

Alphonse Daudé-Bancel

1870-1963

THE leading Georgist of France, A. Daudé-Bancel, died on April 4th, ending a long and illustrious career, both in the Georgist and cooperative movements. Editor of *Terre et Liberté* (Land and Liberty) right up to the end, Mr. Daudé-Bancel had written a brief autobiographical sketch for the April-May-June 1960 issue of that periodical, from which we glean the following information:

The cooperative movement was Daudé-Bancel's first great interest, he having been attracted to it as early as 1880, when he was only ten years old. This came about from reading a book entitled *Francinet, or a Tour of France by Two Children*, in which the Rochdale cooperative movement was praised.

Daudé-Bancel decided to become a cooperator, but at first made his living in pharmacy. In Montpellier, he came across Charles Gide, Professor in the Faculty of Law, who took an interest in the struggling young man. Later, Gide became president of the Union of French Consumer Cooperatives and invited Daudé-Bancel to be the secretary general. Thenceforth, he was in the midst of cooperative work—both the educational and business ends of it.

Through Gide, Daudé-Bancel

learned, too, about Henry George and the taxation of land values. In 1924, the Georgist leader of that time, Sam Meyer, asked Gide if he knew of someone who could edit the Georgist periodical *La Terre* (The Land), and Gide recommended Daudé-Bancel, who accepted. During World War II, Meyer became a victim of Nazi persecution, and the paper (which later became *Terre et Liberté*) was suspended. But after the war *Terre et Liberté* was revived with Daudé-Bancel again editing it.

One day, along with his friend Camille Belliard, director of *Amitié par le Livre* (Friendship through Books), Daudé-Bancel thought of a prize contest in the writing of a novel which should express both cooperative and Georgist ideas. The contest was launched and the winner was P. V. Berthier, a journalist for *Le Monde*. The book, *On a Tué M. Systeme* (Mr. System Has Been Killed), was published in 1959 and enjoyed a success.

When the Henry George School launched its correspondence course in French, Daudé-Bancel cooperated. His last years were devoted mostly to the Georgist movement. In spite of growing blindness and illness, he continued working right to the end.

1949 and 1959—a Reminiscence

In 1949, when the International Conference for Land Value Taxation was held in England, I was at the London office of Land and Liberty when word came that the French Georgist leader, A. Daudé-Bancel, was coming. He was taking the night train from Dieppe, and was to arrive at the Victoria Station the next morning.

Since he didn't know English and I knew some French, wouldn't I meet him at the station and escort him to the office? Yes, of course I would, and so I went over and found that the chore wasn't so simple! There were endless rows of tracks, and hordes of people racing in every direction.

At track 1, I asked where the night