a value of no less than 8,318,635 dollars per acre. Nowhere else, except in the very centre of the city of London, is land more costly than this. 'A piece of land 4 feet by 4 feet 4 inches—not enough for a man's grave—at the corner of State and Washington Streets, Chicago,' is more valuable than 100 acres of average farm land in Illinois (p. 19). So valuable are Chicago business sites that, even including such mammoth buildings as the Masonic Temple (20 stories) and the Schiller Building (17 stories), the value of forty-four of the monstrous erections, commonly called 'sky-scrapers,' is actually less than the value of the land upon which they stand (Table xxi.)."

Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt wears a solitaire diamond ring for which she paid 45,000 dollars. The annual report of the New York coroner shows that 4,500 women are buried in the Potter's Field every year from New York. The wedding trousseau of young Miss Vanderbilt is said to be by far the finest and most costly ever worn by an American bride, costing into the hundreds of thousands of dollars. The almshouses on Randall's Island, near where the wedding took place, is so full of paupers that over a hundred of them are compelled to sleep on the floor.—*Coast Seaman's Journal*.

How Russia pays for Coronation.

While reading the accounts of the coronation of the Czar, of the pageants, processions, and feasts, of the pomp and parade, of the barbaric splendour, of cloth of gold and glittering gems, I could not help thinking of the poor and melancholy peasants, of the toiling, half-fed millions, of the sad and ignorant multitudes who belong body and soul to the Czar.

I thought of the backs that have been scarred by the knout, of the thousands in prisons for having dared to say a whispered word for freedom, of the great multitude who had been driven like cattle along the weary roads that lead to the hell of Siberia.

The cannon at Moscow were not loud enough nor the clang of the bells, nor the blare of the trumpets, to drown the groans of the captives.

I thought of the fathers that had been torn from wives and children for the crime of speaking like men.

And when the priests spoke of the Czar as the "God-selected man," the "God-adorned man," my blood grew warm.

When I read of the coronation of the Czarina, I thought of Siberia. I thought of girls working in the mines, hauling ore from the pits with chains about their waists; young girls, almost naked, at the mercy of brutal officials; young girls weeping and moaning their lives away because between their pure lips the word liberty had burst into blossom.

Yet law neglects, forgets them, and crowns the Czarina. The injustice, the agony, and horror of this poor world are enough to make mankind insane.

Ignorance and superstition crown impudence and tyranny. Millions of money squandered for the humiliation of man, to dishonour the people.

Back of the coronation, back of all the ceremonies, back of all the hypocrisy there is nothing but a lie.

It is not true that God "selected" this Czar to rule and rob a hundred millions of human beings.

It is all an ignorant, barbaric, superstitious lie—a lie that pomp and pageant, and flaunting flags, and robed priests, and swinging censers, cannot change to truth.

Those who are not blinded by the glare and glitter at Moscow see millions of homes on which the shadows fall; see millions of weeping mothers, whose children have been stolen by the Czar; see thousands of villages without schools, millions of houses without books, millions and millions of men, women, and children in whose future there is no star, and whose only friend is death.

The coronation is an insult to the nineteenth century.—*The Journal of the Knights of Labour*.

Too Much Wealth—Too Many People.

By H. H. HARDINGE.

(Actual occurrence.) Scene—Factory in

Enter traveller for steel works.

"Good morning, how's business?"

"Oh, slow; not much doing; how is it with you?"

"Oh, about the same; everything appears to be dead or dying."

"Well, what's the trouble; don't people want steel any more?"

"Yes, I suppose so, but the fact is there is an over-production; we need a war to make times good, and besides there are too many people anyway."

"Well, well, that is exceedingly good; too many people and over-production of wealth in one breath; did the idea originate with you?"

"No, I've heard it before."

"Well, so have I, and I'm sick of such rot."

"Rot?"

"Yes, sheer nonsense."

"Why?"

"Well, you want a war to decimate the population; don't you think that is a very clumsy and expensive device for accomplishing the desired result, to say nothing of the physical suffering endured by the wounded, and the long trail of widows, orphans, wooden legs, sorrow, pensions, pension frauds, and an endless train of uncomfortable sensations, and recollections. Now, to a person of your bloodthirsty proclivities the uncertainty of killing your victims

The Single Tax is the Key to Open it.