

children. It will surprise readers familiar with his great work, "The Problem of War," to learn that he is not a writer by profession but a manufacturer and engineer. But he is nevertheless constantly busy with the pen. An article of his appears in current *English Review*. Part of his letter follows:

NO TIME FOR HALF WAY MEASURES

EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

You may rest assured that the spirit of Henry George neither slumbers nor rests. At the forthcoming Easter Conference of the Independent Labor Party the full demand is up for discussion. The very first item on the agenda is a resolution which if passed will reopen the whole matter in a way that has never yet been presented. Conditions in Great Britain are such that if anything is done at all it will be a radical move in our direction.

My hope is that a competition will spring up in which the progressive political parties will vie with one another as to which shall propose the greatest practical reform. A timid attitude has no hope of success at the moment, and that is why some of us founded the Commonwealth League a few years ago to make a missionary advance into the fields of the Labor Movement poisoned by the treachery of the Lloyd George liberals. Many people actually believe that the Taxation of Land Values is in operation, misled by the Peoples' Budget of 1909-10.

The very sound of the formula carries discredit, and apart from the constitutional difficulties represented by the House of Lords veto, there is a real difficulty in the psychology of the situation today. If you will in March number of *Land and Liberty* read the account of the proceedings in Parliament when Wedgewood manfully tried to obtain leave under the ten minute rule to introduce a Bill to enable local authorities to levy rates upon land values, and pro tanto to reduce existing rates upon houses and improvements, you will see how unscrupulous our opponents are and how clever they can be. It is obvious that a strong flanking movement on the part of the rank and file is needed to crumple up the insidious opposition created by misrepresentation. The best reply is an uncompromising stand on principle.

Unfortunately too many of our friends have forgotten the Memorial Policy introduced by Verinder, John Paul and the United Committee of a National Tax on Land Values and an allocation to municipalities by making certain local changes national ones. It has been sidetracked by the parochial Rating of Land Values, and the "Tax and Buy" advocated by the Land Nationalizers and the Fabians. It is necessary to revise the Memorial Policy in the strongest form possible, so as to preserve our principles pure and undefiled, and to make them understood of the people.

Too many Liberal and Labor politicians in order to obtain the support of Henry Georgians have given promises and joined the Leagues, while on the platform they scarcely mention land and instead advocate all sorts of State control schemes. It is necessary to preach to the people in plain words, leaving the subtleties to dissolve themselves. It is not our intention to refuse a slice at a time, but we are asking for the whole loaf, pursuing tirelessly economic justice to its fullest achievement.

At present I meet once a week at a round table a group of very interesting men, Austin Harrison, of the *English Review*, Mr. Cooper, of the *British Farmer*, Sir Herbert Matthews, of the Board of Agriculture, and others. I am accompanied by one or two "live wires" and we have been giving them curative treatment.

Surbiton, England.

JOHN E. GRANT.

IMPORTANCE OF THE COMING CONFERENCE

EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

Perhaps my imagination has been overwrought, or it may be by reason of a passionate longing for some really big thing that will advertise our great reform to the world, but my rest has been disturbed and my generally calm, cool and unexcitable nature has become afflicted with exuberant thrills since reading the call for an International Conference of Single Taxers in your Nov.-Dec. issue.

Had there been no world war with its burdens of debt, and the nations were going along in their accustomed manner breeding poverty for the many and unearned wealth for the few I would have read the published call for a conference with composure and few if any thrills would agitate me. But things are different now. It is not necessary for me to recount the details of debt burdens and the well nigh crazed efforts of the governments of the peoples to meet these debts and the pitiful endeavors of the people themselves to escape from their burdens. I merely want to say that opportunity is knocking at our door, which if not grasped now will reveal to the world that we are only "parlor reformers." We must make the Conference a success. We must give to our movement an advertising boost that will compel, what we have long half heartedly wished for, the attention of the world.

This we can do if we take from our mental dictionaries the word sacrifice and replace it with the words sacred duty. We must go in force for the world to be impressed by numbers. We must not delegate this duty to our best men or our foremost workers, but every one of us, no matter how insignificant he may deem himself, should be there to answer to his name when the roll is called, for what I imagine is the real beginning of the decisive battle for economic justice and human progress.

Should we make the Conference a success in numbers we can appoint committees to go to the crazed governments of the various countries and show them the way out. Do you get the significance of that? Can you read that statement and not be thrilled by it?

Should we make of this Conference a failure, that is, should only a handful of delegates go from these United States and elsewhere, our committees will not only be small, but will be listened to with less respect.

Every Single Taxer should consider these phases of what can happen and hold himself personally responsible for what does happen. There is no middle ground for him or her to stand, if it is at all possible to lend his or her presence. The humblest one among us will count for just as much on this occasion in the eyes of the world as our greatest leader. Don't forget that.

Centreville, Md.

OLIVER McKNIGHT.

EXPLOITING PORTO RICO

EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

In *La Prensa* of New York, March 16th, there is an article entitled "Porto Rico is Prepared for Autonomous Government." It says that all the dailies on the island continue publishing telegrams from all parts showing the popular good will at the appointment of former representative Horace M. Towner to be governor in place of Mr. Reily. The people are particularly pleased because it is recalled that in 1919 Mr. Towner at a banquet declared himself in favor of Porto Rican autonomy, and also because upon leaving the island at the end of his last visit he shouted to an assembled multitude, "Three cheers for Porto Rico," in perfectly good Spanish.

Furthermore he has announced that while governor he will dedicate himself to the economic prosperity of the island, the development of its riches, and the improvement of its institutions, "being particular to couple this with the announcement that there will be no "revolutionary" reforms.

Mr. Towner has been to Porto Rico three times on Congressional junkets. He thinks he knows Porto Rico. He does: as much as the sugar planters and other interested gentry wish him to and no more. Nothing "revolutionary" will be his watchword. What could be better from the standpoint of those who exploit the island? Nothing "revolutionary" is typical of his party and of the administration which sends him, a lame duck, to Porto Rico as a salaried agent.

I have an acquaintance with Porto Rican affairs covering many years. I also am conversant with the language of its people. That any appointee of the administration or any committee of Congress understands Porto Rico is possible, but not very probable. Investigating committees that have gone to the island have been shown around and entertained by both Americans and Porto Ricans of wealth and prop-

erty, and they saw just what it was intended they should see and no more. They came away well satisfied with what they saw. In Washington they had information from Munez Reviera and Cordova Davila, the Resident Commissioners, and both gentlemen knew exactly how much to say.

In all my goings and comings I never heard of one of these visiting Congressmen going off by himself to visit the poor in their huts. I have done it, and the pictures I have of Porto Rico are decidedly contrary to anything told at Washington.

India on a small scale! This is Porto Rico. It is our India. Unbelievable poverty! Filthy, vermin-ridden huts, poor food, the veriest tattered garments, no sanitation—these are the sights that greet visitors to the poorer sugar fields and to many of the larger plantations. Wealth, comfort, luxury and ease among the few residential districts of San Juan. There is a third class, a parasitic tribe of politicians who fawn upon the rich and live off the poor.

"Revolutionary" reform is the one thing needed in Porto Rico. Taxation of land values, or the collection of ground rent, as you please to state it, should be adopted by the insular government. This would force many absentees living in Spain and the United States to sell their idle lands.

Many a time I have sat on the bridge over the San Antonio channel, and admired the palm-covered hillsides in Santura, across the bay. It seemed so refreshing in the tropical heat to rest one's eyes upon such a paradise. I carried the picture with me to the cold North and looked forward to the time when I might have another glimpse of it. Last year I sat on the bridge again and looked across, but the palms were gone. Closer view showed the land cut up into building lots. The owner, a Spaniard, had returned for the first time since 1898 and was reaping a harvest. Lots were selling at \$2,000 each and Santura is not Flatbush! At the same time a Mr. Callender, who lived on the other side of the tract, has his house assessed at four times what he had paid for it during the war period. All these years the Spaniard's tract had been taxed as agricultural land.

A Mr. Parker, who owned a hillside in Bayonon, didn't have ambition enough to work it. In course of time the town grew out to it and started to cover it, and in 1916 he was drawing a handsome monthly rental simply because humans must have shelter, and in the tropics they multiply faster than elsewhere.

No, what the politicians who talk of "autonomy" really want is a feudal State where the present ratio of 100,000 of the upper class to 1,150,000 of the workers will continue. All talk of "autonomy," which to the deluded voter means "independence," is bunk because complete autonomy may be had by applying for admission as a State of the Union and this is what the leaders of the party favoring autonomy say they do not want.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

JOHN LUXTON.

WASTE NO MORE REGRETS

EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

Please waste no more regrets that the Single Tax conference scheduled by the Los Angeles Single Tax League to occur at a date in February at Fresno was called off. No possible harmony could have resulted. For three campaigns, one group has worked for a Single Tax amendment in California, the other has worked with the antis to decrease the vote. There is no common ground upon which these two can stand. However, *this division between Single Taxers in California is not merely local and accidental; it is general and organic.* It is the nationwide gulf between those who would establish the new economic justice and those who fear it will come too quickly. In various parts of the country may be found examples of the class represented by the Los Angeles League, who deplore all attempts to put Single Tax amendments before the voters *anywhere*. Their constant fear is that Henry George's chief tenets may be breathed aloud. Millions are always ready to help hang on to the old; help is only needed to usher in the new. This is the chosen work of the Great Adventure League.

Glendale, Calif.

LONA INGHAM ROBINSON.

PLEASED WITH THE REVIEW

EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

I am thoroughly in sympathy with your paper and the cause it so ably advocates. I was delighted to read the list of those who subscribe to the fund to keep it alive, and hope more will be added in order that our paper may soon be made a monthly.

I was much pleased with your article "Spread the Light." For over twenty years I have practiced letter writing to newspapers and individuals.

I think what is needed is a man gifted like John Wesley, the apostle of Methodism in the 18th century, to go up and down the country preaching the gospel of justice and arouse the people out of their lethargy and indifference. General Booth had a good opportunity of doing the needed work of wakening men to the fundamental cause of poverty, but he did not himself see it, and so spent his time in doctoring the effects instead of going to the seat of the disease.

Princeton, Ill.

WM. COULSON.

IMPARTIAL, AT LEAST

EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

It seems to me that your friend who wishes to make a bequest to the Single Tax cause would do well to put the money in trust, the net income to be equally divided between the SINGLE TAX REVIEW and the Manhattan Single Tax Club. If either ceases to exist, the other would receive the whole income. May both live forever.

Sorrento, Italy.

ALFRED BISHOP MASON.

FOR LOVE OF HUMANITY

EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

The campaign put up by the New York Single Taxers in California prove their sincerity and logical position. Just received today *Tax Facts*, whose editor is Stoughton Cooley. I admire his ability but I do not agree with him. He defines private property and ridicules free land enthusiasts. Before we can make real progress we must recognize the religion of love. Man is essentially an emotional being.

The right to the use of the earth must be demanded for "love's sake." If ours is not a religious question it is nothing.

Chicago, Ill.

DR. MORRIS LYCHENHEIM.

A MISTAKEN VIEWPOINT

EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

Mr. E. W. Walthall says in his excellent letter in the January-February, 1923, issue of the SINGLE TAX REVIEW: "I concur in the view that the fundamental principle of the Single Tax is the restoration of the God-plan of man's habitation of the earth—the greatest, the most fundamental of all reforms' and that the tax phase is merely the way of accomplishment."

Ye Gods! "Merely the way of accomplishment."—Merely indeed! *It is the way of salvation* the—only way. It is a way upon which we can advance. True, there are obstructions, license tax boulders to be removed, personal property tax fences built across it, general property tax swamp to be drained away, and in one place there is an income tax landslide that needs removal. But each obstruction removed, we are further on the way, and strengthened for the next task, and have gained friends.

We need give ourselves no concern that fundamentals will be obscured by tactics. We who think that the light of truth shines for us need not fear that others will not see it.

A democracy is the most conservative thing there is. It is the slowest to take on new responsibilities, and the slowest to relinquish its liberties

Once the personal property tax is abolished and definitely out of use, for a number of years, there will be no return to it. The same is true of other taxes. People just naturally hate taxes. The proposal to levy a tax on land values will always have real opposition—but the proposal to exempt any given class of property will always receive consideration.