

IDEO - KLEPTOMANIA :

THE CASE OF HENRY GEORGE.

HIS UNACKNOWLEDGED USE OF OLD SINGLE-TAX THOUGHT AND
OF THE WRITINGS OF ADVANCED ECONOMISTS IN CON-
STRUCTING HIS NEW-FANGLED AND INCONSISTENT
SCHEME OF GEORGEISM.

BY

J. W. SULLIVAN.

WITH HENRY GEORGE'S DENIAL OF PLAGIARISM FROM PATRICK
EDWARD DOVE.

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*A COLLAPSE TO HENRY GEORGE'S PRE-
TENSIONS.*

BY J. W. SULLIVAN.

* There is in existence an old book the contents of which are calculated to seriously disturb the peace of mind of even the most tenaciously tried and true Georgeite. Half a dozen men who have lately read it have reached the same conclusions regarding it and George's book. The conclusions are: The doctrines of Henry George are not Henry George's. The framework of "Progress and Poverty" was not of his construction. His argument for the absorption of rent by the public was audaciously appropriated by him. His demonstration of "the law of human progress" is, from caption to conclusion, a mere elaborate paraphrasing of the ideas of a genius who in the exposition of that law was admirably direct and simple.

How have these men come to regard George as a mere converter of old ideas into new forms of expression?

George admits, or rather contends, (page 305, Lovell's edition), that the French physiocrats Quesnay and Turgot proposed just what he proposes, that all taxation should be abolished save a tax upon the value of land. Quesnay, he believes, "arrived at practical truth, though it may be through a course of defectively expressed reasoning." "Without knowing anything of Quesnay or his doctrines," he proceeds to say, "I have reached the same practical conclusion by a route which cannot

* This article was opened with a review of Henry George's course as a politician. As his reply was confined to the charge of plagiarism from Dove, the review is omitted. In other respects the reprint follows the original matter throughout.

be questioned by the accepted political economy." On page 399 he says: "I have in this inquiry followed the course of my own thought. When, in mind, I set out on it, I had no theory to support, no conclusions to prove. Only, when I first realized the squalid misery of a great city, it appalled and tormented me, and would not let me rest, for thinking of what caused it and how it could be cured. But out of this inquiry has come to me something I did not seek to find," etc. Here are what, to the lay mind at least, would seem to be positive assertions of originality both for his system of opinions and the course of investigation on which they are based.

"Progress and Poverty," abounding in figures of speech, in fanciful and pathetic allusion, the *collectanea* of a mind long dwelling on a few leading thoughts, owes much to the poets, but interwoven with its mass of extra scientific writing are certain extraordinary postulates, certain unfamiliar forms of reasoning, and certain startling conclusions. Putting aside illustration, digression, the discussion of collateral issues, and a plenitude of sentimental expression, the gist of the argument may be summarized briefly. (1.) The statement of the problem: Why, in spite of increase in productive power, do wages tend to a minimum which will give but a bare living? (2.) The development of the reply that through the monopoly of land its rent tends to advance until laborers' wages are barely sufficient for their subsistence. (3.) The remedy—to restore to labor the natural equilibrium in opportunity by taxing away the rent of land and abolishing all other taxation. (4.) The theory that from such an adjustment human progress, proceeding in harmony with natural laws, will steadily be in the direction of the abolition of poverty, the civilization of the world, the highest moral and intellectual development of all men and the universal recognition

of divine truth. See George's own summary in the preface to Lovell's edition.

Without the matter directly pertaining to these major ideas, George's book would be a *congeries* of notes, formless and incoherent. They are the trunk and branches of the tree. All the rest is twig and leaf. George's fame as a philosopher rests solely on their originating with him—on the assertion that he was the first to trace the poverty of the masses to land monopoly, the first to discover a just and effective remedy in the appropriation of rent by the government, and the first to perceive the coördination of certain great natural laws.

Thirty years before George wrote "Progress and Poverty," Patrick Edward Dove published anonymously in London "The Theory of Human Progression." Compare the following extracts from the latter work with the principal divisions in George's train of thought in "Progress and Poverty": (*Italics* are as in the original; the four head-lines are mine)

I.—THE PROBLEM.

... how comes it that, notwithstanding man's vast achievements, his wonderful efforts of mechanical ingenuity, and the amazing productions of his skill, his own condition in a social capacity should not have improved in the same ratio as the improvement of his condition with regard to the material world? In Britain, man has to a great extent *beaten* the material world. He has vanquished it, overpowered it; he can make it serve him; he can use not merely his muscles, but the very powers of nature, to effect his purposes; his *reason* has triumphed over matter; and matter's tendencies and powers are to a great extent subject to his will. And, notwithstanding this, a large portion of the population is reduced to *pauperism*, to that fearful state of dependence in which man finds himself a blot on the universe of God—a wretch thrown up by the waves of time, without a use and without an end, homeless in the presence of the firmament, and helpless in the face of the creation. . . .

But what is the *cause* of British pauperism? Why are there periodic starvations in Ireland and the Highlands? Why is there a crisis every few years in England, when able-bodied men, willing to work, can find no employment? Why are Britons obliged to be

shipped off to other countries? Is it because the natural capabilities of the soil have been wrought up to the highest pitch, and yet there remains a surplus population that the soil will neither employ nor feed? Is it because manufacturing has been carried to its utmost extent, and there really is no further room for the employment of a larger population? Is it, in fact, because man has done his best with Britain, made the most of it, got out of it all the food and all the wealth that it is capable of producing, and yet it will not keep its own inhabitants, either by the food it produces, or by articles of exchange that it might give to other countries for food? Is it a matter of *necessity* that there shall be *paupers* (that vile word) in the richest country in the world? Is it *true* that England can no longer support Englishmen; nor Ireland, Irishmen; nor Scotland, Scotchmen? Have we, in fact, arrived at the last term of population, and must all, over and above, expatriate or starve? Is this true, or is it *false*?

Either pauperism and degradation are the work of the Creator of our system, the All-Powerful, who has placed present man in circumstances where the natural capabilities of the earth are insufficient for his support; or, pauperism and degradation are the work of fallen man, who through ignorance has based his arrangements of the earth on superstitious propositions, and thereby necessarily has rendered it impossible that the amount of good intended by the Creator can be extracted from the earth. . . . —[*Dove*, pages 306 and following, Boston edition.]

II.—LAND MONOPOLY RESULTING IN PAUPERISM.

The evil is expressed in a few words; and, sooner or later, the nation will appreciate it and rectify it. It is "the alienation of the soil from the State, and the consequent taxation of the industry of the country." Britain may go on producing with wonderful energy, and may accomplish far more than she has yet accomplished. She may struggle as Britain only can struggle. She may present to the world peace at home, when the nations of Europe are filled with insurrection. She may lead foremost in the march of civilization and be first among the kingdoms of the earth. All this she may do, and more. But as certain as Britain continues her present social arrangement, so certainly will there come a time when—the other questions being cleared on this side and on that side, and the main question brought into the arena—the *labor* of Britain will emancipate itself from thralldom. Gradually and surely has the separation been taking place between the privileged landowner and the unprivileged laborer. And the time will come at last that there should be but two parties looking each other in the face, and knowing that

the destruction of one is an event of necessary occurrence. That event *must* come. . . . Of the two parties, one must give way. One must sink to rise no more ; one must disappear from the earth. Their continued existence is incompatible. Nature cannot support both.

And when once this last great question of *liberty* has been disposed of, the country cannot fail to commence another evolution, and to enter on a line of progress that shall ultimately place men on the same equality with regard to *natural property* that will then prevail with regard to political liberty.—[*Dove*, page 315.]

One generation was not content with making arrangements which were to be in force for that generation alone ; but laws were enacted, and customs were acknowledged, whereby the arrangements of one generation were to descend to future generations, and to be imposed on men not yet born, who were to be born into a world already portioned out, and consequently to which they had no title. Those, therefore, who were born into the world in a country where the land had been accorded to individual proprietors could obtain their livelihood only by laboring for other men ; and as those to whom the land had been accorded could not cultivate it themselves, and as the land was required for the support of the population, the *laborers* were under the necessity of paying a *rent* to those who thus procured a vast revenue without labor. This system of diversity of rights to the natural earth, which God intended for the race, being perpetuated from generation to generation, entails with it, as its necessary attendant, that baneful condition of society in which we have a few aristocrats endowed with vast wealth without labor, and a multitude of laborers reduced to poverty, destitution, and sometimes to actual starvation.—[*Dove*, page 365.]

III.—THE REMEDY.

If, then, we admit that every generation of men has the same free right to make its own arrangements, and to carry into effect the principles it knows or believes to be true, quite independently of the arrangements that have been made by any anterior generations, we must also of necessity admit, that the earth and all it contains belong, for the time being, to every *existing generation*, and that the *disposition* of the earth (as the great storehouse from which man must derive support and sustenance) is not to be determined by the laws, customs, arrangements, king's gifts, or prescriptive rights of any past generation of men, but by the judgment and reason of the existing generation, ordering all arrangements according to the rules of equity, which are always valid and always binding, and

which at every given moment of time are the rules which ought to determine human action. Consequently the question at every period is, "What is the equitable disposition of the earth?"

The great social problem, then, . . . is, "to discover such a system as shall secure to every man his exact share of the natural advantages which the Creator has provided for the race; while, at the same time, he has full opportunity, without let or hinderance, to exercise his skill, industry, and perseverance for his own advantage."

No truth can be more absolutely certain, as the intuitive proposition of the reason, than that "an object is the *property* of its creator," and we maintain that *creation* is the *only* means by which an individual right to property can be generated. Consequently, as no individual and no generation is the creator of the substantive, earth, it belongs *equally* to all the existing inhabitants; that is, no *individual* has a special claim to more than another,

But while on the one hand we take into consideration *the object*—that is, the earth—we must also take into consideration *the subject*; that is, man, and man's labor.

The object is the *common property* of all, no individual being able to exhibit a title to any particular portion of it. And individual or *private property* is the *increased value produced by individual labor*.

But the permanent earth never can be private property—although the laws may call it so, and may treat it as such—it must be *possessed* by individuals for the purpose of cultivation and for the purpose of extracting from it all those natural objects which man requires. The question then is, upon what terms, or according to what system must the earth be possessed by the successive generations that succeed each other on the surface of the globe? . . . How can the division of the advantages of the natural earth be effected?

By the *division of its annual value or rent*; that is, by making the rent of the soil the *common property* of the nation. That is, (as the *taxation* is the common property of the State), by taking the whole of the taxes out of the rents of the soil and thereby abolishing all other kinds of taxation whatever. And thus all *industry* would be absolutely emancipated from every burden, and every man would reap such natural reward as his skill, industry, or enterprise rendered legitimately his, according to the natural law of free competition.

We have no hesitation whatever in predicting that all civilized communities must ultimately abolish all revenue restrictions on in-

dustry, and draw the whole taxation from the rents of the soil. And this because (as we shall endeavor to show in a future portion of the subject) the rents of the soil are the common produce of the whole labor of a community.

The State has alienated the lands to private individuals called proprietors, and the vast majority of Englishmen are born to their labor *minus their share of the taxation*.

This taxation of labor has introduced vast systems of restriction on trades and industry. Instead of a perfectly free trade with all the world, England has adopted a revenue system that most materially diminishes both the amount of trade and its profit. And, instead of a perfectly free internal industry, England has adopted an excise that is as vexatious in its operation as can well be conceived. Both the customs and excise laws, and every other tax on industry, have arisen *from the alienation of the soil from the State*; and had the soil not been alienated, no tax whatever would have been requisite; and were the soil resumed (as it undoubtedly ought to be), every tax of every kind and character, save the common rent of the soil, might at once be abolished, with the whole army of collectors, revenue officers, cruisers, coastguards, excisemen, etc., etc.

Taxation can only be on land or labor; (By land we mean the natural earth, not merely the agricultural soil.) These are the two radical elements that can be subjected to taxation, *capital* being originally derived from one or the other. *Capital* is only hoarded labor or hoarded rent.—[*Dove*, 371-380.

IV.—THE LAW OF HUMAN PROGRESS.

When political economy shall have done her work on earth, and taught men how to evolve the maximum of material good, and when equity shall have taught men to construct society in accordance with the principles of justice, the reason of mankind will still go onward, and the higher and nobler good, the aspirations after immortality, will still beckon on humanity; and earth, transformed by truth, harmoniously reverberating from reason to revelation, shall at last rejoice in the universal knowledge of Him whose kingdom is everlasting.

But on the continent, *philosophy* is the theology of the great mass of thinking men; and *their* theology, derived from the revelation of nature, does actually follow the development of science. And as skepticism was first posited with its negation, and the Pantheism with its most general affirmation, and now, instead of a mere power, an intelligent power is beginning to be seen as absolutely necessary to explain the phenomena of nature, we may rest assured that, with

the development of social and moral science (which cannot fail to undergo their evolution in their order), there will arise necessarily a moral theology, and the world will be indoctrinated with the theory of a moral Deity.

Now, if it be true that all human science ends in *morals*, and that natural theology follows the developments of science (and it can never legitimately be in advance of science), then natural theology will come ultimately to be a purely scientific *moral* theology, and will thus be brought to the point where man *identifies* the God of nature with the God of scripture. And thus the long-lost unity will be once more restored, and the enlightened reason of mankind, reading aright the revelation of the true God in the cosmos of creation, will see—not in doubt nor in darkness, but in the full daylight splendor of its own inherent majesty—the divinity of that gospel which opens up the heaven of the moral universe, and spreads before the full grown intellect of man the eternal joys of a purchased immortality.—[*Dove*, page 483.]

Here, then, ready to hand, could George have found all his cardinal doctrines. Here is the marrow of the philosophy of “the prophet of San Francisco.”

But, many may be found who will ask: Is it not possible that George knew nothing of Dove's book;—he might have conceived the main thought independently, and the rest, coming in logical order, would naturally run parallel with Dove's? Possible, but hardly the fact. There is much internal evidence that George ransacked Dove's book for points, generally, however, polishing them up in his own language. George never wants for words.

Between the two following passages is the strong family resemblance of a younger to an older brother:

Let us suppose an island divided into thirty estates. These estates belong to thirty proprietors and are cultivated by *slaves*, by genuine out-and-out salable negroes. These slaves are the *property* (*!*) of the white proprietors, each of whom has a stock of one hundred. There are then thirty proprietors, and three thousand laboring slaves, supported by the island—the slaves having sustenance and the *labor*, the proprietors having indolence and *the luxury*. As the slaves belong to the proprietors, they are *individual* slaves, confined to the cultivation of their respective estates. Let

us now suppose that the proprietors made a new arrangement of their affairs; that, instead of possessing each a hundred slaves, they thought it would be more convenient to establish a system by which those proprietors who wanted the labor of *more* at any particular time should be able to have it, and those who at any particular time had not work for a hundred should relieve themselves of the expense of their keep. To effect this, and to throw the *trouble* of the new system on the slaves, they abandon the system of individual slavery and *generalize* it. Each proprietor gives up his right to his negroes; but the negroes are still to do the *work* of the island, and the proprietors are still to have the profit. Nor is it difficult to effect this arrangement without compulsion—all that is necessary being to establish the rule, that the negroes shall be fed by those for whom they work, and that their wages shall be their *sustenance*. All the land being in the hands of the proprietors, the negroes can obtain support only by laboring *for* the proprietors Are they [the laborers] not still *the serfs of the proprietors*? It makes little difference whether we have an imaginary island with thirty proprietors and three thousand laboring serfs, or a real island with thirty thousand proprietors and five or six millions of laboring serfs.—[*Dove*, page 349.]

Place one hundred men on an island from which there is no escape, and whether you make one of these men the absolute owner of the other ninety-nine, or the absolute owner of the soil of the island, will make no difference either to him or to them.

In the one case, as the other, the one will be the absolute master of the ninety-nine—his power extending even to life and death, for simply to refuse them permission to live upon the island would be to force them into the sea.

Upon a larger scale, and through more complex relations, the same cause must operate in the same way and to the same end—the ultimate result, the enslavement of laborers, becoming apparent just as the pressure increases which compels them to live on and from land which is treated as the exclusive property of others. Take a country in which the soil is divided among a number of proprietors, instead of being in the hands of one, and in which, as in modern production, the capitalist has been specialized from the laborer, and manufactures and exchange and all their many branches have been separated from agriculture. Though less direct and obvious, the relations between the owners of the soil and the laborers will, with increase of population and the improvement of the arts, tend to the same absolute mastery on the one hand, and the same abject helplessness on the other, as in the case of the island we have

supposed. Rent will advance, while wages will fall. Of the aggregate produce, the landowner will get a constantly increasing, the laborer a constantly diminishing share. Just as removal to cheaper land becomes difficult or impossible, laborers, no matter what they produce, will be reduced to a bare living, and the free competition among them, where land is monopolized, will force them to a condition which, though they may be mocked with the titles and insignia of freedom, will be virtually that of slavery.—
[George, page 250.]

Here, again, the vein is much the same :

Serfdom and aristocracy are, in fact, the correlatives of each other. Wherever there are serfs, *there* there are aristocrats ; and wherever there are aristocrats, *there* there are serfs ; and though the laborers of England are not serfs in one sense, inasmuch as they may emigrate if they can find the means, they are to all intents and purposes, serfs so long as they remain in England. It is a mere fallacy to suppose that serfdom has been abolished in England. It has not been *abolished*, it has only been *generalized*. . . . Serfdom, or even slavery, may be abolished in appearance, and yet retained in reality, *the means of compulsion being changed* with the advance of society, which would no longer tolerate the open employment of individual force.—[Dove, page 348.]

The ownership of land is the basis of aristocracy. . . . The simple privilege of the ownership of the soil produced, on the one side the lord, on the other the vassal—the one having all the rights, the other none. The right of the lord of the soil acknowledged and maintained, those who lived upon it could only do so upon his terms. . . . The English landowner of today has, in the law which recognizes his exclusive right to the land, essentially all the power which his predecessor the feudal baron had. . . . Between the condition of the rack-rented Irish peasant and the Russian serf, the advantage was in many things on the side of the serf.—[George, pages 252-253.]

Forms of expression occurring in the following passages cannot but sound familiar to readers of "Progress and Poverty" :

Let the political arrangements be what they may, let there be universal or any other suffrage, so long as the aristocracy have all the land, and derive the *rent* of it, the laborer is only a serf, and a serf he will remain until he has uprooted the rights of private landed property. *The land is for the nation, and not for the aristocracy.*

We affirm, then, that serfdom has not been abolished, but only

generalized, in England, Ireland and Scotland. . . . A serf is a man who, by the arrangements of mankind, is deprived of the object on which he might expend his labor, or of the *natural profit* that results from his labor, and, consequently, is under the necessity of supporting himself and his family by his labor *alone*. And a lord, or an aristocrat, is a man who, by the arrangements of mankind, is made to possess the *object*, and who, consequently, can support himself and his family *without labor*, on the *profits* created by the labor of others.—[*Dove*, page 353.]

And what is *the cause* of human pauperism and human degradation? for the two go hand in hand. . . . Does any man suppose that the nation will much longer believe that Britain cannot support its inhabitants? Does any man believe that the men who can make steam engines, cotton mills, and railroads, and ships, and the largest commerce in the world, and spinning jennies, and steam printing machines, and Skerryvore lighthouses and electric telegraphs, and a thousand other wonders, could not make such a distribution of Britain as should enable every man in it, and many more, to earn an abundant livelihood by their labor? Does any man believe this? And if he does not believe it, does he suppose that any superstitious notions about the king's right to grant the soil to individuals will long stand in the way of *their doing it*? If Englishmen discover that pauperism and wretchedness are *unnecessary*; that the divine being never intended such things; that the degradation of the laboring population, their *moral* degradation consequent on poverty, is the curse of *the laws* and not of nature—does any man suppose that Englishmen would not be justified in abolishing such laws, or that they will not abolish them? Can we believe for a moment, that if any arrangement would enable the population to find plenty, that such an arrangement will not be made? If any man believe this, he is at all events willing to be credulous. For ourselves, we believe it not.—[*Dove*, page 312.]

Was it for this that the Almighty made man in his own image and gave him the earth for an inheritance? Was it for this that he sent his Son into the world to proclaim the divine benevolence, to preach the doctrine of human brotherhood, and to lay the foundation of a kingdom that should endure forever and ever? We do not believe it, neither do we believe that pauperism comes from God. It is *man's* doing, and man's doing alone. God has abundantly supplied man with all the requisite means of support; and where he cannot find support, we must look, not to the arrangements of the Almighty, but to the arrangements of men, and to the mode in which they have portioned out the earth. To charge the poverty of man on

God, is to blaspheme the Creator instead of bowing in reverent thankfulness for the profusion of his goodness. *He* has given enough, abundance, more than sufficient; and if man has not enough, we must look to the mode in which God's gifts have been distributed. There *is* enough, enough for all, abundantly enough; and all that is requisite is freedom to labor on the soil, and to extract from it the produce that God intended for man's support,—
[*Dove*, page 308.]

It is not trade that Britain wants; nor more railroads, nor larger orders for cotton, nor new schemes for alimending the poor, nor loans to landlords, nor any other mercantile or economical change. It is *social* change. New *social* arrangements, made on the principles of *natural equity*. No economical measure whatever is capable of reaching the depths of the social evils. Ameliorations may, no doubt, be made for a time; but the radical evil remains, still generating the poison that corrupts society.—[*Dove*, page 315.]

But resemblances do not cease here. On reading "The Theory of Human Progression," one finds that *Dove*, a generation before *George*, showed the injustice and absurdity of any attempt at a division of the land itself; declared the invalidity of titles to land founded on the gifts of kings, or on war or despoliation of any kind; referred to the inclosure of the commons in Great Britain; traced the changes from the feudal form of land tenure to the present system; employed to strengthen his position the condition of the peasants of Ireland and the Highlands; denied the possibility of over-production or over-population; found the origin of poor laws and national debts to be the monopolization of the land; dwelt on the injury of indirect taxes to the poor; declared that equality before the law includes natural rights; maintained that the only just theory of property is that by which the laborer is given the full fruits of his toil; drew the line of distinction between property in land and property in the products of industry; showed that social improvements result in increase of rent; held that the attainment of full political rights must be followed by that of property rights; narrowed the social problem to a discussion of

the laws of distribution, and pointed out the insufficiency of every remedy for poverty save the tax on land values.

Scores and scores of times has George been presented to audiences as the master political-economist, the first to prove the one world-wide source of poverty, the inspired originator of the theory of the Single-tax. Did he ever deny it and say that Dove was the man?

At a dinner given to George at the Brighton Beach Hotel two months ago, he was greeted formally in these words: "You re-examined the tenets of political economy, you sounded the depths of philosophy, you measured your conclusions by the eternal laws of morality, and you gave to the world an explanation so simple and yet so conclusive that candid criticism is defied. But you did not rest when you had solved the problem. A remedy was demanded, and you found one—one that harmonizes with your habits of thought, and while involving the essential principles of justice is in the drift of current political agitation."

Knowing the truth, what were Henry George's thoughts and feelings then? Was he honest in thus reaping where another had sown? And how many times in the past ten years had he been the centre of similar scenes and accepted like praise? Did he think no tribute due Patrick Edward Dove?

George's paper has never mentioned Dove. If George ever referred to Dove on the platform in this country as his source of inspiration, the press has not reported the fact.

Is there any evidence that George ever knew anything about Dove's book? There is. Five years ago he spoke favorably of it publicly in Glasgow, where Dove has friends still living. A report of his speech on the occasion is contained in the "British Daily Mail," December 19, 1884.

How many people have since asked George how he ever came to think of the Single-tax?

These cold facts must leave every Georgite—every one holding to the *man*—a prey to depressing thought. Henry George, the conscientious Single-taxer would be apt to reflect, might well have been content with the large credit justly his due for giving Dove's propositions to the world in a brilliant and moving style. Much as it is to discover truth, equally honorable is it to succeed in bringing it before the people, if the indebtedness to the original be but acknowledged. But no. Was it not and is it not Henry George's weakness to think of himself before all else? Has he not a consuming desire to appear greater than he is—to wield a power not rightfully his? And has not his selfish ambition ended in ruining him? Who can now await his thought? Who will follow his leadership?

George has taught some queer morality.

An example: In the issue of his paper of June 23, 1888, in an editorial of many thousand words, he devotes some three thousand to the rights of authors in their works. He here takes the ground that, as the expenditure of labor in the invention or discovery of a machine gives no natural rights or ownership in the idea, so the ownership of an author is, not in his ideas, but in the labor of the literary production of his book. Somebody in England has used the ideas of "Progress and Poverty," but George says he will not try to prevent it. He says:

Nor have I any moral right to ask it. When another sees these truths they are his as much as they are mine. If I discovered them, it was only in the sense that one may discover the belt of the Orion. They are there to be seen, and have been seen, and will be seen by many before and independently of me. All I, or any one else, can do, is to point another in their direction. To really see them, he must see them for himself, with his own power of perception.

When George wrote thus, was he anticipating the day when his deed should find him out? Perish the sus-

pcion. He was simply consistent. And now if men should take a lively interest in the contents of Dove's book, and in certain passages of the works of Leslie, Senior, and others, there is no reason at all why George's philosophic equipoise should be disturbed. He has really believed it was his word-carpentering that made "Progress and Poverty." His conscience has approved his acts.

Patrick Edward Dove was born near Edinburgh in 1815. He died in 1873. He projected a series of three works on "The Science of Politics." The first volume was "The Theory of Human Progression." Besides the edition printed in London in 1850, an American edition was printed in Boston in 1851 at the expense of Charles Sumner. The second volume of Dove's series was issued in 1856. The third was never printed, and the manuscript was lost. Dove was regarded by Carlyle and others as a genius. He was for a time editor of the Glasgow "Commonwealth," but mostly led the life of an English country gentleman. He traveled much and studied in Germany.

NOTE—Information concerning Dove's book first reached me about six weeks ago. It came from an active Single-taxer, who had, however, heard nothing more than whispers as to the existence of an old anonymous work containing the genesis of "Progress and Poverty" between its covers. A few days later a man well-known in the reform movement wrote me giving the name of the book and saying a copy was in the Astor Library, which was then closed. As soon as the library was reopened I read the volume and prepared the foregoing article. I have placed it with the TWENTIETH CENTURY as the readiest means of communication with free land men. Dove's book, it turns out, has been passing about for several months in a small circle of literary men in New York. The facts relating to Dove's life, including a statement that he anticipated George, are to be found in "The Dictionary of National Biography," 1888, an English work. They were mostly furnished by Dove's son. A copy of the Boston edition of "The Theory of Human Progression" is in the Astor Library and one of the English

edition in the *Mercantile*. Many bookstores in New York, Philadelphia, and Boston have been searched in vain for other copies.

A DENIAL BY HENRY GEORGE.

[*Standard*, October 19, 1889.]

In this issue we reprint from the last number of the *TWENTIETH CENTURY* an article by J. W. Sullivan, entitled "A Collapse to Henry George's Pretensions." The opinions of me and of the "*Standard*," which Mr. Sullivan expresses, it is not worth while to discuss. But since the charge of plagiarism has been already extensively noticed, it is worth while to say something of that and of the interesting matters it brings up.

"The Theory of Human Progression and Natural Probability of a Reign of Justice" was published in London and Edinburgh in 1850, and an American edition was issued in Boston in 1851. I first heard of it three years after "*Progress and Poverty*" had been published, when in Dublin, in September, 1882, Charles Eason, head of the Irish branch of Smith & Son's newsdealing company, presented me with a copy. But though out of print there must be at least one or two thousand copies of it scattered through libraries, public and private, in Great Britain and this country. Mr. Sullivan has certainly seen at least the back of one before, for the copy presented to me by Mr. Eason occupies a prominent place in my small collection of books, to which he has had access. Dr. Darling of this city brought into the "*Standard*" office, some couple of months ago, a copy of the American edition, which he had picked up at a book stand. And, besides Mr. Eason, I have met on the other side of the Atlantic a number of men who have known of Dove and his books, among them Mr. Dove's son, now living in London, who presented me in 1885 with another of his works. This, however, I have never had a chance to

look into, as it was speedily borrowed. As I cannot say, as advertisements sometimes do, that the borrower is known, I should like to ask him, should this meet his eye, to oblige me by returning it.

It is certainly true, and especially of Great Britain, that if there were anything on which to base a charge that "Progress and Poverty" were a plagiarism of the "Theory of Human Progression," or even that Mr. Dove's book had covered the ground that mine traverses, it would not have remained for Mr. Sullivan to make it. How different the two books are in character and scope, any one familiar with "Progress and Poverty" can see from the syllabus of the "Theory of Human Progression," which will be found in another column. They agree, to be sure, in the recognition of certain fundamental truths, but these are, as I have always contended, self-evident truths, which any one who will look may see, and which even when covered up by power and obscured by sophistry, have in every age and among every people had their witnesses. I saw them for myself, as Dove saw them for himself, as Herbert Spencer saw them, as Bishop Nulty saw them, as millions of men before the nineteenth century had seen them, and as every one who chooses to look may see them to the end of time, for they are a part of the natural order, as much so as the attraction of gravitation, or as that relation by which two and two make four.

Whatever may be thought of the manner of the charge in the TWENTIETH CENTURY, it is probable that the editors of that paper really think there is a basis for it. One who could suppose that Newton discovered gravitation might have supposed that I had discovered the injustice of private ownership of land and was the inventor of the Single-tax. And when he first heard of another who before me saw the same truths, he might in the

same way conclude that he was the real discoverer, and that I must have taken these ideas from him.

But no such pretension has ever been made by me, any more than it ever was or ever would have been made by Dove. So far from ever claiming that there was anything new in the idea that all men have equal and inalienable rights to land, I have always contended that this was a primary perception of the human mind, and that private property in land has nowhere grown up but as the result of force and fraud. So far from ever claiming that I had been the first to discover that all taxes ought to be levied on land values, I have always contended that that was the first, obvious and natural system, and that it is as clearly the creative intent that public expenses should be defrayed by taxes on land values, not taxes on the products of labor, as that men should walk on their feet and not on their hands. I not only devoted a great part of "Progress and Poverty" to proving that this is the primitive system, as well as the just system, but on page 37 of "Our Land and Land Policy," published in 1871, eight years before the publication of "Progress and Poverty," occur the first words in which I ever proposed the Single-tax, and they are these:

Why should *we* not go back to the old system and charge the expenses of Government upon our lands?

Not my system, or anybody else's system; not a newly discovered system, but the old and natural system; the only one conforming to the natural laws, and therefore the one *intended* by the Intelligence which is behind natural laws.

This has been from the first my constant position. Whatever opponent or advocate may have said of Georgeism, or the George system, or the George theory, I have never used, but have always, as far as I could,

discouraged the use of such terms. I have not claimed, and have many times expressly disclaimed, to have seen anything that others had not seen before me and that was not to be seen by whoever chose to look.

Mr. Sullivan charges that I have not publicly made any mention of Dove in the United States. As to this I cannot recollect, but it may well be so, since the historical part of the matter has cut no figure in the United States, and in all my writings and speaking in this country since I have known of Dove, my effort has been to directly address myself to the practical questions on which discussion turned. But on the other side of the Atlantic, where there was a disposition among a certain class to sneer at the Single-tax as a new fangled Yankee notion proposed by a man from San Francisco, I have frequently mentioned Dove and others, who before me or independently of me have proposed the same thing; and have always insisted that instead of anything new, what we proposed was but a going back to the old system, under which, in far ruder and poorer times, pauperism had been unknown. It was in accordance with my advice and to give expression to this idea, that the leagues that were formed in Scotland and in England on the occasion of my visit in 1884 were styled land restoration leagues. And it has been my design, expressed to Mr. Dove's son, whenever I could get the leisure for literary work, to write a monograph on Dove, in a series of similar monographs, for which the material is growing more abundant as the progress of our ideas gives new interest to the work of men like him, who saw the truth and expressed it, though without producing noticeable effect.

The character of "The Theory of Human Progression" is not such as to justify its publication in a paper like the "Standard," or to warrant any expectation of considerable sale. But it may be that the attention which

will be called to it by the assertion that it is the prototype and source of "Progress and Poverty" will cause sufficient demand to pay the expenses of reprinting an edition. In this case I would gladly undertake to republish it, and I know in advance that the present Mr. Dove would as gladly consent. In the original edition it is a large 12mo of 523 pages, containing about four-fifths as much reading matter as "Progress and Poverty," and being illustrated with a chart of the region of human knowledge—beginning with metaphysics and ending with revelation. A small edition could be printed on good paper and in substantial binding for \$3 per volume, and a larger one for less. If those who would be willing to subscribe for a copy will write to the publisher of the "Standard" to this effect, we will begin the printing of an edition as soon as there are enough subscriptions to warrant it. I think those who can afford the outlay will be well repaid, for over and above the interest of the work in its bearing on the land question, it is the product of a vigorous thinker ranging over a wide field.

From the dedication and syllabus of the "Theory of Human Progression," which are printed in another column, an idea of the book may be had. It is in the main a metaphysical work in which very strong and very clear references are made to the fundamental principles which ought to govern the relations of men to land, but these references are hardly more than incidental, and do not go any more into detail than is shown in the extracts Mr. Sullivan has made.

The argument of the "Theory of Human Progression," as indicated in its full title, is that there is a natural probability of the reign of justice on earth, or millennium, which has been foretold by scriptural prophecy. One of Dove's primary postulates is the inspiration of the scriptures and the divinity of the founder

of the Christian religion, which he treats as the true religion, all others being false. But though accepting the doctrine of the fall of man, he is nevertheless an evolutionist, in the sense of believing that the natural and necessary progress of man is by the gradual development of knowledge (or to use his phrase, correct credence), in the natural order and necessary sequence of the sciences, to a reign of justice, in and out of which is to grow a reign of benevolence.

The elements of correct credence as Dove enumerates them (page 94) are:

1. The Bible.
2. A correct view of the phenomena of material nature.
3. A correct philosophy of the mental operations.

The three things which he links together as respectively cause and effect, involving the conditions of society, are (p. 120):

- Knowledge and freedom.
- Superstition and despotism.
- Infidelity and anarchy.

And the four propositions which best give an idea of the scope of his work and the course of his thought are (p. 160):

1. On the sure word of divine prophecy, we anticipate a reign of justice on the earth.
2. That a reign of justice necessarily implies that every man in the world shall at some future time be put in possession of all his rights.
3. That the history of civilized communities shows us that the progression of mankind in a political aspect is from a diversity of privileges toward an equality of rights.
4. That one man can have a privilege only by depriving another man or many other men of a portion of their rights. Consequently that a reign of justice will consist in the destruction of every privilege and in the restitution of every right.

These propositions are extended to twenty-one main propositions and twelve sub-propositions, but they are

all involved in the first four. The tenth sub-division of the twentieth proposition and the twenty-first proposition as a whole are, however, well worth quoting as giving an idea of the character of the man and his thought:

Knowledge does necessarily produce change, as much as heat necessarily produces change, and where knowledge becomes more and accurate, more and more extensive and more and more generally diffused, change must necessarily take place in the same ratio, and entail with it a new order of society and an amended condition of man upon the globe. Wherever, then, the unjust interests of the ruling classes are required to give way before the progress of knowledge, and those ruling classes peremptorily refuse to allow the condition of society to be amended, the sword is the instrument which knowledge and reason may be compelled to use; for it is not possible, it is not within the limits of man's choice, that the progress of society can be permanently arrested when the intellect of the masses has advanced in knowledge beyond those propositions, of which the present condition is only the realization.

21. We posit, finally, that the acquisition, scientific ordination and general diffusion of knowledge will necessarily obliterate error and superstition, and continually amend the condition of man upon the globe, until his ultimate condition shall be the best the circumstances of the earth permit of. On this ground we take up (what might in other and abler hands be an argument of no small interest, namely) the natural probability of a millennium, based on the classification of the sciences, on the past progress of mankind, and on the computed evolution of man's future progress. The outline alone of this argument we shall indicate; and we have no hesitation in believing that every one who sees it in its true light will at once see how the combination of knowledge and reason must regenerate the earth, and evolve a period of universal prosperity, which the Divine Creator has graciously promised, and whose natural probability we maintain to be within the calculation of the human reason.

There is in this, and throughout the work, much that is suggestive of the best development of the Scottish intellect, much that suggests what was highest in Puritan and Covenanter, and that came to them through the trumpet notes of Hebrew prophets. It is the spirit that

rings through Macaulay's Naseby:

Like a soldier of the Lord, with his Bible and his sword,
The general rode along us, to form us for the fight.

The book which, so far as my knowledge goes, the "Theory of Human Development" most nearly resembles in motive, scope and conclusions is Herbert Spencer's "Social Statics." Both go largely over the same ground and both reach substantially the same practical conclusions; both assert the same grand doctrine of the natural rights of men which is the essence of Jeffersonian democracy and the touchstone of true reform; both declare the supremacy of a higher law than human enactments, and both believe in an evolutionary process which shall raise men to higher and nobler conditions. Both express clearly and well the fundamental postulates of the Single-tax, and both are of course absolute free traders. Spencer devotes more space to the land question, and more elaborately proves the incompatibility of private ownership of land with the moral law, and declares the justice and necessity of appropriating rent for public revenues without saying anything of the mode, while Dove dwells more at length on the wickedness and stupidity of tariffs, and clearly indicates taxation as the method of appropriating rent for public purposes. But while the English Agnostic might have regarded the Scottish Calvinist as yet in the bonds of an utterly unscientific superstition, there is one respect in which the vigor and courage of Dove's thought shines superior to Spencer's. Spencer, after demonstrating the absolute invalidity of any possible claim to the private ownership of land, goes on to say that great difficulties must attend the resumption by mankind at large of their rights to the soil; that had we to deal with the parties who originally robbed the human race of their heritage, we might make short work of the matter; but that unfor-

tunately most of our present landowners are men who have either mediately or immediately given for their estates equivalents of honestly earned wealth, and that to "justly estimate and liquidate the claims of such is one of the most intricate problems society will one day have to solve."

But the orthodox Presbyterian utterly refuses to thus bend the knee to Baal and eat his own logic. While he is not more clear than Spencer in demonstrating that landowners as landowners have no rights whatever, there is not one word in his book that recognizes in any way their claims. On the contrary, he declares that the £20,000,000 compensation given by the British parliament to the West India planters on the emancipation of their slaves was an act of injustice and oppression to the British masses and adds:

No man in the world and no association in the world could ever have an equitable right to tax a laborer for the purpose of remunerating a man robber; and although the measure is now passed and done with, we very much question whether some analogous case will not be cleared up by the mass of the nation ere many years pass over the heads of Englishmen. When the question of landed property comes to a definite discussion there may be little thought of compensation. (p. 139.)

The years that have passed since Mr. Eason gave me Dove's book have been to me years without leisure, and in the constant press of immediate work I have never looked into "The Theory of Human Progression" more than enough to see what its views on the land question were, reserving a more careful reading till the time when I could carry out my intention. But the closer examination which I have been compelled to make to write this article I have much enjoyed. My own view of human progress, as the readers of "Progress and Poverty" know, does not involve the idea of the certain triumph of right on this earth and in human life as we know it here. And though the wonder-

ful progress that our ideas have made since that time have inspired me with hope, I have never suffered myself to count on results. But in the heat and the turmoil and the dust, the firm confidence of Dove, that the time *must* come when special privileges shall cease to be, and the equal rights of all men will be acknowledged, is like a refreshing breeze. For the thought of this Scottish metaphysician is the thought of the Scottish poet:

Then let us pray, that come it may—
AND COME IT WILL for a' that—

That man to man the warld o'er
Shall brothers be, for a' that!

I am glad that Mr. Sullivan has discovered a genius in Dove, although this discovery relegates me, in his opinion, to the position of a mere "word carpenter," and I hope now that the gentlemen of the TWENTIETH CENTURY have found out that I did not discover the Single-tax, they will drop their free vacant land nonsense and come back to the Single-tax. But a little knowledge is a dangerous thing, and when Mr. Sullivan knows more the same collapse must befall the "pretensions" of Patrick Edward Dove, in his estimation, as has befallen mine. For Dove credits the discovery of the truths, which Mr. Sullivan thinks I must have copied from him, to no one; but treats them precisely as if they might be discovered by any one who chooses to look. Herbert Spencer does precisely the same thing. As between these two Spencer must, by Mr. Sullivan's logic, have been the discoverer and Dove the plagiarist; for though their books were published in the same year, Spencer's was the development of a series of letters published nearly eight years before in the "Nonconformist" newspaper, a journal which, as Mr. Dove was a Presbyterian, it will require no strain

on Mr. Sullivan's imagination to infer that Mr. Dove *must* have seen. But what then becomes of Spencer? His "pretensions" again must be collapsed, for not to speak of Frenchmen, there has been a constant succession of English writers to state, with more or less clearness and definiteness that property in land was essentially different from property in things produced by labor; that there could be no rightful title to private ownership in land; to trace the origin of poor laws and public debts to its monopolization; to contend that all men had equal rights in land; and to assert that public revenues should be raised from land values, and not from the taxation of labor or the products of labor; and, in short, to set forth all the truths in which Mr. Sullivan has discovered that Dove anticipated me. I have not space to go over the list even so far as it is known to me, nor yet could I do so without more reading than I now have time for, but there is one instance to which I have been for some time intending to refer and shall now take occasion.

My friend D. C. Macdonald, a solicitor of Aberdeen, is a native of the Hebrides, and can sing off his pedigree in Gaelic till he comes to the ancestor who centuries ago came over from Ireland in the train of an Irish princess wedded to an island chieftain. He and I went to Skye the last time I was there, and together addressed the people, I speaking in English, which only some of them understand, while he talked to them in the mother tongue which they all understand. And since that time he has helped them fight their battles with factor and landlord and the tyrannical Sheriff Ivory of Invernesshire. This spring Mr. Macdonald came south, to greet me the moment I put foot on Scottish ground, and he brought with him, with much exultation, a book which showed that the Single-tax was advocated by a Scottish professor a century before

Henry George had ever been heard of in Scotland. With his permission I read extracts from the book at my Edinburgh meeting, the first that I addressed in Scotland on my last trip, and also at some other meetings, and when I visited Aberdeen Mr. Macdonald and I went together to the author's grave to pay what respect we might to the memory of a man who a century ago saw and held the same truths for which we are struggling now. Since then Mr. Macdonald has had the book neatly reprinted, and has sent me an advance copy. It is entitled, "An essay on the right of property in land, with respect to its foundation in the laws of nature, its present establishment by the municipal laws of Europe, and the regulations by which it might be rendered more beneficial to the lower orders of mankind. London: Printed for J. Walter, Charing Cross. 1782." The author's name was not given in the title page, but from a note in the copy of the essay in the British Museum, and a similar note in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, as well as from memoranda and the receipted bill for printing found among his papers, as a result of the inquiries Mr. Macdonald caused to be made, it is known that the author was Professor William Ogilvie, professor of humanities in King's College, Aberdeen, from 1765 to 1819.

Like Patrick Edward Dove, Professor Ogilvie belonged to a landed family, his father being the laird of Pittenseer, to which estate he succeeded, but which he sold, with the exception of the mansion and demesne farm to the Earl of Fife. Like Adam Smith, he owed his position to noble patronage, having been appointed to the university through the influence of the Earl of Findlater and Seafield. And a strong desire not to offend the propertied classes and a feeling of the utter hopelessness of any radical reform show through the whole book. Professor Ogilvie saw the truth (as I have

often thought in reading the "Wealth of Nations," that his great cotemporary, Adam Smith, must have seen it,) and he was evidently desirous of leaving to the future some evidence of the fact, for the two copies bearing his name, which were deposited in the great English libraries of record, had evidently this purpose. But only five hundred copies of the essay were printed, and these were, it seems, mostly sent to the continent.

He begins his introduction by saying that while municipal laws are by the bulk of the people regarded as the standard of right and wrong, and that while this prejudice may be natural and salutary to the crowd, yet men of enlarged and inquisitive minds are not bound to acquiesce without inquiry, and thus goes on :

Property is one of the principal objects of municipal law, and that to which its regulations are applied with the greatest efficacy and precision. With respect to property in movables, great uniformity takes place in the laws of almost all nations ; but with respect to property in land, different principles have been adopted by different nations in different ages, and there is no reason why that system which now prevails in Europe, and which is derived from an age not deserving to be extolled for legislative wisdom or regard to the equal rights of men, should be supposed to excel any system that has taken place elsewhere, or to be in itself already advanced beyond the capacity of improvement or the need of reformation.

Neither in the introduction nor anywhere in the book itself does Ogilvie give the slightest credit to anybody for his ideas, though he refers once to the authority of Moses. On the contrary in the introduction he says they are only the opinions of one individual thinking freely ; that this singularity might well authorize a suspicion that they are erroneous and visionary and that this suspicion should have kept them from the public eye but for the hope of exciting others—the learned, the ingenious, and the friends of mankind—to the same inquiry, and "no longer in a matter of the first importance to the interests of society implicitly to acquiesce

in traditionary doctrines." He says that were these opinions for the first time abruptly submitted to him they would startle him and might be rejected, but they have been coeval in his mind with the free exercise of his thoughts in speculative inquiries, had recurred often, been gradually unfolded, and that for some years he has been accustomed to review them with increasing approbation.

Then apologizing further by declaring himself opposed to great and sudden changes, he goes on to declare that there is no country under the sun which stands less in need of reformation respecting property in land than England, to assert that English landholders and farmers are superior in all respects to the same class of men in other countries, to compliment the landholders on their generosity and equitable conduct, and finally to dedicate his book—

To the worthy and humane English landholders, and more particularly to those who of late years have voluntarily granted to their tenants an abatement of rent, this short essay is inscribed by the author, as to men whom he regards with high esteem, and from whom he may hope that his speculations, should they ever come to their knowledge, would meet with no unfavorable reception. Why should he not flatter himself with this hope, however seemingly vain, since uninformed by theoretical reasonings, and prompted only by the innate candor and humanity of their own minds, these respectable landholders, truly worthy of their station and of their trust, have habitually acted in conformity to those principles of public good and natural right which he is desirous to elucidate and establish.

With this "sop to Cerberus" Professor Ogilvie proceeds in a fashion which, though he evidently tries to be moderate, would have made any sop unavailing had his book ever got to circulating among the benevolent landowners.

The essay is divided into two parts, the first being devoted to principles, the second to practical remedies. In this way he begins:

All right of property is founded either in occupancy or labor. The earth having been given to mankind in common occupancy, each individual seems to have by nature a right to possess and cultivate an equal share. This right is little different from that which he has to the free use of the open air and running water; though not so indispensably requisite at short intervals for his actual existence, it is not less essential to the welfare and right state of his life through all its progressive stages.

No individual can derive from his general right of occupancy a title to any more than an equal share of the soil of his country. His actual possession of more cannot of right preclude the claim of any other person who is not possessed of such equal share.

This title to an equal share of property in land seems original, inherent, indefeasible by any act or determination of others, though capable of being alienated by our own. IT IS A BIRTHRIGHT WHICH EVERY CITIZEN STILL RETAINS. . . . Every state or community ought in justice to reserve for all its citizens opportunities of entering upon, or returning to and resuming, this their birthright, whenever they are inclined to do so. Whatever inconveniences may be thought to accompany this reservation, they ought not to stand in the way of essential justice.

That right which the landholder has to an estate consisting of a thousand times his own original share in the soil cannot be founded in the general right of occupancy, but in the labor which he, and those to whom he has succeeded, or from whom he has purchased, have bestowed on the improvement and fertilization of the soil. To this extent it is natural and just, but although it may bar the claim of individuals, it cannot preclude that of the legislature, as trustee and guardian of the whole.

In every country where agriculture has made considerable progress, these two rights are blended together, and that which has its origin in labor is suffered to eclipse the other, founded in occupancy. Did the laws of any country pay equal regard to both rights, so that they might be made to produce their respective good effects without intrrenching on one another, the highest degree of public prosperity would result from the combination.

What Professor Ogilvie had here clearly in mind is the right of ownership, and that right of exclusive possession which is necessary to the use of land. This further appears when, after pointing out that to effect a just combination of these two rights ought to be the

object of all land laws, he thus proceeds to analyze the value of land :

When any piece of land is sold, the price paid by the purchaser may be considered as consisting of three parts, each being the value of a distinct subject, the separate amount of which, men skillful in agriculture and acquainted with the soil of the country, might accurately enough appreciate.

These parts are :

(1) The *original* value of the soil, or that which it might have borne in its natural state, prior to all cultivation.

(2) The *accessory* or *improved* value of the soil—that, to wit, which it has received from the improvements and cultivation bestowed on it by the last proprietor, and those who have preceded him.

(3) The *contingent* or *improvable* value of the soil—that further value which it may still receive from future cultivation and improvements, over and above defraying the expense of making such improvements—or, as it may be otherwise expressed, the value of an exclusive right to make these improvements.

What we should call these three parts is :

1. The land value. 2. The value of the improvements. 3. The speculative or expectant value.

Ogilvie saw, just as clearly as we do, that while the improver of land is entitled to the full value of the improvements, the value of the land itself, actual and prospective, belongs of natural right to the whole community, and constitutes the proper fund for defraying the expenses of the community. His expression of this is, however, somewhat embarrassed by his inclusion in it of the idea, which is of course equally true, that *if* land could be so divided as to assign to each his equal share, then the whole value of that equal share, of land as well as improvements, would belong to the individual. He thus goes on :

Every landowner must be allowed to have a full and absolute right to the original, improved and contingent value of such portion of his estate as would fall to his share on an equal partition of the territory of the state among the citizens. Over all the surplus ex-

tent of his estate, he has a full right to the whole accessory value, whether he has been the original improver himself, or has succeeded to, or purchased from the heirs or assignees of such improver. But to the original and contingent values of this surplus extent he has no full right. That must still reside in the community at large, and though seemingly neglected or extinguished, may be claimed at pleasure by the legislature, or by the magistrate, who is the public trustee.

The difficulty of ascertaining these different sorts of value, and of separating them from one another if ascertained, may be supposed in general to have prevented such claims from being made. It is particularly difficult to distinguish original from accessory value; nor is the community much injured by suffering these to remain together in the hand of the greater landholders, especially in countries where land taxes makes a principal branch of the public revenues, and no tax is imposed on property of other kinds. The original value of the soil is, in such states, treated, in fact, as a fund belonging to the public, and merely deposited in the hands of great proprietors to be, by the imposition of land taxes, gradually applied to the public use, and which may be justly drawn from them, as the public occasions require, until the whole be exhausted. Equity, however, requires that from such land taxes those small tenements which do not exceed the proprietor's natural share of the soil should be exempted. To separate the contingent value from the other two is less difficult, and of more importance; for the detriment which the public suffers by neglecting this separation, and permitting an exclusive right of improving the soil to accumulate in the hands of a small part of the community is far greater, in respect both of the progress of agriculture and the comfortable independence of the lower ranks.

Here is the Single-tax, just as we advocate it today, even to the declaration which I have often made that the greatest evil arising from our treatment of land is not so much in what we permit landowners to take that does not belong to them as in the impediments which it places in the way of production. Professor Ogilvie continues:

Without regard to the original value of the soil, the gross amount of property in land is the fittest subject of taxation; and could it be made to support the whole expense of the public, great advantages would arise to all orders of men. What, then, it may be said, would

not in that case the proprietors of stock in trade, in manufacture and arts, escape taxation, that is, the proprietors of one-half the national income? They would indeed, be so exempted; and very justly, and very profitably for the State; for it accords with the best interests of the community, through successive generations, that active progressive industry should be exempted, if possible, from every public burden, and that the whole weight should be laid on that quiescent stock, which has been formerly accumulated, as the reward of an industry which is now no longer exerted.

But despairing, as he afterward declares that he does, of getting all taxes placed on land values alone, he declares that the next best thing would be to place them on real estate, and meets an objection that we are familiar with:

If the original value of the soil be the joint property of the community, no scheme of taxation can be so equitable as a land tax, by which alone the expenses of the State ought to be supported, until the whole amount of that original value be exhausted; for the persons who have retained no portion of that public stock, but have suffered their shares to be deposited in the hands of the land holders, may be allowed to complain, if, before that fund is entirely applied to the public use, they are subjected to taxes, imposed on any other kind of property, or any articles of consumption.

How preposterous, then, is the system of that country which maintains a civil and military establishment, by taxes of large amount, without the assistance of any land tax at all! In that example may be perceived the true spirit of legislation, as exercised by land holders alone.

I have not the space to review this book at further length, and to show by quotations how conscious Ogilvie was of the evils of private property in land; how he charges upon this fundamental wrong the poverty, turbulence, and misery of the civilized world, the fact that "out of ten thousand acres not ten are properly cultivated," and that "out of every thousand human beings not five are endowed with the strength and comeliness that nature has intended for them;" how it is more oppressive to the people than "all the tyranny of kings, the imposture of priests and

the chicane of lawyers taken together," and how the tax that it levies on industry is more burdensome than all other taxes. He evidently does his very best to be moderate and conservative and polite to the landowning class, of which he himself was a member, though in a small way, but in spite of himself he occasionally breaks out. For instance :

Land holders stand foremost in opposing the imposition of exorbitant taxes by the State forgetting the exorbitancy of that taxation which they themselves impose on the cultivators of the soil, and which the sovereign may in justice, and in the way of retaliation ought, to regulate and restrain. If considered as the rewards of duties to be performed to the public, the incomes of the clergy, after admitting all that spleen has advanced against that order of men, must appear by far better earned than the incomes of land holders. How slight, indeed, in themselves, and how negligently performed, are those duties which the State seems to expect at the hands of land holders in return for their affluence. The public good requires that every individual should be excited to employ his industry in increasing the public stock, or to exert his talents in the public service, by the certainty of a due reward. Whoever enjoys any revenue not proportioned to such industry of his own or his ancestors is a freebooter, who has found means to cheat or to rob the public, and more especially the indigent of that district in which he lives. But the hereditary revenue of a great land holder is wholly independent of his industry, and secure from every danger that does not threaten the whole State. It increases, also, without any effort of his, and in proportion to the industry of those who cultivate the soil. In respect of their industry, therefore, it is a *taille* or progressive tax of the most pernicious nature, and in respect of the land holder himself it is a premium given to idleness, an inducement to refrain from any active useful employment.

Of the irresistible power of the land owning class at that time, Professor Ogilvie was well aware, and in the absence of any democratic government the only glimmer of hope he had for the freeing of industry from taxation, and the resort to land values for revenue, was in some absolute monarch. He applauds the King of Prussia, Frederick the Great, for imposing a tax of

thirty per cent on the rentals of landowners, and thinks that if it had been suggested to him in earlier life by the philosophers he called around his throne he might have inaugurated the greatest of reforms. But Frederick was then over seventy and what hope Ogilvie had centred in the king of France, Louis XVI., whom he speaks of in high terms, and to whom he doubtless sent a copy of his book. But Louis was destined ere long to lose both crown and head.

Evidently despairing of the carrying out in its fullness the reform, of which he saw the necessity, Professor Ogilvie goes on to propose schemes for making some amelioration, such as making allotments to actual cultivators, taxing vacant land and short leases, etc.

What little hope he had in 1782 Professor Ogilvie must have seen entirely swept away in the years that ensued, and in 1819, when he died, the wrongful system must have seemed to him more firmly rooted than ever. But his book has accomplished what he evidently wished it to accomplish, and conveyed to us more than a century after the fact that he saw the great truths we single tax men now see. It seems almost like a greeting from beyond the grave.

I have not heard from Mr. Macdonald since he sent me this advance copy; but I shall write him for copies as soon as they are published, and will advertise them in the "Standard."

To return to the matter of plagiarism. Here is Ogilvie, sixty-eight years before Dove, setting forth the same principles that Mr. Sullivan says I must have taken from Dove. Will he say that Ogilvie was the first discoverer? On the contrary, poor Ogilvie in his turn must have his "pretensions" collapsed. For on November 8, 1775, Thomas Spence, then a bookseller at Newcastle on the Tyne, read a lecture before the Philosophical Society of that town, for the printing of

which that society, as Spence put it, did him the honor to expel him. In this lecture, which was republished in London, 1882, by H. H. Hyndman, Spence, who, by the bye, was a native of Aberdeen, declared in the strongest terms that all men "have as equal and just a property in land as they have in liberty, air, or the light and heat of the sun," and proposed a plan by which the value of land should be made to bear all public expenses, and all other taxes of whatever kind and nature should be abolished. It was that the parishes, where there was to be universal suffrage, should collect the rent of land. Here are some extracts from his picture of what then would be :

Then you may behold the rent which the people have paid into the parish treasuries, employed by each parish in paying the government its share of the sum which the parliament or national congress at any time grants ; in maintaining and relieving its own poor and people out of work ; in paying the necessary officers their salaries ; in building, repairing and adorning its houses, bridges, and other structures ; in making and maintaining convenient and delightful streets, highways and passages both for foot and carriages ; in making and maintaining canals, and other conveniences for trade and navigation ; in planting and taking in waste grounds ; in providing and keeping up a magazine of ammunition, and all sorts of arms sufficient for all its inhabitants in case of danger from enemies ; in premiums for the encouragement of agriculture, or anything else thought worthy of encouragement ; and, in a word, in doing whatever the people think proper ; and not, as formerly, to support and spread luxury, pride and all manner of vice.

There are no tolls or taxes of any kind paid among them by native or foreigner but the aforesaid rent, which every person pays to the parish, according to the quantity, quality and conveniences of the land, housing, etc., which he occupies in it. The government, poor, roads, etc., etc., as said before, are all maintained by the parishes with the rent ; on which account all wares, manufactures, allowable trade employments or actions are entirely duty free. Freedom to do anything whatever cannot there be bought ; a thing is either entirely prohibited as theft or murder, or entirely free to every one without tax or price ! and the rents are still not so high, notwithstanding all that is done with them, as they were formerly for only

the maintenance of a few haughty, unthankful landlords. For the government, which may be said to be the greatest mouth, having neither excisemen, custom house men, collectors, army, pensioners, bribery, nor such like ruination vermin to maintain, is soon satisfied, and moreover there are no more persons employed in offices, either about the government or parishes, than are absolutely necessary; and their salaries are but just sufficient to maintain them suitably to their offices. And as to the other charges, they are but trifles, and might be increased or diminished at pleasure.

And it is thus that Spence closes his lecture :

But what will make this prospect yet more glowing is that after this empire of right and reason is thus established it will stand forever. Force and corruption attempting its downfall shall be equally baffled, and all other nations struck with wonder and admiration at its happiness and stability shall follow the example, and thus the whole earth shall at last be happy, and live like brethren.

God help us to bring it ! What we are struggling for in these closing years of the nineteenth century is no new and before undreamed-of thing. It is the hope of the ages.

When I lectured in Oxford in 1884, one of the professors of political economy in that university opposed me, saying that he had gone through "Progress and Poverty," and could find in it nothing that was both new and true. I replied by accepting his characterization of the book, and thanking him for the compliment, telling him that in the domain of which "Progress and Poverty" treated anything that was true could not be new. And so it is. It is, as Madame de Stael said, not tyranny that is ancient, but liberty. And to free men, what we have to do, is not to make new inventions, but simply to destroy the artificial restrictions that have been imposed, and to come back to the natural order. "God made man upright."

When I first came to see what is the root of our social difficulties, and how this fundamental wrong might be cured in the easiest way by concentrating taxes on land values, I had worked out the whole thing for my-

self without conscious aid that I can remember, unless it might have been the light I got from Bissett's "Strength of Nations" as to the economic character of the feudal system. When I published "Our Land and Land Policy," I had not even heard of the physiocrats and the *impot unique*. But I knew that if it was really a star I had seen, that others must have seen it, too. And so with "Progress and Poverty." I said in that book that it would come to many to whom it would seem like the echo of their own thoughts. And beyond what I then knew, I was certain that there must have been others before me who saw the same essential truths. And as I have heard of such men one after the other, I have felt that they gave but additional evidences that we were indeed on the true track, and still more clearly showed that though against us was ignorance and power, yet behind us were the hope and the faith and the wisdom of the ages—the deepest and clearest perceptions of man.

It is not necessary for me to defend "Progress and Poverty" from a charge of plagiarism. What that book has done is a sufficient answer.

If it had been such a book as those it has rescued from forgetfulness, it would have shared their fate. The strength of "Progress and Poverty" is not that it restated fundamental truths which others had before stated. It is that it related those truths to all other truths, that it shattered the elaborate structure that under the name of political economy had been built up to hide them, and restoring what had indeed been a dismal science to its own proper symmetry, made it the science of hope and of faith. And the criticism of ten years upon a book which has attracted more attention than any similar book ever did before, shows that it was no idle boast that I made when in concluding the economic part I said :

"I have covered every point and met every objection."
HENRY GEORGE.

Twentieth Century, November 7, 1889.

MR. GEORGE AS A BELIEVER IN MALTHUS.

BY J. W. SULLIVAN.

N. W. Senior, writing forty years ago of the debate over the doctrines of Malthus, said that political economists were divided on the question into two hostile camps and that it were hardly possible to bring forth new arguments on either side. One is struck with the truth of this remark on reading the chapters on Malthusianism in "Progress and Poverty" and then glancing at what Whately, Jones, Senior, and Godwin said on the subject long ago.

In the introduction of Mr. George's argument is the following :

The current doctrine as to the derivation and law of wages finds its strongest support in a doctrine as generally accepted—the doctrine to which Malthus has given his name—that population naturally tends to increase faster than subsistence.—Page 68.

Today it [the doctrine of Malthus] stands in the world of thought as accepted truth which compels the recognition even of those who would fain disbelieve it.—Page 71.

Thus commended and seemingly proved, thus linked and buttressed, the Malthusian theory . . . is now generally accepted as an unquestionable truth.—Page 76.

It is difficult to understand how Mr. George could put forward such notions. Does he mean to ignore Godwin's 676 pages, and Sadler's two volumes, one of 600 pages, the other of 700, all directed against the doctrines of Malthus? And the replies of Southey, Coleridge, Bishop Huntingford, Grahame, Price, Muret, Anderson, Owen, Scrope, Weyland, Spencer? The public library shelves are heavy with anti-Malthus books. "For thirty years it rained refutations," says

a biographer of Malthus, speaking of his theory.

As to the tendency of population to increase faster than subsistence, Whately, in the notes to his "Logic," has the following: (See "Progress and Poverty," page 77, Lovell's edition, as to "tendency.")

The doctrine, as mischievous as it is, I conceive unfounded, that since there is a tendency in population to increase faster than the means of subsistence hence the pressure of population against subsistence may be expected to become greater and greater in each successive generation (unless new and extraordinary remedies are resorted to), and thus to produce a progressive diminution of human welfare; this doctrine, which some maintain, in defense of the fact that all civilized countries have a greater proportionate amount of wealth (in other words, a smaller population, in proportion to the means of subsistence), now than formerly, may be traced chiefly to an undetected ambiguity in the word *tendency*, which forms a part of the middle term of the argument. By a "tendency" toward a certain result is sometimes meant, "the existence of a cause which, if *operating unimpeded* would produce that result." In this sense it may be said, with truth, that the earth, or any other body moving round a centre, has a *tendency* to fly off at a tangent. . . . But . . . the earth has a greater tendency to remain in its orbit than to fly off from it; man has a greater tendency to stand erect than to fall prostrate, and (as may be proved by comparing a more barbarous with a more civilized period in the history of any country) in the progress of society, subsistence has a tendency to increase at a greater rate than population; or, at least, with a continually *diminishing inferiority*. In this country, for instance, much as our population has increased within the last five centuries, it yet bears a far less ratio to subsistence (though still a much greater than could be wished) than it did five hundred years ago.

In Richard Jones's "Essay on Distribution," 1831, he says:

As soon as we withdraw our eyes from books to consult the statistical map of the world, it shows us that the countries in which the rent of land is highest, instead of exhibiting always indications of a decline in the efficiency of agriculture, are ordinarily those in which the largest populations are maintained in the greatest plenty by the exertions of the smallest proportion of their laboring hands. . . . Again, looking at the rate of increase of the different orders

of the population of any one country, it is seen at once that the higher and middle classes, that is, those classes which have an almost unlimited command over food and all the means of a healthful subsistence, remain single more frequently, marry later, and increase more slowly, than those whose means of subsistence are more scanty; and, comparing afterward nation with nation, a similar fact forces itself upon us; and we see populations whose means are comparatively ample increasing less rapidly than those who are confessedly more wretched. These facts indicate at once, to an unprejudiced observer, the presence and influence among communities of men of causes which, coming into action during the progress of plenty and refinement, serve to moderate the exercise of man's physical power of increase, and are not resolvable evidently into misery, and almost as evidently not into unmixed vice, or into a faultless state of moral restraint. The perception of this fact is of itself sufficient to inspire distrust in those dismal systems which teach that the whole human race is under the resistless dominion of an impulse forcing ever its aggregate numbers forward to the extreme limit of the subsistence they can procure, and that even wealth and plenty are only forces which impel communities gradually, but inevitably, toward want.

This thought is on page 102, "Progress and Poverty."

In Godwin's reply to Malthus, "Of Population," 1820, 676 pages, is a complete survey of perhaps every phase of the whole question raised by Malthus. As to poverty resulting from the pressure of population against subsistence, Godwin says:

The inference from all history is, that population does not challenge the vigilance of governments to keep it down. . . . Mankind does not increase in the way in which he [Malthus] affirms, and he never had any substantial reason for the affirmation, in the New World. The increase of the numbers of mankind is not counteracted in the way in which he affirms it is counteracted, in the Old World.

The point is developed in whole chapters by citations of facts and reviews of the population question in many countries. As to decadence of populations (see "Progress and Poverty," page 79.) Godwin says:

There are certain countries which were once in an eminent degree prosperous and flourishing that are now sunk in a state of compara-

tive solitude and desolation. Such are Syria, Egypt, Greece, Italy, Sicily, that part of Asia which in ancient times was subject to the great king, and the whole coast of Africa bordering on the Mediterranean. To these may be added the extensive empires of Mexico and Peru in the New World, together with the islands of the American Archipelago.—Page 327.

Godwin has chapter upon chapter controverting the assertion that there is or ever has been a general tendency of population to outrun subsistence. He shows, and "Progress and Poverty" reverts to the fact (page 82, that "the great men of India, as those of China, had no apprehension of the evils of population."

Godwin (page 95) speaks of the species of animals that have perished, "the behemoth, the mammoth, the unicorn, the leviathan," indicating that the doctrines of Malthus are at least not applicable to the lower animals. After mentioning the extinction of human families, he gives a table (page 163) showing that in 500 years the citizens of Rome had only increased from 124,000 to 150,000 in number, and comments on what a prodigious swarm of them there ought to have been according to Malthus. (See "Progress and Poverty" on the descendants of Confucius, page 83.)

Godwin has space also to show that cases of apparent over-population will not bear investigation. "Progress and Poverty" takes up Ireland as an instance of this fact. Senior had done this service fully for Ireland years before, showing that, with a population of five millions, the poverty was as deep as when the country had eight millions. Godwin looked especially into the history of England and Wales.

As to the power of the reproductive force in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, "Progress and Poverty" tells us that a single pair of salmon might fill the ocean in a few years, and that a pair of rabbits would soon overrun a continent. Senior had already said that a single acre of wheat, the increase being six to

one, might stock all the land of the earth in fourteen years. Godwin has a chapter on this point, and dwells on the fact that man, in producing his subsistence, adapts and improves upon the forces of nature.

Godwin, from one end of his book to the other, brings up the fact that social injustice is the cause of want and misery :

The multiplication of the human species has been checked and counteracted by "vice and misery." Who denies it? Yes, conquest is vice. Yes, bad government is vice. And, if these had been exiled from the face of the earth we may reasonably believe that the human species and the globe on which we dwell would have worn a very different appearance from that which they actually present."—Page 340.

Population is not kept down, in the different countries of Europe, by want of the means of subsistence, but by the positive institutions of society.—Page 467.

The fact, noted in "Progress and Poverty," that increase of descendants does not show increase of population—that as a man and his wife, having a son and daughter, each marrying and having two children, would have four grand-children, so each grand-child would have four grand-parents (page 83)—was pointed out with precisely the same illustration by Godwin (page 98). The suggestion of the geometrical progression in the increase of a man's ancestors, inasmuch as he has two parents and these again each two parents (page 83, "Progress and Poverty,") was actually carried back in tabulated form by Godwin, who showed that in the twentieth degree a man has thus over a million ancestors. The "desolation of the Carnatic when Hyder Ali's horsemen burst upon it in a whirlwind of destruction" (page 87, "Progress and Poverty,") is described in several pages by Godwin (beginning page 329.) The reference on page 79, "Progress and Poverty," to Montesquieu's assertion in the early part of the last century that the popu-

lation of the earth had, since the Christian era, greatly declined, is borne out by a long extract from Montesquieu's writings in Godwin (page 39.) On page 85, "Progress and Poverty," a quotation is made from the writings of Rev. William Tennant with respect to the fertility of Hindostan and the frequency of famine there. Richard Jones, in the appendix to his "Essay on Distribution," quotes the same writer on the same point, and Jones, by the way, opposes the theory of the "diminishing productiveness of land." A comparison made in "Progress and Poverty" (page 84) between the density of population per square mile in India and China and that of European countries had already been made by Godwin, save that later statistics gave the later book some advantage. The references to Sparta, Peru, and Paraguay (page 82, "Progress and Poverty"), were each a chapter, or the most of one, in Godwin (pages 71-76.) Reflections similar to those in "Progress and Poverty," on page 74, as to the deplorable effects of the doctrines of Malthus in common thought, are made by Godwin again and again, and the thought of the fine passages as to the nature and powers of man ("Progress and Poverty," pages 96 and 100,) is to be found in David Booth's chapter of Godwin's book and in Godwin's concluding chapters. The illustration of Mr. Malthus's illogical modes of thought ("Progress and Poverty," page 78,)—in which he is quoted as believing that if wages were increased from eighteen pence or two shillings a day to five shillings, meat would necessarily increase in price from eight or nine pence to two or three shillings per pound, etc.—is also brought out in greater detail on page 600 of Godwin's book. The pro-Malthus "current political economy" from which passages are cited in "Progress and Poverty" is Mill and McCulloch. Senior, in writing against Malthus, quotes from the

same authors. Godwin's book, "Of Population," is not named in "Progress and Poverty."

"Malthus and His Work," by Professor James Bonar, of Baliol College, Oxford, was issued in 1885. A comprehensive and philosophic review of the doctrines of Malthus and the literature to which they have given birth, Professor Bonar's book embraces some notice of Mr. George's chapters on the question. Why but little space is accorded Mr. George's arguments may be inferred from what Professor Bonar says of them. On page 305 (Macmillan's edition) Professor Bonar prints the passage in which occurs the famous sentence in Malthus's "Essay": "At nature's mighty feast there is no vacant cover for him," (the man born without possessions), and in a foot-note he adds: "The passage is quoted in full, because by recent critics it is much garbled; *e. g.*, in 'Progress and Poverty,' VII., i., 304, note," (Lovell's edition, page 243). Professor Bonar enumerates the sixteen "direct arguments" made by Mr. George against Malthus. Before stating them he says:

Of the two most prominent schemes of our own day for the reconstruction of society, one, that of Mr. Henry George, involves an unconscious recourse to the old weapons of Godwin, Sadler and other opponents of Malthus. "Progress and Poverty" does not contain any argument not to be found in these writers.—Page 385.

After recounting Mr. George's arguments Professor Bonar ends by saying:

What is right in this view of the real law of population is common to Mr. George and Mr. Herbert Spencer. What is wrong is common to him and Godwin.

Professor Bonar says that Malthus has been generally misrepresented by his later opponents, for the reason that they have imbibed their notions of him simply from Godwin and others among his earlier opponents. His geometrical and arithmetical progres-

sions, for instance, were never meant to express facts, but tendencies. Mr. Senior, one of his most energetic antagonists, was brought to confess that he had not criticised what Malthus had said, but rather what he was reported to have said, and after some correspondence with Malthus he reached the conclusion that his own views differed only in a slight degree from the real ideas of the horrid and ungodly parson.

John Rae, in "Contemporary Socialism," (page 413, Scribner's edition, 1885,) says that by an admission which Mr. George makes in his argument against Malthus, "he virtually surrenders his case":

Mr. George himself admits that in a country of inconsiderable extent, or in a small island, such as Pitcairn's Island, over-population is quite possible before elbow-room is near exhausted. He admits in detail what he denies in gross. For is not the soil of an island or an inconsiderable country as eternal as the soil of a continent? The only difference is that it is not so extensive, and therefore comes to the epoch of diminishing return sooner. That is all. . . . If density of population is such a sure improver of production as Mr. George represents it to be elsewhere, why should it fail here? And if it fail anywhere, how can he argue that it must succeed everywhere? Once he admits, as he does in this passage, that subsistence has a definite limit in the modes of production that happen to be known in any age and country, and that population has a definite limit for such age and country in the amount of subsistence which the known modes of production are capable of extracting from the soil, he really admits all that Malthusians generally contend for, and, coming to curse, he has really blessed them altogether.

So, after some investigation, we must disagree with Mr. George. When he started in to write it down, Malthusianism was not entirely an accepted truth. Half a century ago, in fact, the discussion over it compassed every idea opposed to it that we see brought out today. Moreover, in his criticisms of what learned authority tells us is a fictitious Malthus, evolved in the course of a now venerable controversy by the oppo-

nents of a misunderstood Malthusianism, Mr. George admits, by an unfortunate slip, that he is pleading the wrong side of the case and really believes what Malthus taught.

*MR. GEORGE'S CONFUTATION OF A RE-
JECTED THEORY.*

BY J. W. SULLIVAN.

In Book I., chapter 1, of "Progress and Poverty," the author quotes the wages-fund theory—"that wages are fixed by the ratio between the number of laborers and the amount of capital devoted to the employment of labor, and constantly tend to the lowest amount on which laborers will consent to live and reproduce, because the increase in the number of laborers tends naturally to follow and overtake any increase of capital"—and says:

In current thought this doctrine holds all but undisputed sway. It bears the indorsement of the very highest names among the cultivators of political economy, and though there have been attacks upon it, they are generally more formal than real. It is assumed by Buckle as the basis of his generalizations of universal history. It is taught in all, or nearly all, the great English and American universities, and is laid down in text books which aim at leading the masses to reason correctly upon practical affairs.—[Pages 16-17.

I am aware that the theorem that wages are drawn from capital is one of the most fundamental and apparently best settled of current political economy, and that it has been accepted as axiomatic by all the great thinkers who have devoted their powers to the elucidation of the science.—[Page 20.

Among the leading writers on the science mentioned in the article on "Political Economy" in the "Encyclopedia Britannica" are T. E. Cliffe Leslie, Richard Jones, John Stuart Mill, and Thorold Rogers, among Englishmen, Lassalle, Marx, and Proudhon, among

those of the Continent, and F. A. Walker among Americans. They, and many other economists, had rejected the theory of a wages fund long before 1879, the year in which "Progress and Poverty" was issued.

Said Leslie, writing in the "Academy," June, 1874:

In Germany, the doctrine of a wages fund was controverted more than fifty years ago, and has been repeatedly assailed since; nor does it now form, we may believe we may affirm, an article of the creed of any school of German economists. It is condemned by M. de Lavelye. The notion that there is a national wages fund is incompatible with the exposition which M. Léonce de Lavergne has given of the diversity of the rates of wages in the different parts of France. In England, the doctrine was, after mature consideration, abandoned by Mr. Mill; it has been vigorously assailed by Mr. Thornton; it is repudiated by Mr. Jevons, and, among other economists, the present reviewer long ago combated it. . . . An aggregate wages fund and an average rate of wages are mere fictions, hiding the real rates of wages, the real causes that govern them, and the real sources from which they proceed.

Leslie had contributed an article to "Fraser's Magazine" in 1868, in which he attacked the wages-fund theory at length. He had been preceded, however, by F. D. Longe, who in 1866 had published "A Refutation of the Wages-Fund Theory of Modern Political Economy." But Jones, as early as 1831, in the preface to his "Essay on the Distribution of Wealth," a work used by Mill, summed up as follows the results of his inquiries printed in the body of the book as to the groundwork of fact for the wages-fund theory:

Enumerating first the funds from which labor is supported, it has been shown that they are *various* and *different*, and that of these various funds that which is saved from income and is most appropriately called *capital*, is only one and the least. [—Page xviii.]

In the "Encyclopedia of Political Economy," F. A. Walker describes John Stuart Mill's "recantation of his belief in the wages-fund theory," as made in the "Fortnightly Review," May, 1869. He says that it "produced a deep impression." Professor Walker, in

chapter 8, "The Wages Question," 1876, mentions half a dozen economists who had then rejected the wages-fund theory. Professor Luigi Cossa wrote in Pavia, Italy, in 1877, ("Guide to the Study of Political Economy"): "The wages-fund theory is now almost completely disproved."

The "London Quarterly Review," July, 1871, characterized the wages fund as "a thing, or un-thing (to borrow a German idiom) which is henceforth shunted fairly out of the way of future discussion of all questions affecting labor and labor's wages."

In 1871, Professor Stanley Jevons, decisively rejecting the wages fund, advanced the proposition that the "wages of a laboring man are ultimately coincident with what he produces, after the deduction of rent, profits, and the interest of capital."

Professor Henry Sidgwick wrote, in the "Fortnightly Review," September, 1879:

The doctrine [of a wages fund] is altogether rejected by Mr. Jevons, Mr. Thornton, Mr. Cliffe Leslie, Mr. F. A. Walker, and other American and English economists.

Proceeding, in the same paragraph on page 20 which is quoted from above, Mr. George announces:

Nevertheless, I think it [the wages-fund theory] can be demonstrated to be a fundamental error—the fruitful parent of a long series of errors, which vitiate most important practical conclusions. This demonstration I am about to attempt. . . . The proposition I shall endeavor to prove is: That wages, instead of being drawn from capital, are in reality drawn from the product of the labor for which they are paid.—[Page 21.

Labor always precedes wages.—[Page 44.

The discussion of this proposition and of the functions of capital is carried on up to the end of Book I. Henry George speaks throughout as if the thought were his against that of all recognized economists. He says:

In short, all the teachings of the current political economy, in the

widest and most important part of its domain, are based more or less directly upon the assumption that labor is maintained and paid out of existing capital before the product which constitutes the ultimate object is secured.—Page 22.

The fact is, however, that hardly had the wages-fund theory found formal statement by N. W. Senior when its error was shown and the true source of wages in general pointed out. In his "Essay on Distribution," 1831, Richard Jones, rejecting the theory, shows where wages are obviously the direct product of the labor for which they are paid :

The rents thus paid by the [agricultural] laborer, who extracts his own wages from the earth, may be called peasant rents.—[Page 20.

In Russia, the peasants, who are settled on the soil, receive from the proprietors a quantity of land, great or small, as his discretion or convenience dictates, from which they extract their wages.—[Page 20.

The real wages of the serf, the wealth he annually consumes, depend on what he is able to extract from his allotment of land. . . . With each advance in the exactions of the landlord, the produce of the peasant's allotment, his real wages, must become less.—[Page 48.

The metayer is a peasant tenant extracting his own wages and subsistence from the soil.—[Page 73.

Ryot rents are, with few exceptions, peculiar to Asia. They are produce rents paid by a laborer, raising his own wages from the soil, to the sovereign, as its proprietor.—[Page 109.

Under the head of cotter rents, we may include all rents contracted to be paid in money, by peasant tenants, extracting their own maintenance from the soil. . . . The whole amount of produce being determined as before, the landlord's share, the rent, depends upon the maintenance left to the peasant, that is, upon his wages.—[Page 153.

While obliged to extract his own food from the earth, the quantity of produce which the laborer retained, the amount, that is, of his real wages, depended, we have seen, mainly on the contract made with the proprietor. When the engagement of the laborer is with a capitalist, this dependence on the landlord is dissolved, and the amount of his wages is determined by other causes.—[Page 188.

One important fact must strike us forcibly on looking back on the collective body of those primary or peasant rents which we have

been tracing, in their various forms, over the surface of the globe. It is their constant and very intimate connection with the wages of labor. In this respect the serf, the metayer, the ryot, the cottier, are alike; the terms on which they can obtain the spot of ground they cultivate exercise an active and predominant influence in determining the reward they shall receive for their personal exertions, or, in other words, their real wages. We should take a very false view of the causes which regulate the amount of their earnings if we merely calculated the quantity of capital in existence at any given time, and then attempted to compute their share of it by a survey of their numbers. As they produce their own wages, all the circumstances which affect either their powers of production, or their share of the produce, must be taken into estimate.—[Page 156.

Malthus, the much abused, in his "Essay on Population," seventh edition, page 368, said:

The funds for the maintenance of labor do not necessarily increase with the increase of wealth, and very rarely increase in proportion to it. The condition of the lower classes of society does not depend exclusively upon the increase of the funds for the maintenance of labor or the power of supporting a greater number of laborers.

In speaking of the wages fund, in his "Political Economy," edition 1836, page 224, Malthus expresses the opinion that the condition of the working classes depends "on the resources of the country," and not on capital.

The "wages-paid-from-their-produce theory" was put forward in precise terms long before it was adopted by Mr. George. Witness the following:

F. A. Walker, in "The Wages Question," 1876:

I hold that wages are paid out of the product of present industry.—[Chapter 8.

Karl Marx, in "Capital," 1867:

In all cases, therefore, the use value of the labor power is advanced to the capitalist. The laborer allows the buyer to consume it before he receives payment of the price. He everywhere gives credit to the capitalist.—[Page 153, English edition.

From Storch's "Political Economy," 1815:

The laborer lends his labor to the capitalist.

From Proudhon's "What is Property?" Tucker's translation, 1876 :

That the producer may live, his wages must repurchase his product.—[Page 188.

The capital being given, production is measured, not by the amount of capital, but by productive capacity.—[Page 222.

From Lassalle's controversy with Schulze-Delitsche, 1863, (page 326, Hoehne edition, New York) :

If, in the price of the product nothing were paid but the workingmen's wages, where are the interest and profits of the capitalists to come from? . . . Interest is created from the product of labor to the extent of leaving to the laborer only his wages. . . . The entire social question hinges upon the difference between price of the product and amount of wages.

J. E. Thorold Rogers, in "Fraser's Magazine," April, 1870 :

It is the custom to speak of capital as maintaining labor, as setting labor in motion, as limiting the extent to which labor can be employed, as constituting a mysterious wages fund, as that which gives vitality to industry. . . . The practice of popular language is to speak of the employer only as a capitalist and to ignore the capital of the laborer, whether it be contained in himself or represent the maintenance in advance which he lends in the form of labor to his employer. Take the last of these forms of capital first. No one, I suppose, would doubt that if a carpenter hires himself at weekly wages to a builder, and, possessing a week's wages in advance, maintains himself from Monday morning till Saturday night, when the work which he does is paid for, that he has as much lent his capital to the builder as a banker does who gives a credit or drawing account to the so-called capitalist builder. . . . Wages are not wholly advanced by capital, but are paid out of the product of the labor for which wages are due. . . . A master baker may turn over his capital in ready money trade every day, while his journeymen as probably will not recover their advance for six days. It is possible in such a business, if the returns are rapid, that the capital which the workmen supply may be greatly in excess, taken in the aggregate, of that which the master turns over. •

Henry Sidgwick, "Westminster Review," September, 1879 :

I must now point out, with Professor Walker, that there is no ab-

solute necessity that workmen's wages should be paid entirely out of the saved results of past industry. In fact, in newly colonized countries, where capital and labor are at once scarce and highly productive, the most natural and convenient plan is to pay the laborer out of the product of his industry, whatever sum he requires for subsistence while laboring being merely advanced.

As to labor preceding wages, F. A. Walker, 1876, has the following :

I may mention in illustration the case of transportation companies owning railroads, canals, steamboats, or coaches. The employes number hundreds of thousands, and they are rarely employed by the day—commonly by the week or month. Yet the companies collect all their fares for passage and a portion of their charges for freight daily. They are thus always in debt, often to a vast amount, to their laborers for services which have been rendered to them and of which they have availed themselves to the full extent. So that the companies are virtually carrying on their operations on capital a portion of which is advanced by their own employes.—[Page 134.

Who, as a matter of fact, could have been the leading economic writers who in 1879 had not set aside the wages-fund theory and who had not discussed the theory that wages were paid from their produce? Says John Rae of the wages-fund theory ("Contemporary Socialism," page 409): "It was dead and buried before Mr. George attacked it."

Twentieth Century, December 26, 1889.

HENRY GEORGE IN BEATEN TRACKS.

BY J. W. SULLIVAN.

In the correction of certain economic terms, Henry George follows in the wake of Archbishop Whately; in the analysis of certain definitions, in that of Thorold Rogers.

Whately, in the appendix to his "Logic," 1846, observes that the word "capital" had been differently de-

fined or used by Smith, Ricardo, Malthus, Say, Storch, McCulloch, Mill, and Torrens. In making the same point, George (page 28) speaks of Smith, Ricardo, McCulloch, and Mill, in like order, giving examples of their varying use of the term capital, two of the four quotations being those made by Whately. Whately (page 126) speaks of "a person" who had included land with capital; George (page 29) says that Mr. Thornton had included land with capital. Whately (page 263) mentions that Smith would consider trinkets in the hands of a jeweler to be capital; George (page 35) says the stock of a jeweler would be included as capital by Smith. But these points of resemblance might be passed by as accidental were it not that George (pages 115-117) devotes much space to the error, as he takes it, that economists generally had fallen into of including in the term profits the wages of superintendence, and that Whately (page 267) makes the same point, saying that "almost all these definitions of profits include the *wages of the labor of the capitalist*." The "these definitions" were those of Smith, Say, Storch, Sismondi, Malthus, Mill, Torrens, McCulloch, and Ricardo. Whately emphasized his comment with italics. George treats the discovery as his own, saying:

To talk about the distribution of wealth into rent, wages, and profits, is like talking of the division of mankind into men, women, and human beings. Yet this, to the utter bewilderment of the reader, is what is done in all the standard works. After formally decomposing profits into wages of superintendence, compensation for risk, and interest—the net return for the use of capital—they proceed to treat of the distribution of wealth between the rent of land, the wages of labor, and the PROFITS of capital.

What is further said as to profits, on page 119, "Progress and Poverty," deserves mention with a paragraph of the article by Thorold Rogers in the "Fraser's" of April, 1870, already quoted. George says:

Of the three parts into which profits are divided by political econ-

omists—namely, compensation for risk, wages of superintendence, and return for the use of capital—the latter falls under the term interest, which includes all the returns for the use of capital, and excludes everything else ; wages of superintendence falls under the term wages, which includes all returns for human exertion, and excludes everything else ; and compensation for risk has no place whatever, as risk is eliminated when all the transactions of a community are taken together. I shall, therefore, consistently with the definitions of political economists, use the term interest as signifying that part of the produce which goes to capital.

Rogers says :

What is commonly called profit has been long since distinguished as interest, risk and wages of superintendence. . . . The real rate of profit is the average rate of interest, and whatever advantage the employment of capital can bestow on its possessor beyond this rate is not due to profit, but, as we shall see, to some other cause. . . . Whatever else is secured to the capitalist beyond the average rate of interest is either wages of labor, *i. e.*, the labor of superintendence, superior intelligence, and tact, and the task of supplying the purchaser with what he wants, all which are kinds of labor ; or the replacement of outlay ; or insurance against risk.

The observations on pages 47-48, "Progress and Poverty," with respect to the confounding of money with wealth are in a vein similar to those of Rogers. Next, having argued that wages are not drawn from capital and that laborers are not maintained by capital, George proceeds (page 59) to demonstrate that "the demand for consumption determines the direction in which labor will be expended in production," and (page 67) that the functions of capital are to assist labor in production with tools, seed, etc., and with the wealth required to carry on exchanges. In the "Fraser's" article Rogers had thus put these conclusions :

That which sets labor in motion is not, therefore, as is commonly asserted, the capital of the employer, but the demand of the consumer. This demand is interpreted by the employer, and through his agency supplied. He forms the connecting link between the two factors which constitute exchange, and which constitute supply and demand.

The real service which he [the capitalist] performs to the laborer

is that of affording him a means for continuous industry, by interpreting or anticipating the demand of the market. He does not advance him wages or maintenance. He buys his work and traffics in that which he buys. Nothing is more erroneous than to say that the so-called capitalist maintains labor. An employer has had services advanced to him, and has really contracted a loan with those whom he has employed. The function of the employer is to interpret the demands of the market.

The evidence is now complete that in the composition of all that part of "Progress and Poverty" preceding the development of his laws of distribution, and in a portion of that part, the author might have had aid from other economists at every stage. The errors he discovers in "the current political economy" had been known before. His corrections and analyses had been made before. The principles he announces had been debated before. Every link in the chain of his reasoning had been forged before. His thought was accessible in the average public library. Its encyclopedias would have carried him well along in his preliminary investigations. Its catalogues and reference books for the chief libraries of the country would have given him the name of every author and every work prominent in English political economy. Its "Poole's Magazine Index" would have yielded the title of every article on economics published in the past quarter of a century in all the leading monthlies of Great Britain and America. And original, indeed, would the course of a writer on a scientific question be who would attempt to set up as an authority without ascertaining what was the thought of his forerunners and what the stage of the discussion at the moment when he essayed to take part.

But to readers whose first lessons in political economy are gained from "Progress and Poverty," the book seems packed with truth first brought to light by Hen-

ry George. Witness what Mr. James Love, of Burlington, Iowa, writes to the TWENTIETH CENTURY :

The great strength of the Malthusian theory is derived from the current doctrine that "wages are drawn from capital," and that "increased population is not accompanied by an equally increased productive power." These two Malthusian buttresses Mr. George has shattered—the first in Book I. of "Progress and Poverty," entitled "Wages and Capital," the second in Chapter 4 of Book II., entitled "Disproof of the Malthusian Theory," the *reasoning* in both being *entirely original*. [Mr. Love's italics.]

Mr. Love believes this with the belief of blind faith. He reiterates it through habit. Reading "Progress and Poverty" soon after it was issued, he has ever since been tireless in his support of its teachings, with which he is as familiar as is a good Mormon with the book of latter-day revelation. Even after reading that Prof. Bonar had said there is not a new argument against Malthus in "Progress and Poverty," he writes that Henry George destroyed Malthusianism. Instead of buying Bonar's "Malthus and His Work," (Harper's Handy Series), instead of looking up Godwin's "Of Population," he simply reasserts of "Progress and Poverty" what he has been taught in it to say of it. "*I* assert," "*I* deny," "*I* distinctly join issue," says Henry George, (page 104,) indignantly spurning the Malthus doctrine of John Stuart Mill. And—"I go to the heart of the matter," (page 77); "*I* have pointed out the fallacy," (page 55). "The errors which *I* have been pointing out," (page 34); "Before working out this theory, *I* have deemed it necessary to conclusively show the insufficiency of current theories," (page 161.) "*I*," "*I*," "*I*," like a trade-mark stamp. The attitude of seer and prophet is maintained to the end of the work. "*I* have now traced to their source social weakness and disease. *I* have shown the remedy. *I* have covered every point and met every objection," (page 338.) Mr. Love reads, believes, and worships. Enough

that his word here implies that all the ideas new to Mr. Love are his, that he, the writer, is the one trustworthy authority, and that as a rule other economists need be called up only to be corrected. And thousands of busy men, attracted for the first time to political economy by the agitation consequent on the increasing pressure of social wrongs, taking on trust the claims of the author of the popular book of the day, Mr. George's "Progress and Poverty," devoutly thank heaven for sending to mankind an interpreter of truth the equal of Moses himself.

Another correspondent, however, writes: "You are only telling us what is already known to those who have made a study of the subject." True? Is this why Henry George is not recognized as an economist by the economists?

Twentieth Century, February 6, 1889.

*WHEREIN "PROGRESS AND POVERTY" IS
WEAK.*

BY J. W. SULLIVAN.

I.

"I have covered every point and met every objection."—Henry George's own opinion of "Progress and Poverty" in 1879, repeated in 1889. On this, some queries, heard occasionally among Single-taxers:

(1) Does society present for solution Mr. George's problem? His conception of it stated, does he not, in a subsequent chapter, substitute one that is entirely different?

Smoothed off with little touches of euphony and alliterativeness, the title page of "Progress and Poverty" announces the work to be an inquiry into "the increase of want with increase of wealth"—language which leaves the reader in doubt. Does the author mean no

more than that wherever there is wealth there, as well, may be found want, or does he intend to maintain that, as a nation accumulates wealth, poverty invariably deepens and becomes more widespread among the masses? On page 16 his problem is thus formulated: "Why, in spite of increase in productive power, do wages tend to a minimum which will give but a bare living?" Here, first, a fact is assumed—that wages do tend downward to a uniform level; secondly, the level is described;—at it a quantity equivalent to but a bare living is received by labor as wages. The ambiguity of the title page is cleared away. Mr. George's inquiry is, *not* why poverty, perhaps varying in gradation, is ever to be found as wealth increases, *not* why the poor do not obtain a proportion of increased wealth, but why the rewards of labor, governed by influences persistently acting in the partition of production, cannot be permanently maintained above a point which in general represents but a bare living.

That he may find his answer, Mr. George sets out to discover the laws by which wealth distributes itself to the producing factors. In the hundred succeeding pages he disputes the laws taught by "the current political economy," and then in some fifty more sets up his own instead. Having followed the points as made by Mr. George in these chapters, the reader is prepared for the author's evidence of the *fact* that wages do tend to the minimum described, as well as for his statement of the *reason* why they do, when he is confronted in the last paragraph of Book III., chapter 6, with this explanation:

Perhaps it may be well to remind the reader, before closing this chapter, of what has been before stated—that I am using the word wages not in the sense of a quantity, but in the sense of a proportion. When I say that wages fall as rent rises, I do not mean that the quantity of wealth obtained by laborers as wages is necessarily less, but that the proportion which it bears to the whole produce is

necessarily less. The proportion may diminish while the quantity remains the same *or even increases*.

Of this "strange turn," John Rae (page 438, "Contemporary Socialism,") says :

It will be remembered that the only reason why he [Mr. George] undertook to search for these laws [of distribution] at all was, that by means of them he might explain why wages tended to sink to a minimum that would give but a bare living, but now that he has discovered those laws he declines to apply them to the solution of this problem. He will not draw the very conclusion he has laid down all his apparatus to establish. He will not solve the problem he has promised us to solve ; in fact, he tells us he never meant to solve it ; he never thought or said wages tended to sink to a minimum that would give but a bare living ; he never said they tended to sink at all ; all he meant to assert was that if they increased they did not increase so fast as the national wealth generally. . . . He will not therefore, after all, show us why the poor are getting poorer ; but he will read for us, if we like, another riddle,—why they are not growing rich so fast as some of their neighbors.

What reply can the Single-taxer make to the opponent who, well equipped as to data and demanding precision, avers: "Mr. George's problem is no problem at all. Wages do not tend to a bare living. It has been shown time and again, through convincing methods, by many painstaking investigators, especially by Mr. Giffen, Mr. Wells, and Mr. Atkinson, that, throughout the civilized world as a whole, wages have been steadily increasing for thirty years. Sharing in a small measure the abundantly increasing wealth and, almost in an equal degree with other classes, the famine-preventing advantages of the age, the poor have grown richer, and their condition is undoubtedly better than that of their fathers. Error proven as the foundation of your philosopher's theories, one can be but indifferent to his conclusions." The Single-taxer can but say that Mr. George ought to have stated the purpose of his inquiry to be the discovery of social injustice as affecting the division of the products of labor, in order that he might

find the remedy for that injustice. The point on which his reasoning bears is, not that the poor earn only a bare living, nor that the poor are growing poorer, but that the distribution of wealth, governed as it is by privilege, is grossly inequitable. Were wages considerably advanced by the momentum of the increase in wealth, or doubled through philanthropy, and monopoly in land still remain, the argument against the injustice of that monopoly would still be sound. Therefore, in defining his problem Henry George did err, and in permitting the first formal statement of it to pass out of sight and taking up another he did confuse his case. The weakness of his position on both points has been a source of strength to opponents.

(2) Are the profits of capital found only in interest?

With profits, Mr. George asserts (page 118) his inquiry has nothing to do, since profits are composed of interest, insurance against risk, and wages of superintendence. "I shall . . . use," he says, "the term interest as signifying that part of the produce which goes to capital." "Wages of superintendence," he continues, "falls under the term wages,"—and these wages, as they include "returns for human exertion," he classifies with wages in general! That is to say, the capitalist, as a worker, ever prepared to employ himself, ever watchful of the markets, ever putting his capital to the best investment, ever on strike for the highest wages, ever in position to take advantage of the competition among the penniless, helplessly sees his own wages, like theirs, tending to a minimum which, aside from a three or four per cent interest on his capital, would give him but a bare living. Rae (page 423) says of this curious analysis :

Now here we have to do with no mere difference of terminology. Profits may be employers' wages, if you like to call them so ; but it is a fatal confusion to suppose that, because you have called them

employers' wages you are, therefore, entitled to treat them as if they were governed by the same laws and conditions as laborers' wages. The truth is they are governed by opposite conditions and that the pith of the labor question is just the conflict between these two kinds of wages for the better share in the distribution. The battle of labor is not against the employer receiving fair interest on his capital in proportion to its quantity, but against the additional profit which the employer claims as wages of superintendence, and which he also rates in proportion to capital invested instead of rating it in proportion to his own trouble or efficiency. . . . Profits and wages have thus opposite and conflicting interests in the distribution.

John Stuart Mill, in the chapter on "Profits and Interest," in "Some Unsettled Questions in Political Economy," warns the reader against the error into which Mr. George has here fallen. With Rae, he holds that wages of superintendence are established under conditions bearing no resemblance to those in which are fixed the wages of labor ordinarily. A principal element in financial power, a main source of profits, wages of superintendence will diminish as labor becomes free. With profits, then, one must concern himself in seeking why labor does not obtain the full fruits of its toil, and Mr. George's discrimination here again failing, his critical reader is the less inclined to expect his long inquiry to end at invulnerable truth.

(3) Has interest a permanent place in the distribution of wealth?

In his exposition of the laws by which wealth in production is distributed, Mr. George admits of three wealth-producing factors—land, labor, and capital. In a train of reasoning, extending, as has been mentioned, through fifty pages, he endeavors to ascertain (page 113) "the law which determines what part of the produce is distributed to labor as wages." This he does for the reason that (page 117) "the current political economy fails to give any clear and consistent account of the distribution of wealth. The law of rent is clearly

stated, but it stands unrelated. The rest is a confused and incoherent jumble." Interest, as the return to capital, he regards (page 138) as springing "from the power of increase which the reproductive forces of nature give to capital," which is one of the doctrines of Jeremy Bentham. One of his inferences (page 146) is that "interest and wages must rise and fall together." Finally (page 160) he prints, in a column parallel with the erroneous "current statement," a "true statement" of the harmony and correlation of his laws of distribution—a law for interest being one of them.

Now, is Mr. George's "true statement" really correct? Does interest for capital rest in the nature of things, as do wages for labor and, according to Single-tax thought, rent for monopolized natural opportunities? Is it not solely due to a scarcity, a monopoly, to which even now an end may be foreseen? With an increasing quantity, is not capital getting cheaper and cheaper, bringing the vanishing point of interest nearer and nearer? Mr. George holds that when land shall be made free and rent transferred from private to public accounts, wages are to be doubled and perhaps quadrupled. At what point in this process is the downward tendency of interest to become an upward tendency, the rise thenceforward to be sustained concurrently with the advance in wages? There is no such point. On the contrary, with general prosperity wealth will be converted into capital, new capital will be brought into existence, and such a supply will result as shall tend to extinguish interest. When all producers shall be the possessors of capital, must not simple replacement as a rule meet the requirements of lenders? Indeed, may not such a plethora of wealth be imagined as would leave the owners of competing capital willing to pay for its safe-keeping or its preservation from wear and tear?

If it be granted that interest is natural, would not the growth of a penny at interest, in time, to the value of the earth be natural? And if for men to live without work on the interest of their capital be natural, would it not also be natural that the interest of the savings of a great-grandfather in 1790 should maintain a great-grandson in 1890, although meantime nearly every particle of the wealth of the world of a hundred years ago were consumed, and although man would disappear from the face of the earth were labor to cease for a single year? And if the million or so of the citizens of New-York now drawing interest do so through a natural law, why, in case their incomes from this source were sufficient to maintain them, should they or an equal number of their descendants ever lift hand to work? And, moreover, if, through general prosperity, all the laborers of to-day were to become interest-drawing capitalists, why should anybody thereafter ever do a stroke of work?

If Mr. George's law of interest is thus seen to be absurd, his laws of distribution, like those of his predecessors, must stand unrelated—"confused and incoherent." His search for the law determining wages has ended in error. The true laws of distribution concern land and labor only. As long as rent exists, the real correlation in the laws of distribution will be that between the returns to labor and the returns to the holders of the opportunities which give rise to rent. When all monopolies not natural shall have disappeared, each with its cause, leaving rent as the only return to monopoly, and rent is rendered back to the public by the users of natural opportunities, labor, individual and general, will obtain its full reward—all wages. Said Adam Smith: "The produce of labor constitutes the natural recompense or wages of labor." To show how that natural recompense might be got by labor was the

great task Henry George set for himself. Faulty reasoning led him to infer a natural cause and a law for interest, and, awarding an unearned living to the possessor of capital from the toil of labor, he failed in accomplishing that task.

Twentieth Century, February 13, 1889.

*WHEREIN "PROGRESS AND POVERTY" IS
WEAK.*

BY J. W. SULLIVAN.

II.

(4) Was it not a blunder to associate with the cause of freedom the terminology of Communism?

"We must make land common property."—Page 237.
 "It is not necessary to confiscate land; it is only necessary to confiscate rent."—Page 292. "Private property in land cannot be defended on the score of justice."—Page 243.

Many of the readers of "Progress and Poverty," failing to discern the subtleties hidden in these dicta, have believed they saw the star of hope rising in Communism, and Communists themselves were for a time led to believe—indeed in France are now being led to believe—that the Single-tax movement is Communistic. On the other hand, reformers bent upon equal rights but imbued with a spirit of liberty, have been repelled from the cause by the taint of Communism in "Progress and Poverty." And opponents have never wearied of ringing the changes on its Communistic terms. When, a few weeks ago, the Anti-Poverty Society of Toronto was defending itself against the charge made in a local newspaper of advocating "communistic brigandage and confiscation," explaining that "Henry George proposes no disturbance of land titles,

no dispossession, no distribution or leasing by the State," its members labored under the disadvantage of at least apparently contradicting Mr. George's own words. When a few years ago Mr. Powderly said he did not know how land could be held and worked in common, he expressed an impression then general among the uninformed in reference to "common property in land." When Monseigneur Preston stoutly maintained that private property in land, being recognized by the church, was just, meaning what he meant, was he to be held by Single-taxers as being necessarily in error? When Archbishop Elder of Cincinnati declared it wrong to speculate in land but right to own it privately, his position was that of every Single-taxer. When "Wheelbarrow" of the "Open Court" expressed doubts as to the security of improvements on land held in common, he gave words to what was in the minds of many. When the translator of "La Vie de Monsieur Henri George" speaks of Mr. George as the apostle of "le Socialisme agraire" he hails him as a Communist. When Rev. James B. Converse explains that in his new paper he will advocate the Single-tax but oppose land confiscation, he pays deference to a state of public opinion which seems to him just.

But the error here is more than a misrepresentation of the case through ill-chosen terms or through the non-avoidance of a misleading connotation of words. There is question of fact.

"We must make land common property." To tell us this "Progress and Poverty" was written. How is the "making" to begin, and when is the act of completing the "making" to take place? Land values are already in part taxed. Is, then, the "making" under way? Hardly; for were 99 per cent of the rent which is drawn from aphides-tenants by ant-landlords turned into the public treasury land would not yet be common

property. Title and possible profit and the chance of a future change to his advantage in the form of taxation would remain with the landlord. Under the Single-tax it could never be said: "Land is *now*, for the first time, common property." But the truth is that, for the purposes of the Single-tax, land is to-day common property, the State being at once the source of title and the collector of taxes. Instead of sagaciously making the most of this fact, Mr. George chose to load down his cause with the disadvantage of sensationally proposing something that, expressed as he expresses it, seems to the farmer or owner of a homestead much like demanding a surrender of that which beyond all else is his dependence in life.

"To confiscate" is "to appropriate and turn in to the public treasury as a penalty." In controversies beyond number this inaccuracy in "Progress and Poverty" has been quoted as a proposal for despoliation by force at the hands of the majority.

Unless defined, the phrase "private property in land," like the word "socialism," may have a wide range of meaning. There are good grounds for the assertion that there is no such thing to-day as private property in land. Eminent domain permits no man to say of land to which he has title: "This is mine, against all the world." Nor can any landholder, confident in unassailable rights, maintain a nuisance on his land, nor build on it contrary to legal restrictions, nor avoid special tax levies for public improvements. Absolute, fixed, supreme right of private property in land is unknown. Of late, some attempt has been made by certain Single-taxers to draw a distinction between the meaning of "private property," which they explain they oppose, and "exclusive possession," which they say they uphold. But "Progress and Poverty" (page 257) tells us: "The truth is, and from this truth there

can be no escape, that there is and can be no just title to an *exclusive possession* of the soil."

While it was an essential part of Henry George's work to make plain the difference between property in land and property in the results of labor, to do so did not necessitate borrowing terms from the Communists. His thought was anti-Communist. In adopting and emphasizing the phraseology in question, he was not watchful to avoid objections; he was unnecessarily provoking objections. With force and truth he might have employed language the reverse of that which is associated with the popular impression of his aims—Communism and revolution. Single-taxers might state their purpose as being to make it possible, for all who wish, to acquire private property in land—the common inheritance from nature, the sovereign ownership of which by the people collectively is recognized in the state constitutions—under such conditions as would lead to its highest utilization, reduce the evils of land-lordism to a minimum, recognize the rights of communities in the unearned increment, and possibly lead to the exercise of the natural rights of all, while at the same time permitting the abolition of taxes on commodities.

(5) Mr. George's work being philosophical, ought he not to have taken cognizance of the practical difficulties in collecting ground rent *in full* by taxation?

He says (page 301): "The tax on land values" "possesses in the highest degree the element of certainty. It may be assessed and collected with a definiteness that partakes of the immovable and unconcealable character of the land itself. Taxes levied on land may be collected to the last cent." And elsewhere he speaks as if economic rent could be ascertained exactly and taxed fully. "Taxes may be imposed upon the value of land until all rent is taken by the State, with-

out reducing the wages of labor or the reward of capital one iota."—Page 297. "When all rent is taken by taxation for the needs of the community, then will the equality ordained by nature be attained."—Page 303. "The value of land can always be readily distinguished from the value of improvements."—Page 306. "But the whole value of land may be taken in taxation," etc.—Page 298.

Henry George is of another opinion today. In the "Standard" of August 17 last he says: "The only theoretical point worth discussing is as to how near the taking of the whole of economic rent it would be possible in practice to come. This is a point as to which I am not and never have been clear. Nor do I think that any one at present can say with anything like precision how near we may be able, when we get so far as to attempt it, to take the whole of economic rent for public purposes."

Convincing reasons might be given by Mr. George in support of his present position.

Who can draw the line dividing good will from land value? Good will, business connection, is built up by the labor of individuals. It is theirs. It may pertain not only to certain houses, but occasionally to entire localities, and in some cases to particular kinds of business. Yet the lion's share of it is uniformly taken from the tenant by the Land Lord. A Bowery retail shoe-dealer who built up a fine business, wholly independent of what was given him by the location, brought upon himself in six years an increase of rent from \$1,800 to \$4,000. Just as a branch of the produce business, carried on mainly in one downtown district in New York, increases the volume of its transactions from year to year, the Land Lords raise the rents, which are screwed out of the good will of the trade there united, and not out of land values. As he builds up his business, every

grocer and liquor dealer in the city reckons on paying an increasing proportion of his profits to his Land Lord. The New York business men who are legally blackmailed out of their good will by Land Lords number literally tens of thousands. Under the Single-tax, then, is what these Land Lords are robbing their tenants of to be "confiscated" by the State? Certainly not. Here is a line of thought pregnant with possibilities of vexation to those having the impression that the theory and practice of the Single-tax unlimited were examined to the last objection in "Progress and Poverty."

How strike the point between land values and improvement values? This is *not* done by assessors, any more than they get at the value of the personal property they assess. Consider the perplexities of the task. Observe the decrement in the values of houses. A large hotel in deserted Virginia City may be bought for less than a tenth of its cost. A hotel in New York which only fifteen years ago was built for two millions and a quarter, and which is in perfect repair, cannot now fetch a million. The New England farms offered at less than the cost of their improvements is a familiar story. There is also unearned increment in house values. A sudden rush in the season to a watering place sends up rents; house values have risen. The moment that Congress determines in what city the World's Fair shall be held, a rise will ensue in house values, as well as of land values, in the neighborhood of the site, and the house values will be sustained until after the fair. In view of such decrement and increment, and considering the difficulty of maintaining an equilibrium in the supply and demand for houses, how can assessors infallibly separate land values from improvement values? The judgment of dealers as to real estate values is not infrequently at fault, yet, un-

like assessors, they have a business incentive in making estimates. Note the surprises reported every week at the exchange. Where sales are much of a kind and of frequent occurrence, calculations may be close. But if property is offered to the value of which no index is afforded in the recent sale of a similar piece, no one knows within a large percentage what it may fetch. Guessing must be directed at once upon good will, land values, house values, other construction values, and labor values connected with the soil. The total thus hidden, how may land values be discerned?

The broader the view, the less likely is one to be clear as to how the whole of economic rent may be taken, a variety of causes rising to thwart the judgment. To a long-established landed proprietor, his acres have a value unknown to all others—a sentimental value. To a business man desirous of increasing the area of his establishment, an adjoining lot has a value that it has to no one else. To a hotel-keeper a certain site may be of greater value than to a confectioner. As in the case of vineyards, good will attaches even to agricultural lands. In all highly cultivated districts, labor values and land values, both considerable, intermingle. When a rise or fall in land values extends over a whole region, the margin to be left land-owners by assessors must be wide indeed. Though under the Single-tax speculative booms would be greatly modified, assessors could never catch at fleeting values in a fluctuating market, and should a general rise occur, with danger of a sudden decline, assessments could not promptly be brought up to passing estimates. A general fall in land values, such as has taken place in the past twenty years in New England, in England, and in Ireland, would be followed by a demand by land owners for a generous margin in assessments. A widely extended advance would be equally

a puzzle to assessors. In one of the northern Departments of France, a gradual rise since 1871 has brought values to double those in neighboring Departments; but sales are infrequent, and what valuations should be put on estates some of which have not been sold in a century, no one can say. Fifty years ago an estimate of the land values of France cost the government forty million dollars, and, although landholders everywhere are demanding a readjustment, the administration shrinks from preparing for a change in the land tax because of the enormous expense entailed.

At an outlay of millions, an irrigating company has redeemed 400,000 acres on Kern river, California, and is selling what ten years ago was desert land at as high as \$150 an acre. How much of that shall the State take? On the Pacific slope, farmers are working irrigated lands in coöperative clubs. How divine their economic rent? The stupendous project of irrigating the thousand million acres of arid Western lands—what of it and assessing the economic rent to come?

The Single-tax is the ideal *tax*. But, save in the case of virgin soil, can it free land? Up to what percentage may it justly be pushed? In view of the constant indistinguishable overlappings of private and public earnings in real estate values, may not a safe halting place on the taxation road be at wise Mr. Shearman's 65 per cent of apparent community values? And if the tax stops there or thereabout, vacant land will not be freed, since the tax must in equity rest at the same point on all lands.

But, could it be sent up to 100 per cent, would such a land tax from any point of view be just? Yesterday you, the majority, saw no difference between land and other property, and promised to protect all citizens in their rights. Today you will lay hold of and divide among you what, under sanction of your laws, some

unfortunates have exchanged their earnings for. And where find your precedent? One day you licensed liquor dealers. The next, in a paroxysm of virtue, you rescinded licenses and broke in the heads of liquor barrels. One day you welcomed distillers to your State; they were capitalists giving work to the poor. The next you voted for prohibition and destroyed the value of the distilleries. One day you were pleased to use oleomargarine as a cheap substitute for butter. Another you submitted to the dictation of a rival interest and crushed out the new industry, robbing the manufacturers of their capital.

Twentieth Century, February 13, 1889.

*WHEREIN "PROGRESS AND POVERTY" IS
WEAK.*

BY J. W. SULLIVAN.

III.

Henry George has an alternative for the Single-tax: "We might assume on the part of the community the formal ownership of land, and let it out from time to time to the highest bidder." If so—

(6) Is it not strange that Mr. George, a practical man, has ignored the part that in this country compensation for some land might play in hastening better times for the poor and demonstrating the general benefits to come with the substitution, so far as possible, of rent as public revenue for taxes on the products of industry?

Our concern is with the future. Expediency urges the most direct means to an end of all legalized extortion. Much of the land in private hands in this country is yet cheap. Why not agitate buying back to the public domain, and homestead leasing, much of the land

now held on speculation? Why not challenge the American conscience as to the social crime of denying our citizens the right to land, and the social crime of allowing land to be withheld from use? And as a means of getting the purchase money, why not join with those who, in the light of rough-hewn justice, are calling for an income tax on the unearned fortunes of our millionaires?

One of Henry George's reasons for opposing compensation is founded on an error of his political economy. He believes that in case of compensation the burden of interest charges would be equal to the present rent. But, as has been seen, with land free and the power of production shared in by all, interest would decline. On this score, objection to compensation could not stand, even were it proposed to buy out all Land Lords. Again, according to the teachings of "Progress and Poverty," the unearned increment is sure to increase with increased population. What it may be in twenty years no one can foresee. It ought to leave far in the rear the cost of even general compensation now. But the proposition here advanced, it will be observed, is not to buy out all land owners. It is simply to secure in every part of the country a growing area of public land, an entering wedge for the system of making economic rent stand for taxes.

The value of any programme for Single-taxers lies in the opportunities it affords for the discussion of the fundamental principles of their economic faith and the probabilities it offers for a speedy exemplification of the Single-tax in practice. The policy dictated by Henry George extends neither inducement. It sinks the ultimate object of free land men behind the party questions of the day. The party of protection, the party of free trade, either will welcome the visionary they do not understand if he will but wed himself to the party's

present purposes. And as Single-taxers separate to join the old parties, they do so to take part in an interminable game of see-saw on stale issues, in the hubbub over which the voices of radicals will be lost. The route through the abolition of the present system of federal taxation to land value taxation lies through national party action. No step can be taken until an entire party is converted. With every step then taken, if any are ever so taken, landlordism will be concentrated and fortified. The further this programme is followed, the greater the obstacle finally to be encountered. The weakness of the programme is seen in the immediate effect of its dictation by the George machine. Single-tax clubs have disbanded or have become inactive, no longer are there public meetings such as characterized the days when Anti-Poverty societies were forming, and the old-time spirit has departed from the movement. But it *has* put Henry George at the head of a machine.

Through compensation, municipal public lands and county public lands might soon be possible. In agitating for them, the land question could everywhere be made a local question. The vacant lot would be seen to be a public shame and injury. The spectacle of a piece of unused land and an idle man willing to work, with the power in the community of bringing the two together—that were sufficient for never-ending agitation. To the manufacturer seeking a site for his business could be offered the opportunity of taking public land on lease. To his life-long neighbors could the landless man urge his right to live and his equal rights with them in the land about his birthplace. In object lessons like these lies work to enliven Single-tax clubs and something tangible to inspire the laborer with hope and encouragement. The policy of moving direct to the land through leasing, and compensation where ne-

cessary, promises early results. In every community are men who, opposing "confiscation" and in whom the inch-in-a-century process of tax abolition arouses but a languid interest, will uphold any righteous scheme for making equal rights directly practicable and for taking the future unearned increment for public uses. The cattle men of the Plains, now occupying public land illegally, could find profit in their business on paying twenty to thirty millions a year rent. The land of the Indian reservations now being opened, most of which is stolen under the present system, could be justly awarded on lease at auction. Unopened Western coal, petroleum, and gold and silver bearing lands, to which, by Mr. George's admission in Denver, the Single-tax would be difficult to apply, might be opened through leasehold, to the discouragement of the monopolies now building up in the new States and Territories. All over this union, in the neighborhood of the cities, are low-class lands, which, once under public control, could be let to the workers; and no land long remains poor after it has become the garden plot of the laborer; and rapid transit to such districts would soon follow a demand for it.

The tax abolition programme was, perhaps, the best possible to be recommended for England, with its thirty-five thousand landed proprietors, forty years ago, in the time of Dove, in the era following the adoption of a free-trade policy, in the infancy of the use of steam and electricity. But in 1890, in a country where the landowners number millions, where the party which holds protection as the one ingenious American system of making everybody well-to-do is successful, where tariff reform to the smallest extent is a matter of doubt year by year, where free trade is but the dream of a few theorists, every condition is a reason for those who are in earnest to take the way to

free land by going around and behind the mountain that lies in the way—the present taxation system and the determination of landowners to defend their property—and not by removing the mountain in shovelfuls. Give labor access to the soil, demonstrate the workableness of substituting economic rent for other taxes, and tariffs and all other clumsy and costly methods may be abandoned. Like weapons of war displaced by new inventions of proved value, they would go to rust.

(7) Has Henry George made it clear that economic rent is natural and a permanent factor in political economy?

If he has, the present controversy over that question might be settled by reference to the passages in which he treats of real rent. According to his theory, the land value tax is to free to laborers all unused land. In doing so, it will bring about, first, the abolishment of that form of rent which may be called toll—the price paid for access to monopolized land, no matter what the produce; second, the destruction of speculative land values; and, third, a rapid rise in the margin of cultivation, or in other words a heavy shrinkage in the rent of land in use. The question now being debated is, would this shrinkage continue on to zero? Can the student of "Progress and Progress," pointing to his text, prove that it would not? Can he refute the position taken by the supporters of the occupancy-and-use theory of landholding, that there are enough first-class opportunities in nature for all laborers, and that rent, like interest, is solely the result of the monopoly of vacant land? With land free, would population increase in large centres as is described pages 170-188, or would an entirely different form of society arise—that of people coöperating in equality in many separate communities? If so, would there be rent? "Progress

and Poverty" would be the stronger were this point well covered.

Twentieth Century, February 27, 1889.

*WHEREIN "PROGRESS AND POVERTY" IS
WEAK.*

BY J. W. SULLIVAN.

IV.

(8) In describing his philosophical ideal of society, does Henry George consistently adhere to his first principle?

Society would thus approach the ideal of Jeffersonian democracy, the promised land of Herbert Spencer, the abolition of government. But of government only as a directing and repressive power. It would at the same time and the same degree become possible for it to realize the dream of Socialism. . . . Government could take upon itself the transmission of messages by telegraph, as well as by mail, of building and operating railroads, as well of opening and maintaining common roads. . . . We could establish public baths, museums, libraries, gardens, lecture rooms music, and dancing halls, theatres, universities, technical schools, shooting galleries, playgrounds, gymnasiums, etc. Heat, light, and motive power, as well as water, might be conducted through our streets at public expense; our roads lined with fruit trees; discoverers and inventors rewarded, scientific investigations supported; and in a thousand ways the public revenues made to foster efforts for the public benefit. . . . Government would change its character, and would become the administration of a great coöperative society."—Page 326.

In treating of the land, Mr. George is an individualist, telling us how each may get his share of an object to which all have equal rights. In relation to industry he is here a Socialist and there an individualist, failing, however, to place before his reader a guiding principle by which it may be determined when Socialism is just and feasible and when individualism. If the

theatres, shooting galleries, and dancing halls are to be run by government, why not the daily newspapers, the great combination retail stores, and the beer saloons? If the technical schools, universities, and gymnasiums, why not the restaurants and hotels? If fruit is to be grown by law, why not grain? If the railroads are to be built and operated by industrial armies, why not have the government work the coal mines and the petroleum beds, and even the flouring mills, the hat factories, and the breweries?

(9) Could he not have found in the principle of equal rights and hands off—the Single-tax-unlimited principle—the true one for a government in regard to all social functions?

What is sought first by free-land men in the land-value tax is the equalization of opportunities, the disposal of the revenue being a different question. Disregarding this latter fact, and believing that the State income from rent would far surpass the ordinary needs of government, Henry George went on to provide ways and means for disbursing the public funds, and so drifted into a State Socialism. And mark the inconsistency. Lest there might be a needless extension of government machinery he would not have the State let out land to the highest bidders in lots to suit, (page 291,) but, indifferent to the dangers of a colossal and complicated bureaucracy, the like of which has never been attempted by any nation, he would put in the hands of public officers the administration of every monopoly save that of agricultural and building land, together with innumerable duties in no wise pertaining to the functions of government. To get at this doctrine, what is his starting-point—justice? or a conception of social utility differing in nothing from the principles of State Socialism? or a desire to get rid of the surplus?

The abolition of artificial monopolies and the equalization of rights in all natural monopolies—to this end logically leads the thought by which has been erected the Single-tax system. To abolish artificial monopolies nothing more is required than to abrogate the laws that have given them existence. Wipe from the statute books the tariff laws, and most of the great trusts will disappear. Place all men in the same relationship to the common carriers of the country, and other trusts will go. Rescind the laws which impart to the national banks their advantages, and their monopoly will pass away. When the work of undermining the legal supports of this class of monopolies is finished, what others will remain? None but those having their foundation in land. If the Single-tax principle is then to be followed the problem presented in any given case will be as to how the public may take to itself the value of the monopoly in question, while to private enterprise is left every detail of construction and operation in connection with the monopoly itself. Only through such a course might we find ourselves on the way to the goal of Jefferson and Spencer. That goal attained, government would neither push men down nor lift them up. Its assistance would be negative. It would no more than guarantee rights. So far from being the administration of a great coöperative society, it would let men free to work alone, as is their right, or to coöperate, if they were so pleased. As a fiscal agent, its duty would be circumscribed to returning to its producers the various forms of rent. Whether the best method of returning that rent—which is wages, collectible only in that form—would be in employing it to meet public expenses, in lieu of present taxation, is a matter for separate consideration.

“Progress and Poverty” presented in popular form

the unanswerable claims of all men to equal rights in the land, and it gave the reasons why land values should not go to Land Lords. But, that done, points on which the author's reputation as a thinker were staked were badly covered, tenable objections to his inconsistent philosophy were not covered at all, and the introduction of points non-essential to his argument served to lead his reader astray.

The success of "Progress and Poverty"—in the past—it is not difficult to account for. To the literary world it has the charm of a novel by Jules Verne—sensation; poetry; grace of diction; a rhythmical movement of massive sentences; a fascinating appearance of weightiness; sentimental dissertations arranged after the forms of logic; a pleasing picture of government paternalism; the production of a panacea for poverty which, to the readers of the "book of the season," among whom "Progress and Poverty" first became popular, was no more likely of realization than navigation of the air in Jules Verne's imaginary balloons. The masses, however, read in the book their rights to the land. With them its success was due much to the same causes as for a time made the order of the Knights of Labor so great a power. In the passing wave of the people's revolt, the one, as the other, was the best thing of the kind at hand. To hastily formed industrial organizations the Knights brought the methods of the trades union, and for a time they flourished. To the excited workingmen of the country, "Progress and Poverty" bore in fervid strains the message of work provided by nature, and all its teachings were indiscriminately extolled to the skies. When the Knights numbered a million, "Progress and Poverty" counted its highest sales. As its weaknesses were demonstrated, the secret order declined. As the propositions of "Progress and Poverty" were subjected to crit-

ical examination, the difference between its author's promises and his performance became evident. The Knights, earnestly reforming themselves, will doubtless figure again in the labor movement as a great power. But the clever compiler of "Progress and Poverty" has proved "rigid wise." He will admit of no error in his book; he will take up with no truth not taught in his pages; and to quickly bring about the millennium described in it he will fall into step with the Democratic party! Therefore will the men who keep abreast of the discussion in economics lay his work on unused shelves, and therefore will men like those who built up the Labor party of 1886—who will be heard from again—leave him in the rear, a stranded politician.

Twentieth Century, March 6, 1890.

HENRY GEORGE'S DENIAL.

BY J. W. SULLIVAN.

In his denial of plagiarism from Dove, made in the "Standard" October 19 last, Henry George might have scored strong points in his favor could he have truthfully made a few brief statements such as these: "From the time I was presented with a copy of 'The Theory of Human Progression' I have endeavored to make the merits of the work known. In public and in private, as my associates will testify, I have spoken of Dove frequently. As to the theory of the Single-tax, so far from claiming any merit not my own in connection with its development, it has been my constant effort to put before the public its history from its beginnings. And as to destroying the old political economy, I have never said that I had done anything more than avail myself of the work of the critics of it who preceded me

and who had already built up the new political economy. I have but laid claim to collating, editing, elaborating what others before me had fully thought out and put on record. I fear no charge of concealment or plagiarism. Candor has marked my course." Truly, this kind of a reply would have stood him in better stead than all the ten thousand words of his remarkable denial, characterized as it was by a display of the fencing master's coolness and the tactics of the controversialist.

Reference to this denial, it may here be stated, has not been made heretofore, for the reason that some inquiry as to the sources of the other parts of his book and as to what advances, if any, Henry George had made beyond the economists who preceded him, was necessary to a full understanding of the circumstances inviting the main accusation against him. After an insight into the method he practiced in preparing his chapters devoted to "shattering" "the current political economy," the reader might the more clearly see how strong were the probabilities of an adherence to that method on to the end—how it was possible that his entire volume was composed of ready-made material.

For many reasons Henry George could not make a claim for candor play any part in his denial. First, we have wrung from him the remarkable admission that a copy of the "Theory of Human Progression," the only known English work extant from which he might have obtained his land doctrines in their fullness, had been in his possession for seven years and he could not recollect that he had ever made public mention of it in this country. To this it should be added that if he ever referred to it in private none of his many former associates who are now out with him are aware that he did, and of those up to date still in with him none has thus far said that he did. With supporter and opponent

alike calling for the writings of science on the Single-tax, it had never occurred to him in all those years to produce that book. When he sat on the Anti-Poverty stage and was time and again greeted as the "inspired leader," the "master," the "great detective of political economy," and when all the drift of the bountiful praises showered on him was to the effect that he was the untutored philosophic genius who had worked the puzzle that so long had defied the schoolmen, the existence of Dove, whom he "had frequently mentioned on the other side of the Atlantic," never entered his mind. Yet Dr. R. V. O'Neill, of this city, who had read the "Theory" fifteen years before, informs me that just about the time of the formation of the Anti-Poverty Society he wrote to Henry George asking him if he had ever seen Dove's book—his letter, however, never being replied to or published.

Other facts, serving to indicate that one of Henry George's saving qualities is secretiveness, are brought up in this denial. The service done him by the hitherto unheard-of pamphlets of Ogilvie and Spence could not have been more opportune had they been kept by for the emergency. Five years before, in accepting from Mr. Dove's son a copy of "The Elements of Political Science," which contains the Single-tax theory in concise form, he promised to write a monograph on Dove—and never found time to do it. Well may he state "he knows in advance" that the younger Mr. Dove would consent to a republication of the "Theory," for Mr. Dove has lately written me that he not only gave that consent to Mr. George several years ago but told him he would be much obliged indeed if Mr. George would reprint any part of either of his father's works. All this, when subsequent to that request of Mr. Dove, a corps of writers, some volunteers and some on salary, were ransacking in every direction

in search of data for Mr. George's "Land and Labor Library," but without getting a word from Henry George about Patrick Edward Dove. Mr. George's indisposition to give Dove's publication to the world seems still to cling to him. The "small edition" of the "Theory" projected in his denial, but not since heard of, was to be issued at \$3 a volume; Mr. George's jobbers, the Concord Printing Company, will contract to furnish him with 1,000 copies, of the form he described, for \$700.

Henry George again brings his candor into question in asserting that he has made no pretensions to originating the system the support of which has caused its advocates to be known as "George" men. Whether he has or not may be left to readers of the book and to common fame. A well-known Single-taxer, writing that "a number of the members" of his club "thought the case against Mr. George" made out in my first article "a pretty strong one," speaks of himself as "an earnest believer in the reform of which I supposed him to be the father." In November last, in Toronto, the chairman of a meeting in introducing Henry George spoke of him, perhaps perfunctorily, as the inventor of the Single-tax. Mr. George's explanation that he was not—it was after these articles had been begun—was considered by the local newspaper editors noteworthy enough to call for special headlines in the notices of the meeting.

But the most significant fact in Henry George's denial is his strenuous endeavor to work a confusion as to the historical status of the Single-tax theory. Adroit player that he is with words and facts, he does it by telling the truth—or rather enough of the truth to suit his purpose.

He says: "Not to speak of Frenchmen, there has been a constant succession of English writers to state,

with more or less clearness and definiteness, that property in land was essentially different from property in things produced by labor," etc. True in fact, this is not true in the implication that all this "succession" had in some way or other taught more or less of the Single-tax system of economic doctrine. Mr. George had not "space to go over the list even so far as it is known" to him, though the unsuspecting reader might have believed that he would have strengthened his case by naming at least some of the list. Why he did not do so we shall presently see.

The argument of Henry George's denial is a *reductio ad absurdum*. It is to the effect that if his pretensions are to collapse in presence of Dove's, then Dove's pretensions must collapse before Herbert Spencer's, and Spencer's when Professor Ogilvie is heard from, and finally the latter's when Thomas Spence turns up. Here, again, so far as he goes, Mr. George's facts—save as to Herbert Spencer's being a Single-taxer—are true. Several writers whom he could not possibly have heard of, and the later of whom could hardly have seen the pamphlets of the former, have taught the Single-tax. Hence Mr. George would have it seem absurd to say they were not all original. And so his own title to genius is established.

But had Henry George gone on here to the end with the truth, there would have been another collapse—that of his twelve-column argument. For, so far from being impossible, his line of collapses is easily made a certainty. Every student of political economy will unhesitatingly say that, if claims should be set up on the part of Dove, Ogilvie, or Spence that he had first proposed the Single-tax system, those claims, in the light of fact, would fail. And all such students know that the Single-tax set of principles did not crop up at different times here and there over the earth, the inde-

pendent product of many minds, as Henry George tries to make it appear. But, in passing, it may be remarked that even if they had, that fact would not prove that Henry George did not quarry Dove's book to get materials for his own.

Let us complete Mr. George's half statements. Let us classify his succession of writers and see where they belong. Let us see why it is hardly within the range of possibility that any economist back to the time of Spence, in 1775, and even a decade or two before that, should have re-originated the tenets of the Single-taxers.

The history of the Single-tax system of political economy is open to all who will read it, and is as plain as any record ever written. In outline, it is follows: The Encyclopedia of Diderot and d'Alembert, issued in 1756, contained two articles, one on "Farmers" and one on "Grain," written by Francois Quesnay, a man of scientific attainments, who when surgeon to Louis XV., was called by him "my thinker." Embodied in these articles was the thought soon expanded into a system by the French Physiocrats, or Economists, as the first school of Single-taxers was called. Quesnay's views evoked much discussion, and ten years later he and Turgot, who afterward became minister of finance, each published their principal works, in both of which the Single-tax system was elaborately expounded. Then followed from other Frenchmen a shoal of writings on the subject, which was a popular one up to the time of the Revolution. A list of the principal of these writers may be learned at any public library. Some of them are named, and the Physiocratic system is described, in the Encyclopedia Britannica, in the article on "Political Economy." In 1764, Adam Smith, with whose great work Henry George is perfectly familiar, spent much time in Paris in company with Quesnay

and his associates. In writing the "Wealth of Nations" Smith availed himself of his knowledge of the works of the Physiocrats, adopting Turgot's celebrated four maxims of taxation, and his analyses of price, value, the division of labor, and of distribution into wages, profits, and rent. Chapter 2, book V., of Smith's work contains, with his comments, adverse and otherwise, a statement of the Economists' Single-tax doctrines. Either from Smith's works or from French sources could any writer mentioned in George's denial—Spence, Ogilvie, or McNulty—have obtained knowledge of the Single-tax. It had passed into literature before their time—though it must be admitted into a department of literature not even now read by everybody who talks of it. Henry George knew all this when in his denial he brought out his references to the English pamphleteers—Spence, of 1776, and Ogilvie, of 1782—who had taken up with the ideas of the Physiocrats, then not only being widely discussed in France but about that time brought partially into practice under Turgot. For of the Physiocrats George says (page 305) in "Progress and Poverty": They "proposed just what I have proposed."

In England, the teachings of the Physiocrats found little acceptance. In the chapter on that school of philosophy, in the "Guide to the Study of Political Economy," Luigi Cossa is unable to quote from any standard English work supporting the Physiocratic doctrines, though his book, a survey of economics in general, gives an index to the works of more than four hundred economists.

About 1848, there was in France a new school of Physiocrats. Singularly enough, another economist from Great Britain was on terms of friendship with some of its adherents, and to one of them, Victor Cousin, he dedicated his first work, published in 1850. This

man was Patrick Edward Dove. His production was "The Theory of Human Progression." The Single-tax part of the work was based on the Physiocratic doctrines as to rent and the *impot unique*, and Dove's exposition of the nature and cause of rent in his second work is precisely that of the Physiocrats. But Dove's applications of the theory, as well as his historical references, relate to Great Britain.

Thus we see completely effected the collapse of Single-tax devisers that Mr. George would fain make preposterous. The *reductio ad absurdum* on which he staked his case has collapsed. And thus we see the danger to his pretensions that lies in any list of the Single-tax writers, French and English, who preceded him. They are but the supporters, commentators, rehabilitators, of a system set up nearly a century and a half ago. But, of course, if Mr. George wishes merely to cite noted men who have wrestled with the land question and seen that the equal rights of men must apply to the land, he may write out a list reaching back to the beginnings of history — Herbert Spencer, Rousseau, Hume, Blackstone, Sir Thomas More, Pope Gregory the Great, several of the Fathers of the Church, the Gracchi, Moses. But these were not Single-taxers.

The work of Patrick Edward Dove failed to secure a popular reading, though favorable notices which it received in leading magazines and newspapers are reproduced in his "Elements of Political Science," printed in 1854. Why it did not become a handbook with the masses it is not difficult to understand. It was published anonymously, a fact unfavorable to its sale, especially from the bookseller's point of view; its style is barren of devices to catch the popular taste; the only edition printed in England was of an expensive form; the author, simply a man of letters, did not push its sale or become a platform propagandist; after the dis-

bandment of the Chartist clubs, which had taken place two years before, a reaction set in unfavorable to further radical agitation; not long after its publication came England's war with Russia; and next followed her long-continued excitement over the question of our slavery, and then of our war, her interest in each being but little less than our own. Had "Progress and Poverty" been published at any time between 1850 and 1865, or even 1870, what most likely would have been its fate?

At least two copies of "The Theory of Human Progression" found their way to San Francisco and into two of the three principal libraries there. The catalogue of the Mechanics' Institute Library published in 1874 contains the title of the book, as does also that of the Free Public Library for 1882, the present librarian having no doubt it had been there for some years previous. Henry George, we are told by one of his biographers, "lived in the libraries" during the two years that he was writing "Progress and Poverty." And this may be believed, since he refers to forty authors in his index and quotes many more in the body of the book. He had time and opportunity to thumb over every work in the libraries named classified under "History," "Sociology," "Political Science," "Political Economy," etc., etc.

To return to Henry George's denial. Lack of candor is conspicuous in his unfortunate assertion that the "Theory of Human Progression" "is in the main a metaphysical work," with references to the "principles which ought to govern men to land" "hardly more than incidental," and not going "any more into detail than is shown in the extracts" made by me. This must perforce be met with a flat contradiction. Nearer the truth was the bright Irishman who, laughing at this statement of Mr. George, said to me: "It's all plain

reading!" and the German who, asking me if I had yet read Karl Marx's chief work, remarked, with a meaning, that it contained some "incidental references" to "Capital." Of the scores of men who have read the "Theory" in the past four months and spoken to me about it, there is not one but who has echoed: "It's all there;" and every one of them knows whether Dove's book has been misdescribed by Henry George or by me. Last summer, before I had heard of Dove, a reputable writer for the press occupied some of his spare time in copying the "parallels" in the works of George and Dove. He tells me he intends to publish them, as he traced more than four hundred and fifty.

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.

BY J. W. SULLIVAN.

Let us now review the case:

(1) Henry George set out to write down Malthus. The moment he took pen in hand to do so he established a bond of honor between himself and his prospective reader. If he was but to draw up a recapitulation of the more telling arguments already made against the doctrines of Malthus, his reader was to have a right to be made aware of it, the more so since the reader especially addressed was layman to the economic schools. A right at once existed by which he should be put upon a plane of information with the economists themselves as to the sources of Henry George's argumentative points. Else undeserved credit might naturally be accorded the writer for powers of penetration, for thought-work performed, and by inference for ability to plan, to foresee, and to lead. But as we have seen, as is stated by Professor Bonar, the argu-

ments used by Henry George had been every one employed by Herbert Spencer and William Godwin. Mr. George's thorough acquaintance with Spencer's economic philosophy needs no more than bare mention. His knowledge of Godwin's work on population is shown in his plentiful use of the illustrations, dissertations, and historical references to be found in that ancient and neglected book. Though he did bring unusual gifts of expression and the equipment for book-making acquired by him as printer and editor, he did not bring one new thought to the discussion begun by Malthus. Pertinent, then, are these questions: Did he do his duty by his reader? Did he give credit where credit was due? Or did he aim at gathering for his own brow laurels which justly belonged to others?

(2) Henry George set out to write down the wages fund theory. In this task he assumed from beginning to end the attitude of one conducting an original inquiry. He finished it without throwing a single ray of new light on the subject. He did not mention those who had done so and whose arguments he used. He led his reader to infer that he was overturning the theory, when really it had been toppled over long before. Yet, referring today to that appropriation of honors wholly due his predecessors, he asserts that he "shattered" what he found to be "the current political economy." Now, on learning, as he has done in these pages, the extent of Henry George's participation in this work of shattering, what will his once uninformed reader say? Was he or was he not duped as to the sources of the thought when he read that part of "Progress and Poverty" treating of the wages theories? Did he understand then as he knows now how much Henry George drew from others and how little he worked out himself? Is his opinion of Henry George's intellectual abilities the same now as it was then?

The only writer on political economy that I know of that places Henry George among economists is R. R. Bowker, in his little "Economics for the People," but he is careful to speak of George as "giving new color to old doctrines." In the February, 1890, "Popular Science Monthly," Horace White directs attention to the fact that of the several hundred professors of political economy in the colleges and universities of the civilized world not one, so far as he has heard, has given adhesion to the Single-tax doctrine, yet cowardice or self-interest can hardly be the cause, since among them are Socialists in monarchies, radicals in conservative countries, and free-traders in the midst of bigoted protectionists. Has the peculiar position into which Henry George has foisted himself before the public as the prophet of a new ism of the Single-tax creed, together with the peculiar reputation he must have gained for himself among the political economists, through his bold and uncredited use of others' thoughts, got anything to do with this disinclination to support his movement? Seeing that his plumes are but borrowed, have they refused to admit of his leadership?

(3) Henry George, knowing something of the Single-tax as taught by Quesnay and Turgot in France, and much of it as given in Adam Smith's English work, set out to rewrite the system. For ten years he had been reading, writing, and speaking on the land question, and exploring every available channel in literature relating to the subject. In two of three libraries accessible to him, catalogued, was Dove's old book containing the Single-tax propositions in full. George produced a work which resembles certain of the contents of Dove's in scores, nay, hundreds of particulars. To believe that Henry George never saw that work of Patrick Edward Dove requires one to set aside circumstantial evidence of a nature that ordinarily would be

as convincing as direct evidence. Briefly these are the circumstances: The striking similarities in the contents of the books—in thoughts, language, references, and illustrations; Henry George's opportunity to use the older one; his knowledge of early Single-tax literature as an incentive to look for more and a guide in seeking it; his ease of access to the catalogue references to the "Theory;" his habit of appropriating ideas from other men's books without credit; his customary implied and expressed assumption of originality without ground; his long continued silence as to the older book—a silence which in appearance differed in nothing at first from the craftiness of the self-seeker and later from the silence of guilt; his disingenuous denial of the charge of plagiarism, made up as it was of the artifices of sophistry; his misleading description of Dove's book, since, whatever else is in it, he evaded the point that in it are also all the essential principles and postulates relating to land and property to be found in "Progress and Poverty," and his law of human progress as well; the probability that in searching in the libraries for works on the law of human progress he would find index references to "The Theory of Human Progression;" his failure to carry political economy a single point beyond the authors whom he used; his weakness in essaying the solution of any social problem other than the land question, and his inability to see that his wished-for confiscation through the Single-tax is impossible.

If, from the evidence given, the reader should be convinced, or regard it as highly probable, that Henry George's fame as a philosopher is unmerited, what follows? That the free land movement, or even the Single-tax movement, has no truth for its foundation? That because one man has thrust himself to the fore,

insisting that his selfish leadership must be followed, therefore those who have worked on the same lines with him have reason to be disheartened? That because it has been developed that Henry George is working for himself and hugging to his crude but set policy rather than striving for the evolution of truth in political science and political economy, therefore the cause of social regeneration should suffer? No. Nothing more has happened than that a point has been reached at which they may lift the movement out of a "stage of emotional insanity," by freeing themselves from a "species of unreasoning man worship," and casting aside whatever of narrowness and shiftiness is associated with the man. It is a time to halt and reflect. Are they going to follow the dictates of their own common sense or will they blindly pin their faith to a leader who ever moves in a devious course? If there are those who will go on with him, surely the past promises them but little satisfaction in the future. Can they make their leader out? Was he most wise when he started the crusade or when he set up the machine? Could he be sincere when he railed at the stock-gambling millionaire for profiting from the business methods of Wall street, and equally sincere when he lauded the Johnstown millionaire for grabbing away the land from the panic-stricken fugitives fleeing the death-floods of Conemaugh? Did he mean it when a year or so ago he denounced the Democratic party as hopelessly corrupt, or does he mean it now when he smuggles himself into that party and declares it to be the party of the people? When does he speak from his heart—when he spasmodically sings Burns's "Man to man shall brothers be," or when he relentlessly boycotts mention of Dr. McGlynn and the Anti-Poverty Society? Is it truly his faith that "God wills it," as he tells us in a tractated speech on free land, or is it to come

about by a thimble-rig policy? Did he love the Labor party most when he encouraged its members in his speech on election night, 1887, or when, a few short months later, he deliberately cut its throat? Does he believe in the voice of the people, or does he think it ought to be wisely overridden, as when he successively prevented the proposed Single-tax conventions at Chicago, New York, and Washington? Does he deem it best to depend upon the moral and religious sentiments of men or upon such political dickering as has been described by the Secretary of the National United Labor party? Does he wish his orators to say he is a profound, original philosopher, as they did last fall at the Brighton Beach Hotel dinner, or merely that he is a propagandist with push, who has given striking expression to certain doctrines not new and succeeded in getting men to listen to them, as they did a few weeks ago at the Metropolitan Hotel dinner? Was he just as conscious of guilt when he devoted three pages of his paper to denying and wriggling out of the charge of plagiarism from Dove, where he could make it seem there might be doubt, as he must have been when he failed to reply to the charge of his plagiarisms from the economists who had written against Malthus and those who had exploded the wages fund theory, where the evidence of his appropriations was irrefragable? Were his peculiar force of character and his powerful mental grasp of far-off results best shown last year, when he turned his back on his independent supporters and joined the politicians, for the sake of the cause, or so far back as ten years ago, when he decided to print in his book much ancient matter, and, claiming it as his own, set up as prophet, for the sake of the cause? And the Socialists?—eulogizing Socialists in '86, ejecting Socialists from his party in '87, and fraternizing with Socialists in Paris in '89, what can be his real feel-

ing toward the Socialists, save to use and throw away?

But the great body of social reformers are no longer bothering to make Henry George out. Even the free land men have mostly passed him by. According to so prominent a land nationalizer as Dr. Houghton two-thirds of the Single-tax clubs of Ohio have either been disbanded or are inanimate. As has lately been said by Mr. Pentecost without contradiction, all the Single-tax clubs of New York save two are practically dead. These are examples of a paralysis of the movement which began with the dictation of a questionable policy by the George machine. Among the labor unionists who set Henry George up for Mayor in 1886, his name is hardly ever heard. The leaders who once spoke and worked for him would nearly all decline to do so now. Today Henry George's New York associates are mostly either politicians or fad reformers willing to use him for his supposed influence—men to whom the emancipation of labor is a phrase without meaning. And his supporters are mostly men living out of New York who admire the Henry George with a pen in his hand—a man of beautiful sentiment and resourceful art.

Georgeism is already a thing of the past. Henry George, the philosopher, never was. Henry George, the politician, has sought his place and found it. In this fact is encouragement for the men who made the movement of 1886 a possibility and those who so earnestly worked for the National United Labor party. It is to be hoped that on a fresh start their standard bearer, if they are to have one, will be neither more nor less than a man—neither a prophet nor a prophet impersonator.

These articles have been printed in a publication having for its motto, "Hear the other side," and extending to opponents an invitation to present their

views on any subject discussed in its columns. In this case, with the exception of Henry George's denial, nothing that could be called counter-argument or counter-statement has come from the other side, and no correction of any quotation or statement of fact made by me has been offered. The first two or three articles drew forth about a score of letters from protesting correspondents, but the little storm they raised soon passed by, and since then the tone of the letters to the editor touching on the subject has in general been that of approval. Some of the letters at first received were written by fair-minded and intelligent persons, to whom I regret having given pain. Yet it is now a pertinent question whether they do not think that indignation ought to be directed against the author of a deception rather than against him who exposes the deceit. Others of the protesting letter writers were violent men—with pen and ink. To them I promise to make public reparation for the wrong they assert I have done, if political economists ever tender Henry George a dinner in honor of his original contributions to the science; or if he is ever again greeted in the terms in which he repeatedly allowed the speakers to address him at the Anti-Poverty meetings; or if any scholarly Georgeite ever writes to me that there is no evidence of plagiarism from Godwin, for example, in "Progress and Poverty;" or if any Central Labor Union ever gives Henry George another nomination; or if any reader of Dove's work ever declares that Henry George's description of it was not evasive; or if any admirer can now read his denial without being haunted with the suspicion that, to say the least, its argument was uncandid; or if any one of his orators is ever able to read to him in public the speech of the chairman at the Brighton Beach dinner without treating the audience to a roaring farce.