

## VIEW FROM THE TOWER.

Among the questions of the hour awakened by the more vigorous independent thought and increase of knowledge of our day, is what is known as The Land Question. Briefly stated the question is: Can one man rightfully *hold* thousands of acres more than he can or does use, while his brother man who desires to use land can obtain none without paying a speculative price for it, which in many cases he cannot do, if he would?

Going back, we inquire: Who held the original right, title and claim to earth as a whole with all its privileges, rain, sunshine, air, water and land. All must admit that God, the Creator, owned it all; and he gave the control of it to our father Adam for his use and the use of all his children. So then every foot of land is God's property and men are merely granted the privilege of using it, and not of hoarding it for speculative purposes. Surely no one could claim that the heavenly owner had given him a *right* to appropriate that which others have need of, and which he does not need.

This principle God laid down clearly in his dealings with Israel. His arrangement with them in giving them the land of Canaan, was on the principle of a *lease* and not of ownership of the land. It was to be a perpetual lease, subject to certain conditions, one of which was, that they must not work the land to death (as because of a violation of other parts of the law, the reservation of vast parks, etc., etc., the tenantry of Ireland are obliged to do, bringing on repeatedly failure of crops and famine). When God brought the tribes into Canaan he divided to each a portion according to their numbers and requirements; and another of the conditions of their *lease* was, that though they might trade with each other and thus be hindered from sloth, indolence, and lack of healthful ambition, yet they must not permanently take advantage one of another, so as to create class distinctions, making a permanently

poor class and a permanently wealthy class, as we see it in Europe today, and as we see that time would bring about in America.

To keep this equilibrium, God arranged that he would lease them the land for only fifty years at a time. They might treat the land as their own, buying and selling as their changing circumstances might require for fifty years, but at the end of that lease all title reverted back to God, the owner, who then gave it again as at first on another fifty years' lease to the same families, or their representatives according to their number and needs. This fiftieth year of restitution was known to the Jews as the Year of Jubilee: and concerning it God's regulations were as follows: "In the year of Jubilee ye shall return every man unto his possession. And if thou sell aught unto thy neighbor, or buyest aught of thy neighbor's hand ye shall not oppress one another: [but] according to the number of years after the jubilee thou shalt buy of thy neighbor and according to the number of years of the fruits, he shall sell unto thee: According to the multitude of the years [to the next jubilee] thou shalt increase the price, and according to the fewness of years thou shalt diminish the price of it." (Lev. 25:13-16.) These are exactly the terms of a lease. And the ground and reason for this arrangement is specified in a succeeding verse (v. 23). "The land shall not be sold forever: FOR THE LAND IS MINE; for ye are strangers [without ownership] and sojourners [tenants] with me."

While this Jubilee had a typical lesson as a prophecy of the Millennial age, "the times of restitution of all things" (Acts 3:21), yet it had as well a practical blessing in it for the Jew: and experience will yet prove to the world the wisdom and necessity of *some* such arrangement. Not until now, could this necessity be so fully appreciated for various reasons. The world for several hundred years has found a vent for its rapidly growing population in emigration to America, Australia, etc., whose millions of acres attracted many of the most ambitious and enterprising from crowded Europe, drawing attention and reflection away from the fact that an aristocratic class, styled the "Nobility," had gradually acquired, some by fair and some

by foul means, far more than their proper proportion of *God's land*, which under present arrangement is really the basis of all wealth; while others are forced [R938 : page 1] by circumstances to be, and to continue, a pauper class, with but slight hope of bettering their condition, except by emigration, because the wealthy aristocracy holds the basis of wealth – the land.

The time was, that this class did not think or hope beyond the liberties and stations of their fathers, but not so now; now men are thinking vigorously and independently – too much so, often extravagantly and foolishly, to their own injury and to the injury of the cause they seek to serve. They are no longer willing to be dumb driven cattle, but now demand that whatever inequalities the wrong ideas of the past have produced, these shall not go on increasing, but that the masses shall so rule and legislate that, while individuality shall remain and individual energy and ability have its reward, the conditions which *produced* and perpetuated *class* distinctions shall give place.

In America where the people rule themselves, the laws are being examined and overhauled as the best and surest means of preventing the evils so manifest in the Landlord system of Europe. They see that here as there, land is at present the basis of wealth, because it is a necessity whose value increases with every birth, and with every shipload of immigrants. They see that present laws and arrangements are favorable to land speculation, favorable to the acquisition of immense [R938 : page 2] tracts of land, the rentals of which may at no distant day be as onerous and burdensome to the people here, as they are to-day in Ireland and Europe.

The sentiment of the people cries out for a wholesome law on this subject, to secure to every man an opportunity of a share in God's land under his lease. Admitting the truth of the principle that wealth should be represented in buildings, factories, etc., in personal property, representing labor, and not in land, which is God's and which is given *us all* to use, the question arises: How can this truth be gradually

approached, so as to work the least rupture of society, and the least possible injury to those who, under existing laws, have and hold title to land as representing labor, or wealth?

Complex and almost unanswerable as this question at first sight appears, we are living in a time – "the time of the end," when knowledge was to be increased (Dan. 12:4.) – when we should expect the answer to come from some quarter; and sure enough, it has come. So far as we know, the answer does not come from one of the "saints," (We know nothing of the man's religious views,) nor should we expect it from a saint. It should come from one of the world, whose time and talent would be absorbed in presenting *this truth* to the world. The saints minister specially to the saints, and in spiritual things mainly, and would have neither the time nor inclination to forsake their higher work for the "body of Christ" – the Church, to take hold of any of the various reforms of the hour among and specially bearing upon the World in this dawn of the Millennium. It is proper, however, that all the saints have right ideas on all the living questions of the hour; that he who sees the great truths of God's plan may at least not oppose by word or deed the grand outworkings of that plan in any direction. And though the holders of these general truths may not appreciate spiritual truths, in fact *cannot* do so, since they must be spiritually discerned, yet we should remember the words of the Apostle, "He that is spiritual judgeth *all things*, yet he himself is judged of no man." (1 Cor. 2:15.) The saints can understand others, while others cannot comprehend the saints. We see the plan from God's standpoint, and act our part intelligently, while others are unwittingly used in its accomplishment, and ignorant both of our interest and co-operation.

The answer to the question to which we refer has awakened much opposition on the part of many intelligent people, some of whom do not understand clearly either the question or its proposed solution, but hastily jump at the conclusion that it is a communistic idea of dividing all the property of the world alike among all the people. This they rightly conclude would be useless; because if divided in the morning,

some would be paupers before night, having sold their all for some momentary gratification. But this is not at all the plan proposed.

The answer to this land question – the remedy proposed for bringing about *gradually* a recognition of the fact that God is the real Landlord and leases it to each man in such proportion, as he can and shall use it, and thus divert capital from land, where it is burdensome upon the masses, into manufacturing, building, etc., where it will benefit all, by giving increased employment to laborers – is advanced and championed by Mr. Henry George, of New York.

A brief synopsis of this proposed scheme of remedial legislation and its effects, as we foresee them, is as follows: The plan is to assess all general taxes on the basis of land holdings, at market value. This would be placing the responsibility and expense of government and improvements upon those claiming and holding the land whose value is improved; while the man who has none of the land would have no tax. The effect of this legislation would be, first, to discourage investments in land, except for actual use; secondly, to induce all who have surplus or idle lands to sell them; thirdly, since much of the surplus land would be for sale, it would stimulate the sale of building lots and small farms, to those who cannot now purchase, by reducing values of unimproved lands and inducing present holders to sell on long time and low interest. This increase of land and home owners would give additional stability to the government which protects them, and of which they are factors. The capital taken out of land would seek investment in building, manufacturing, and kindred enterprises, which would not only tend to increase the demand for labor, but also to cheapen rents and bring more of the luxuries of life within the reach of the "lower classes," which it would thus help gradually to lift to the level of manhood, by stimulating in all, the laudable ambition to be in every way the equals of their fellow men.

This would not, as some have asserted, put the brunt of all the taxes upon the farmers and let the owners of small city lots go

practically free of tax; for the *market value* of the land – what the bare land would sell for – would determine the tax, and not its size. Thus a city lot on a business street might be worth ten thousand dollars, and a good sized farm might in some places be worth only one thousand dollars. In this illustration the city lot would pay ten times as much as the farm.

With most of farms and most of city properties the taxes would vary little from present rates; the exceptions would be in the large increase of the taxes upon "wild lands" and upon unimproved city property. At present, the man of enterprise who invests his wealth in a handsome building is taxed every year for having thus given employment to artisans and helped to beautify his vicinity and thus increase the value of his neighbor's unimproved property, which pays little tax, benefits no one but the owner, and is a drawback to the general community.

If we see this to be a correct principle, it will not do to oppose the right. What if you have some "wild lands" or unimproved town lots, which you bought on speculation, whose value would be injured, you should be glad to share a part in forwarding a general good, even if it costs something. And if you are one of the saints, while you cannot neglect *your* work to forward this cause, but must wait on *your* special ministry – preaching the glad tidings, yet you certainly must not oppose any feature of right. Remember, too, that while the "little flock" is in a special sense "The King's own," and while he in a special sense is the "Captain of our salvation," yet in another sense there are many troops and divisions, in the great army by which present arrangements and institutions are to be overthrown. – Rev. 19:15-21.

But will this solution of the question be accepted and acted upon by the people? Will this great change, this peaceable social revolution, accomplish the object desired? *By no means!* Those whose selfish interests are at stake will misrepresent the matter: men of wealth and influence will jump at the conclusion that it is a form of communism

and anarchy, the secular and religious press will make light of it, and the majority of the people of influence and culture will pay no attention to it, thinking it a wild fanatical dream.

The result will be, that this like other safety-valves of legislative reform, will be closed tight, until finally the pent up force of the lower stratum of society will upheave and shatter the entire social structure in a reign of terror and anarchy which Scripture foretells, in which all bounds will be passed, leveling all claims to land ownership and all values of every sort, as portrayed in MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., Chapter XV. From our standpoint, therefore, we see it would be the part of wisdom for all to come into harmony with this new land movement; for the holding of vast tracts of land away from others is certainly contrary to the spirit of the dawning Day. Whether Mr. George and his co-laborers succeed or not, landlordism is sure to go down under the reign of Immanuel.

### **A ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIEST**

known as Dr. McGlynn, has become an earnest advocate of Mr. George's land theory, and though opposed by Archbishop Corrigan, silenced from preaching and ordered to Rome, he has thus far not only defied and resisted papal interference, but, having the sympathy of many Catholics, he bids fair to create a wide split in the Church of Rome. Dr. McGlynn seems to be an honest man and a thinker, and the more he thinks and reasons as at present, the wider will be the breach between him and the Pope. The following Press dispatch is probably truthfully reported: – **[R939 : page 2]**

St. Louis, May 16. – Dr. McGlynn was received by a large audience last evening when he came to the front of the Opera house stage to deliver his lecture, "The cross of the new crusade." From an interview it is understood that he will never go to Rome to recant, even if excommunicated. Dr. McGlynn outlines his faith as follows: "I would as soon go to Constantinople for my politics as to Rome. I

believe the teachings of the church to be infallible, but the infallibility of popes, prefects, propagandas and bishops is quite another thing.

"Galileo discovered a great truth, but the popes and prefects denied it. This did not make it less a truth. The inquisition tried to convince him that right was wrong, but he explained his truth and refused to believe it aught else than a truth. Then he was cast into prison, and, being an old man, he soon grew tired of prison life and after four days he recanted. He knew he was right, but he got down on his knees and perjured himself like a gentleman. Afterwards the heads of the church were compelled to acknowledge that Galileo was right and they were wrong. What Galileo ought to have done was to go to jail and rot there. If they had said: 'You will die without the sacrament of the church unless you relent,' he should have said: 'I want none of your sacrament under such conditions; I will die without it.' Galileo was right and the world at the time was wrong. We are now right on the Land question and the world is wrong. We are not revolutionists; we are not going to hurt anybody. We are trying to secure equal justice to all men by a peaceful political revolution."

The Church of Rome has long boasted of her invincibility, and that her ministers were obedient and her doctrines one. That this has been so in the past is largely owing to the superstitious hold she has had of her subjects; but she cannot expect to be free in the coming years as in the past. While other sects and systems are tottering and falling under the weight of their errors, she too must go to fragments. She has had many questions to settle and has settled many – right and wrong – but in this "Evil Day" questions are arising which cannot be straddled, and which mean disaster to her system, whichever side she takes. Two of these questions are now before her, the Land question and the Labor organization question. The Labor problem confronts the Church of Rome from the fact that in her desire to hold her subjects completely, mind and body, through the Confessional, she forbids their joining any secret society whose affairs might not be freely submitted to her priests for their approval. The "Knights of Labor"



organization has enrolled hundreds of thousands of Catholics among its members who are bound to act according to the commands of the order, irrespective of the opinions of priests and confessors. Many Catholic Bishops saw this to be a question vital to the control of Papacy over her subjects: If she sanctions liberty of conscience at all, it becomes the entering wedge for full liberty of conscience on every subject, and hence the end of her power. On the other hand, she dreads to force an issue with so large a number of her subjects on a point which they feel is all-important, essential to their future earthly well-being. But advised by American bishops who appreciate the influence and strength of the Labor movement in this country, the Pope has recently consented to recognize Catholics holding membership among the Knights of Labor.

This is a great step, a great concession, and is being interpreted as expressive of a great sympathy between the Church of Rome and the "lower classes"; as indicating that she is championing the cause of Labor as opposed to Capital. Not so, however. She more than any other system on earth has been the foe of liberty of conscience, and it is her own boast that she changes not. This concession to the K. of L. is not of choice: it is wrung from her. She more than any government on earth, is dependent on the servility, unmanliness, and mental bondage of the people for her influence and continued control over them. Hence in the struggle of this "Day of Trouble" she will be found on the side of monarchy, capital and oppression, notwithstanding the fact that the masses of her subjects are among the poor. She well knows that political liberty is a sure forerunner of general freedom of conscience, and her chief concern is to keep her shackles on men's consciences. Her interests bind her to support the thrones, and the interests of the thrones of earth will bind them to the Church of Rome and all others favorable to their maintenance – and this in the end will also include Protestant "orthodoxy."

We say, then, that the approval of the Knights of Labor organization by the Church of Rome will surely not stand; it will ere

long be revoked. Is this a prophecy on our part? No; it is but the reading in the light of the past history of that apostate church, of the prophetic statement of Revelation 19:19, which clearly shows that in this struggle the Beast [symbol of the Church of Rome] will be found on the side of, and banded with, the "Kings of the earth" and their armies.

The Land question she hopes to nip in the bud by squelching Dr. McGlynn, one of the leaders; but so far he gives evidence of being of the sort willing to be martyred rather than deny an important truth. The above report of Mr. McGlynn's sentiments shows him to be a veritable Luther, raised up by other issues. Here seems to be the entering wedge of a great trouble in the Church of Rome, represented in Rev. 16:10,11. The darkness represents the perplexity rapidly coming over that hierarchy; and the gnawing of their tongues represents the painful controversies and contradictions one of another by those who act as Papacy's tongues. Mr. McGlynn has already contradicted Archbishop Corrigan and has cited the utterances of other tongues of Papacy, other writers and teachers honored in the past,

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### **View From The Tower – Concluded.**

to support him. In contradicting and controverting Dr. McGlynn, the Archbishop has been obliged also to call in question the testimony of records and writers long regarded by Catholics as sacred. Thus the gnawing of tongues in pain begins.

If Dr. McGlynn will stand firm to the sentiments above quoted, he will surely go farther. He states his belief in the infallibility of the Church of Rome, but not in the infallibility of popes and bishops. This means that he accepts as infallible only the utterances of the great Councils of the Church of Rome, if we understand him. But if this be

his position, he must go farther and deny the infallibility of Councils; for was it not the Grand Council of the Church of Rome which in 1869, sitting in the Vatican at Rome, declared for the first time the Infallibility of the Popes? So, then, Dr. McGlynn must come to the conclusion reached by unprejudiced, thinking men long since, that neither the Church of Rome nor its popes are beyond the possibility of error – infallible.

The jangle and turmoil, political and religious, which is preparing for the world and coming from every quarter, is agonizing indeed to those who see not that by such means God is working out a great blessing, preparing for the permanent overthrow of error and wrong on every subject and in every quarter, and the establishment of the Kingdom for which we have long prayed: "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

In the little interval of peace before the storm gets under way, every saint should esteem it a privilege to share in the great work of the hour – the sealing of the servants of God (not the servants of sects), [R939 : page 8] the Israelites indeed, in whom is no guile, *in their foreheads* – providing such with the intelligent, intellectual, Scriptural understanding of God's plan, which alone will enable them to "stand" and not "fall" in this evil day. And if, while seeking out and sealing these, you are able to put into the hands of the deluded, Satan-blinded world some of the eye-salve of truth, you should do so – "doing good unto all men as you have opportunity, especially to the house-hold of faith."

Surely those who are getting "The Plan of the Ages" (M. DAWN. VOL. I.) into the hands of the people so generally, are doing just such a work – sealing the saints, blessing many, and honoring our Father. He that honoreth God shall be honored. He that watereth others shall be watered.

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