

NO man, I think, ever saw a herd of buffalo, of which a few were fat and the great majority lean. No man ever saw a flock of birds, of which two or three were swimming in grease, and the others all skin and bone. Nor in the savage life is there anything like the poverty that festers in our civilization. In a rude state of society there are seasons of want, seasons when people starve; but they are seasons when the earth has refused to yield her increase, when the rain has not fallen from the heavens, or when the land has been swept by some foe—not when there is plenty; and yet the peculiar characteristic of this modern poverty of ours is, that it is deepest where wealth most abounds.—HENRY GEORGE, in "The Crime of Poverty."

PAMPHLET NOTICES

A THOUGHTFUL WORK*

This is not an "easy" book—not at all light reading, so-called. This does not mean that Mr. Sinton fails to clearly explain his ideas and ideals. No fault can be found on that score. The Single Tax, an inadequate name, no doubt, is simple enough, for it has come to mean the right of all men to the use of the earth. But it involves many considerations not so obvious, and these considerations are what we know as political economy, a study which seems to have baffled some of the best minds of this and past generations.

First of all, how many working for this cause sense, as Mr. Sinton does, the tremendous change that its application to modern life would bring about? A change which Mr. Sinton tells us is so revolutionary that it "will make the Reds look White." Our author goes even further than this. He explains his belief that interest will disappear, that there will not only be no poor but no rich, that no one will gain by investment of wealth unless he himself also works. It may be objected that these considerations are largely academic; nevertheless they provide some interesting speculations. I remember many years ago when the late James MacGregor—peace to his ashes!—and I stopped before a building up town. I was a young man then and he was my mentor. He pointed to the building and said, "The Single Tax is an insidious proposal, young feller. When it comes to pass the value of every brick in this building will be cut in half." What other effect indeed could the wholesale freeing of the productive forces of the world have upon wealth in all its forms? It is something of this side of the question that Mr. Sinton sees and writes about.

He goes even further. Featuring the enormous impetus given to production by the removal of the shackles that bind it he declares that the change "would make wealth practically as free as air and water."

In a way no more startling book in advocacy of our cause has appeared in years. Somehow we are glad to get it. Perhaps it is not calculated to make converts—only exceptional souls are to be touched by such arguments. But it will stir our own believers, for he has taken us up into the very highest mountains and bade us behold a vision to which we have been too long unaccustomed, a vision too strong perhaps for the eyes of most.

The work is a series of letters written to friends, sometimes to resolve difficulties that have occurred to them. The work is compiled by Mabelle Hathaway Brooks.

Whether we agree or disagree with Mr. Sinton we find him always interesting and suggestive. There is more solid thinking in this little work than in dozens of volumes dealing with philosophy and economics. Bolton Hall accompanies his commendation of the work with a pledge to return the money if you don't like it. So take his dare.

—J. D. M.

*Spiritual Law and Economics Harmonized. By Walter I. Sinton. 206 pp. Soft cover. Price 75 cents. Published by the Author, San Francisco, Calif.

A NOVEL TREATMENT

"Light on the Land Question—the story of an Idea," is a pamphlet published by the United Committee at 11 Tothill Street, London, England, at six pence a copy. It is called "A Frank Inquiry into the Land Value Policy by the Man in the Street." It consists of 32 pages bound in stiff covers.

It reviews, we think, the course of reasoning which has been the experience of most of us—at all events, of many of us—in coming to a definite acceptance of the proposal. The Man in the Street who writes this pamphlet approaches the idea skeptically. At first he is intellectually repelled by the large claims made for it. He is suspicious that something is concealed that the advocates do not disclose, that the language is extravagant, that something is being put over on him, that something sinister lurks in the proposal. He says frankly that he was "irritated and annoyed."

He had been fooled so often, this Man in the Street, by preachers and politicians. When George says that the idea will find friends, those who will toil for it, suffer for it, and if need be die for it, he is even more skeptical. For he had fought in France and had been told this before as had the boys on many fronts—that here was something worth dying for. So he asked with some asperity of our Tothill friends if anybody had really ever died for it, and was told that the author himself might be said to have given his life for this truth.

Then the Man in the Street starts out on his inquiry, still suspicious and uneasy, fearing perhaps that he had got into a nest of fanatics. But he finds out that our friends are not fanatics, but argue with clearness and persuasiveness. So he examines one by one their various contentions. He is overcome by the inexorable logic. He tests every step in the process of their reasoning, taking nothing for granted, and emerges fully convinced, for he has answered to his own satisfaction every objection urged by the opponents.

It is a great pamphlet.

—J. D. M.

CORRESPONDENCE

ASKS SINGLE TAXERS AND SOCIALISTS TO UNITE

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Since the excitement of the election is now past, it should be possible and in order to discuss our proper relation to the Socialists on the merits of the case, without bias or prejudice.

As to the way matters stand in this country, should the Single Taxers and the Socialists join forces? Most assuredly they should, and for good reasons. The goal of both is the same, even if they don't know that much—as yet. But they will learn as they proceed and get into contact with reality.

The Socialists want to use Government power to establish and maintain co-operation in the production and distribution of wealth. The Single Taxer fights for individual freedom with equality of right in the land, and looks upon the requirements of co-operation as only incidental. Neither of them realizes that the Co-operative Commonwealth is an accomplished fact, brought about, not by any man's design or planning, but by natural evolution, and that all there is to do, and must be done, is to adjust the machinery of its organic parts so as to bring it into orderly functioning.

Look around and open your mind to what you see. Observe that an up-to-date Nation is now a vast co-operative estate on which every worker is producing wealth and service, directly and indirectly, for anybody, for everybody and for the estate as a whole, and taking his own requirement from the general supply, the free and open market, into which he delivers the product of his own labor, receiving and giving money, in one form or another, as receipt for what is given and taken.

When the land question becomes a fiscal question the money question becomes part of it. When land monopoly is disposed of, the money monopoly must go too, if individual freedom with perfect co-operation

is to be attained. On this the Single Taxers and the Socialists will be in unison.

Public ownership of public utilities is now looming large on the horizon, prematurely it seems to me, but there it is. On that issue the Single Taxers and the Socialists will be found in the same camp.

Public utilities exist for public service. Just what constitutes public service in a co-operative commonwealth? When a man takes charge and direction of a group of other men's labor, or otherwise serves the public, does he not become a public servant, rightfully subject to such rules and regulations as public safety and welfare may require, especially for those that work under his direction? If an important industry in private hands refuses to function satisfactorily to the public, may not the commonwealth take it over to be directed by its responsible servants. Does not that seem the inevitable course of economic evolution? Talk about your "right to run the business to suit yourself;" Who gave that right in a complex co-operating society? Liberty is fine in the academy and the wilderness, and was always the watchword of thieves and freebooters; but in the practical life of the people, rights and duties take precedence. Such is nature's Law.

The reason for the confusion of professional economists and the disagreement between Single Taxers and Socialists appears to be that the transformation of individualistic production into a co-operative organic system has come about by a process of natural evolution, unheralded, without human plan or purpose. Everybody played his part in it unconsciously, and nobody noticed the essential nature of what was taking place. But few seem yet aware of it until their attention is purposely directed to it. Its rapid and luxurious growth is still in the anarchistic stage, without intelligent and orderly direction to definite purpose. It is time it be studied, understood and put into such order as to serve the common welfare. Humanity's fate hangs thereon.

There are principles to be applied, sincere and earnest work to be done by both Single Taxers and Socialists. It will be time enough for them to split when the aims they have in common have been accomplished.

Fisk, Mo.

S. TIDEMAN.

A STRANGE STATEMENT

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Those good disciples of Henry George who were on the Resolutions Committee of the recent Henry George Congress in San Francisco, make a strange statement in their "Resolutions on Agriculture." They say, in their first Whereas, that "the increasing mechanization of agriculture has thrown many farmers out of employment."

The only way to throw farmers out of work is to take their farms from them; and farm machinery never did that. Who ever saw a farmer out of work while he had a farm? A farmer with a farm always has access to land—always has natural opportunities—always has plenty of work and usually very small pay for doing it.

"The trouble with the farmers" is not unemployment; it is robbery—legalized robbery—a robbery to which the farmer himself is a *particeps criminis*. And it is not machinery, but ground rent made private property that cuts down the "dirt farmer's" share of production and keeps him in poverty—ground rent which in justice is public property and should be used for public purposes—speculative ground rent, which drives him from the markets of civilization into the wilderness—capitalized ground rent, which extorts from him a price for a bit of God's land—land even at the verge of cultivation—and mortgages years of his labor to pay for it—periodical ground rent, which takes a part of every crop he raises and gives no return for it. It is taxation which gives ground rent to "the farmers who farm farmers"—It is taxation which not only gives public property to private persons, but also takes private property for public purposes; it is taxation which "protects" great landed estates from their share of public expenses, plunders the people and forces the farmer to sell low and buy high;

it is taxation which makes low wages and small profits—creates disemployment and destroys purchasing power—robs toiling producers and hungry consumers—all to enrich grasping landlords and gambling speculators.

No student of "Progress and Poverty" ought ever to admit that machinery produces unemployment. Neither should he admit that man, "the only animal that is never satisfied," can ever be unemployed for lack of work to do. The word *unemployment*, like the word *protection*, is a lying misnomer. There is no "problem of the unemployed." What is glibly called so is in fact the problem of disemployment—the problem of "enforced idleness." That problem Henry George solved fifty years ago—and discovered not only "The Cause," but also "The Remedy."

And—to digress a little—any disciple of our beloved teacher who calls those great discoveries "the theories of Henry George," ought immediately to give more study to the book and become wiser and more accurate in the use of terms.

Warren, Pa.

ASHER GEO. BEECHER.

PLEASED WITH MR. BROWN'S RECEPTION

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

It was cheering to read in your last number that James R. Brown has been receiving such cordial response to his talks in the East. The East seems to be better for Single Tax speakers than Kansas is. The last time that John Z. White was here he spoke in the rooms of the Chamber of Commerce and there were only about twenty persons in the audience and only one of those was a member of the Chamber.

Mr. Brown said, the field is ripe unto the harvest but few be the reapers therein. Mr. Brown apparently has the happy faculty of making his hearers laugh while injecting his points. Would that we had more of his kind!

All honor to you for conducting for so many years through thick and thin—mostly thin—a dignified, well poised, long sustained campaign through the medium of THE SINGLE TAX REVIEW and LAND AND FREEDOM.

Wichita, Kas.

E. E. SODERSTROM.

A SUGGESTION

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

I wonder if we are not letting a propaganda chance slip by in the present depression. Especially does this seem to apply to what we might be telling the Democratic congressman and senators. In his message of 1916 President Wilson approved Louis F. Post's proposal—technically it was the official proposal of the Department of Labor—to put the unemployed in touch with unused land. Congressman Crosser, you may remember, introduced a bill to put it into effect. But Wilson's approval was merely perfunctory; he made no such effort to have it put over as he did with many measures of much less importance, and it never got out of committee. Now these Democratic congressmen, if they did not lack brains, could be raising a hullabaloo about how alert a Democratic Secretary of Labor and a Democratic President had been in regard to unemployment, how they urged preparations for such depressions as the present and how this policy shines by comparison with the do-nothing and know-nothing policy of Department of Labor since Wilson and Post left and the befuddled policy of Hoover. I wrote to Senator Wagner along this line some time ago but had no reply. He seems to prefer the bills he introduced which he must have gotten out of the libretto of some comic opera.

Baltimore, Md.

SAMUEL DANZIGER.

A WELCOME NEW YEAR'S GREETING

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

At this time I want to express to you my earnest best wishes for a happy and prosperous New Year and to tell you how much I personally