

Land and Freedom

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Comment and Reflection

SUPPOSING it were true that the average legislator in national, state and local bodies was as stupid as people, subconsciously, are beginning to believe he is, would it not seem that even then one or more would awaken to a realization of certain obvious relationships affecting the problem of unemployment. Apparently our legislators are not even able to define "unemployment," which is but the failure of the cooperation of two factors, Land and Labor. If they think at all of land they think of it as a medium for raising cabbages, never as a basis for the erection and a source for extracting material for houses, skyscrapers, factories and department stores. They think of the land only as a farmer and think even in this way in a much restricted sense.

SUPPOSE it is true that our legislators cannot define "land" any more than they can define "unemployment." Suppose they never read a line of Henry George, and know nothing of political economy, yet does it not seem strange that the fact should fail to occur to them that employment is provided by land to all those wanting employment, either in the Garden of Eden or the city of Chicago. Is it true, as Sherlock Holmes says in a recent screen play, "The obvious escapes attention?" It would seem so, for it is perfectly obvious that the way to provide employment is to put men on the land.

SO the legislators whose observation overlooks the obvious might be moved to the consideration that groups of men should be put on the land through any means available, preferably of course by the means of land value taxation, but *any* means that would open land to occupation, any means that would bring together the now dis-united factors of Land and Labor.

IT is for this reason that we venture to hope that something will come out of Abe Waldauer's move for the establishment of a soldier's enclave on Georgist lines in Tennessee. We are wondering, however, if when Waldauer's city grows to a million inhabitants whether the obvious will still escape attention. But we think not. Perhaps we may vision the establishment of a state that might grow out of it in which the obvious relationship of Land and Labor will no longer escape observation. It would be too large a phenomenon to be passed over in silence.

IN the ignoring of the obvious the legislators of all countries are not alike. The lawmakers of Denmark are exceptions. Here is a little country with the lowest tariff in the world; it is probably the most prosperous country in the world. It has made real advances on Henry George lines; that great man is probably better known in Denmark than in the land of his birth. The backbone of the movement there are the working farmers, the husmænd, and we invite the attention of the American farmer to the fact. Here the farmer ignores the obvious, fearing that the taking of the economic rent would put a greater burden upon him. Our Danish brothers know better; they, like nearly all farmers everywhere, have very little economic rent to tax, and they would gladly give it all to have other taxes removed.

AND the Danish people are marching on. In another part of this issue will be found the news of the election of four SingleTax party members to the Danish parliament. This does not mean that they are the only members of the Government who have espoused the doctrines of Henry George, for there are a number of others, but these four are elected as representing a newly constituted political party. Everywhere in Denmark public sentiment is influenced by the fundamental teachings of the great American economist. The Danish people have a genius for the discovery of the obvious.

IN addition to the victory in Denmark for the cause of liberation, this issue of LAND AND FREEDOM bears other testimony to a stirring beneath the surface of things. Certainly the news from Ireland gives promise of what may occur in the Free State. Ireland has a traditional background from the days of the Brehon Code of Saint Patrick down to the notable teachings of Bishop Nulty and Michael Davitt. If this latent spirit can be aroused by such men as Robert Barton a flame may be lit in Ireland that will set all Erin afire.

IT is good news also that Professor Brinsmade reports from Mexico. Here, too, in Spanish America, there is a traditional background in the great figure of Rivadavia that appeals strongly to racial pride. The great Argentine president is known wherever Spanish is spoken in Latin America, and the name of the great American, Henry George, is linked with his in the new history that is now in the making. This movement of ours cannot much longer