

the juridical position of the land as a consequence of the absorption of the rent, the amount of same, the evaluation and adjudication of the land to private individuals, the distribution of the rent amongst the various fiscal departments, the periodicity of rent determination, the transformation of the state mechanism and the methods of absorbing the rent, . . . are questions already studied and determined by Georgists, but which, since they are matters of practical politics, must be considered at the opportune moment by those who are to carry out the Georgist reforms in a fiscal and social field.

Some of the speeches delivered at the Convention, we are informed, were wonderfully eloquent. Some of these raised controversial issues. But the final result was complete harmony in the Declaration of Principles.

Institutional Deviltry

THE impossible never happens and the seeming miracles with which nature abounds are miracles to us only because we do not understand them. If all of the demons that have peopled the brain of unenlightened mankind through the centuries were to get together in one great convention with the avowed purpose of framing up a programme that would accomplish the greatest amount of *evil*, in the shortest time and with the least friction, this is probably the programme they would adopt. They would of course, place Satan himself in the Chair and his head devil or general foreman would head the committee on Platform. After due deliberation at the close of a day, a week or more probably a month, they would make a report to the general convention and it would read like this:

"Your Majesty! We have considered the matter very carefully and we have arrived at very definite conclusions. The system that we would install amongst men in their present semi-enlightened condition must possess certain characteristics. It must be invisible to the eye, or men will see it. It must be impersonal, or men will identify it and destroy it as they have many times with kings and emperors. It must be institutional, so that like the church and the state, they will take it for granted; they will see the evils generated but will not recognize their source. It must be subterranean so as to work smoothly and without friction. It must be noiseless so that no one can hear it. It must be odorless (except for the noxious vapors inseparable from a city slum which men take for granted) so that no one can smell it. It must be all powerful so that no one can resist it and above all it must be automatic in operation so that it will not require constant attention to keep it going. Your Majesty, we the committee on Platform recommend the adoption of such a system; if such compound aggregation of virtue and vice can be invented and pieced together, it will be a hundering! The very apotheosis of artistic deviltry."

Satan would listen, attentively, look wise, wiggle his tail a bit then lay back in his chair and laugh heartily. "Why you simpletons, don't you know that the system that you have outlined has been in operation among the Christian Nations for hundreds of years? That it possesses every quality that you have recommended; that it is the most highly capitalized iniquity on the face of any planet. Oh me! oh my! this labor question has reached the hellish stage it is impossible to get good competent devils to work for nothing any more. You devils have thrown your time away; the system now operating is invisible, institutional, impersonal, subterranean, noiseless, odorless, except in spots, automatic and quite irresistible as far as the average person is concerned and what is more (here Satan gives his thigh a hearty wallop) it has the unqualified endorsement of the anti-crime wavers, the anti-vice crusaders, the anti-political corruption, morons and the very best people indeed, oh, yes, indeed! the very best!"

—H. H. HARDINGE.

Malthus Formula Irrational

ALTHOUGH population has increased enormously in the last one hundred years, the food supply has increased so much faster that at this day one of the acute problems is how to save agriculture from its surplus. This increase was for a while owing to the opening of the American continents; latterly it is owing to scientific knowledge and the use of machine power. Nowhere yet has this knowledge or power been exhausted; everywhere, even in very old countries, the productivity of agriculture may be greatly increased. This is simply to say that the quantity of human life the earth will support under a system of scientific agriculture is unknown.

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In Japan it is perhaps true that the limit of the native food supply is about to be touched. Yet it was her own choice to achieve greatness through industry, which means to exchange manufactured goods for food as an economic policy; parallel has occurred a sudden increase of population. For tens of centuries before this she had lived happily on her own soil in complete isolation.

Here is no question of economic necessity. There is only the idea of it. It is a matter of policy to begin with, and contains the fallacy that strength for war is still measurable in man power, whereas now the first measure of it is machine power. Moreover, the absurdity of treating the territorial mania as a matter of economic necessity is made apparent by applying the Malthusian formula to the future of any vital race. Either Italy or Japan could prove by arithmetic that in two hundred years, from the simple projection of its rate of increase, it will need more than the whole world to live in. Statistically it is readable; rationally it does not occur.

—GARRET GARRETT, in *Saturday Evening Post*.