

and constituting an area much more extensive, valuable, and fertile than that presently in the occupation of crofters, the landlords have appropriated the clansmen's rights and interests in it without payment or compensation of any kind. The solution of the highland problem is not land purchase, but resumption of the clansmen's right to occupy the Fatherland"; and added that the urgent need was restoration, and the re-opening of the country would help to bring that about. The conclusion of the matter is in this final extract we take from *The Forbidden Land* :—

"The fundamental and permanent cause is congestion on the land, congestion upon bits of barren soil to which the smallholders of happier days were relegated in order that wide stretches may now be reserved for sport.

Men within the last few months (written in 1924) have gone to prison because they could not get holdings, and tried to save themselves from starvation by tilling scraps of the sporting domain. The sportsman says that this land is useless for agriculture; the squatter is ready to try his luck. Is it better that he should starve, or have his passage paid by charity to a more hospitable country? Is depopulation still to go on for the sake of the few? Are the millions of acres suitable for one kind of agriculture or another, or for afforestation, to remain productive of only a small amount of venison and some thousand brace of grouse? This is a sterner question than whether the rest of it shall remain closed to the multitudes who might find rest and refreshment amidst its natural beauty, in spite of all drawbacks of climate."

THE IMPRISONMENT OF MATTHEU ALONSO

LAST MONTH we were able to give only the "stop press" news that Professor Mattheu Alonso was alive and well although under duress. He and Mr. Baldomero Argente should have attended as Spanish representatives the International Conference on Land Value Taxation and Free Trade in London, September, 1936, but their journey was stopped and nothing could be heard of them at the time. Long since then letters have come from Baldomero Argente that he is well and free and occupied on his literary work, but friends outside Spain had despaired of Mattheu Alonso for lack of any satisfactory word during the past five years. Most gratifying therefore was the news reported in *Land and Freedom* (New York), December issue, that a letter had arrived from Mattheu Alonso himself. Here is the story of his experiences as he relates them :—

"Since September, 1936—that is, within the Period of the Revolution—I was here at Tarragona, working as professor at the Instituto y Escuela Normal del Magisterio, and also working at my profession of Law. I used Henry George's books in my classes, both for comment and translation.

"When General Franco's troops entered Tarragona, accusations and indictments of the citizens who remained here began. Many had fled to France, and so escaped.

"I was the victim of the jealousy of a lawyer, who charged me with accusing my Fascist clients instead of defending them. This charge was so false that I was able to clear myself by presenting a certificate which vindicated me completely. This certificate refers to the first five death sentences which were demanded before the Special Court of the Guard of Tarragona by the previous Loyalist Government, and which I opposed. Two of the cases I saved in Tarragona, and the other three I was also able to save at the Court in Barcelona. After these cases had been decided, no further death penalties were imposed, due to the fact that the Special Court used the decisions on these first cases whenever the death penalty was demanded. Thus, no one else was sentenced to death.

"Though I was completely cleared of the charge against myself, nevertheless there were other charges. The Fascists discovered that I had been an outstanding republican, and that a political party had nominated me as candidate for Deputy in 1936. They found that in my teachings I propagated the Georgeist doctrine, which the judge of the Court qualified as 'anarchistic and anti-patriotic.'

"In my defence, I showed them that the Georgeist doctrine is not anarchistic, and that our doctrine is approved by the Holy See; and I related the story of Dr Edward McGlynn, Pastor of St Stephen's in New York. I also pointed out that General Fanjul, col-

laborator of General Franco, had been Vice-President of the Liga Georgista Espanola, and that our Secretary, Don Arturo Soria, was assassinated by the Communists.

"The Tribunal was very much impressed by the case of Dr McGlynn, but it took them forty-five days to ascertain whether or not Georgeism was a revolutionary doctrine. Since I held no high political position, and since I have never been involved in a crime, I was not sentenced to death, but was given a life sentence. During the forty-five days, however, I was in prison among those sentenced to death. Each night I saw my companions taken out to die, and one night I thought they were going to take me, too. You see, I was on the brink of being the first Georgeist martyr!

"After my sentence was confirmed, I was transferred to the Prison of San Miguel de los Reyes in Valencia, where I remained completely *incomunicado* until August 26, when I was liberated. Due to a reviewing of sentences, mine has been reduced to six years.

"My present status is that of prisoner in my own home, and of course I will not be reinstated in the University to continue my teachings. My immediate problem is to be able to live, since the authorities have confiscated my home and everything I possessed, including my clothing, and even my professional diplomas. I am living now through the kindness of my sister. I hope that the authorities will at least allow me to work as an attorney. If not, I will be compelled to request help from you to approach the Spanish Embassy in Washington to give me a passport to the United States, so that I might establish myself in your country as Professor of Spanish and Economic Philosophy."

Prof Alonso was formerly an instructor of Economics and French at the University of Salamanca. For two years he was lecturer in Spanish at the University of Liverpool, England. In 1934 he paid a brief visit to the United States. He was profoundly impressed by the Henry George School of Social Science, founded two years previously by Oscar Geiger, and he had resolved to create a similar institution in his native country.

The editors of *Land and Freedom* have communicated with Washington and hope to assist Prof Alonso to go to the U.S.A. should the occasion warrant.

I hope to see after this war a Scottish revival led by Scots in Scotland. I hope to see a body of technical experts in research set up to investigate and advise on industries and agriculture. We suffer too much from absentee landlordism. We need taxation of land values, access through modern transport to markets, power schemes, afforestation, and an extensive land settlement plan.

LADY GLEN COATS, in the
Scots Independent, January.