

abolishment of the social injustice and discord that were everywhere apparent, even in what were regarded as the most highly civilized countries.

Today there is to be found in books or magazines little of this hopeful note. There is some grumbling and complaining, and much fault-finding with governments and institutions, but little or no constructive suggestion. When the editors of the successful magazines are approached with a suggestion of informing their readers as to the real causes of the evils of which the public complains, the stock reply is: "Oh, that's Single Tax. Nobody wants to hear about that now." Eminent publishers decline to consider a Mss. re-stating the fundamental truths of man's relationship to the land, or pointing out the chief reason for remedying industrial evils. The popular fiction of the day is largely devoted to variations upon the theme of sex, or sensational treatment of polite society as it exists among the privileged few. Nowhere is there to be found evidence that the writers have any realization of the great fundamental problems that confront mankind in all regions of the earth.

It may be expecting too much to hope that any considerable number of those whose trade is writing will take the trouble to study the fundamentals of the land question, and arrive at the only sound conclusion possible for a logical thinker. But at least it may be worth suggesting that if any of those who are feebly groping for light on the economic darkness that enshrouds the world will turn their attention to the writings of Henry George, they will find in them the key that unlocks the door to knowledge of the only way out of the morass of ignorance, poverty and social degradation. Here is the truth, and the way of enlightenment. The whole world groans and travails in helpless misery because of the basic violation of the natural law that man must have access to land, or he is not free. Here is a subject worthy of study, thought and serious application. Why do not those writers who want something important to write about take up the urgent issue of establishing a just system of land holding, that will free production, and insure an equitable distribution of wealth that will permanently abolish involuntary poverty and all the evils that flow from it?

IT is commonly supposed that land belongs to its owner in the same sense as money or a watch; this is not the theory of English law since Norman Conquest, nor has it been so in its full significance at any time. No absolute ownership of land is recognized by our law books, except in the Crown. All lands are supposed to be held immediately or mediately of the Crown, though no rent or services may be payable and no grant from the Crown on record.

—SIR FREDERICK POLLOCK, "ENGLISH LAND LAWS."

THOSE who are the loudest in denouncing "high taxes," are the leading advocates of numerous taxes.

At The Birth of The Single Tax

[This article, written especially for LAND AND FREEDOM, is from the pen of the oldest Single Taxer now living, both in point of age and connection with the movement. His acquaintance with Henry George began in 1859. Young George was at this time connected with a San Francisco daily. Mr. Trapp relates that he was with Henry George when the first locomotive was landed on the Pacific coast. While the multitudes greeted the event with shouts of welcome, young George remarked, "This is the beginning of the poor man's troubles." "No wonder," remarks Mr. Trapp, "that they called him the prophet of San Francisco." His mind's eye saw ahead to the time when the railroads would bring to this empire of what was then low priced land the teeming populations of the East with resultant land speculation and intensification of the struggle for employment. He probably did not see it all at this time, but the light was coming to him, and already he had more than glimmerings of the great social problem which it was his destiny to solve.—EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM.]

DURING the Civil War the government of the United States felt the need of rapid transportation from the Atlantic to the Pacific oceans. Owing to the vast unoccupied territory between the centers of our civilization and the Pacific, and the two mountain ranges that must be crossed, the construction of a transcontinental railroad was looked upon as a hazardous undertaking. Many engineers regarded it as impracticable and many of our financiers eyed it askance.

But the government feeling the accomplishment of the road a necessity, offered a bonus of each alternate section of land embracing an area of ten miles on each side of the road. This generous offer induced two groups of capitalists to organize. They established two companies, one to undertake the task of a road to start west from Omaha, the other for a road working east from Sacramento, California. It is with the latter company that this article will chiefly concern itself.

Both companies worked with all possible dispatch. They met in Utah near the great Salt Lake and named the place Ogden. The Western group was headed by Leland Stanford, Mark Hopkins, Judge Crocker, Charles Crocker, Jr., and C. C. Colton.

When the road was finally completed the organization soon incurred the displeasure of the people of the Pacific coast because of high charges for both freight and passenger traffic, the inconveniences borne by the public, and the arrogance of the railroad officials.

But the climax came when they engineered through Congress the Low Land Bill. The injustice of this measure can only be understood when it is known that this company calling itself the Central Pacific Railroad Company caused a multitude of claims to be entered along the Right of Way,

such as Town Sites, Mill Sites, Dam Sites, Mining claims, and Mineral rights of various kinds until they had a sufficient amount of such claims to cover the greater part of the valuable lands of California.

There were at this time a number of fairly prosperous farmers who had "squatted" upon the land with the tacit understanding that when the land came into the market they should have prior right to acquire title to it. The Railroad interests having little respect for law or person immediately began the eviction of these industrious, well meaning people who had settled upon these lands with the purpose of making a living and building homes.

One of the outstanding incidents of the avarice and greed of the corporation which was fastening its clutch upon the State, was what is known as the Mussel Slough War. At this point a number of farmers had settled and made many improvements, building, fencing, clearing and irrigating the low land from a mountain stream. This community had become very prosperous and its land and other possessions valuable.

Not being satisfied with acquiring about one half of all the best lands in California, this ruthless corporation gathered a band of gunmen and took them to the ground and proceeded almost without notice to drive these farmers off their land at the muzzles of the guns. The settlers having legal possession according to government rulings in such cases naturally resisted. I do not remember which side fired the first shot, but a number of shots were exchanged. My recollection of the event is that one of the settlers was killed and several wounded, the gunmen escaping unhurt. While the case at Mussel Slough was atrocious and aroused much indignation, many evictions of a similar nature were occurring throughout the State.

At this time the population of the Pacific coast was composed of young men from the Western states who believed in the doctrine of equal rights to all and special privilege to none, and who lived by the axiom to do unto others as they would be done by. They were accustomed to sharing fifty-fifty with a friend or stranger. It was natural that men who had worked together with such ideals since the days of '49 should be outraged by so gross a violation of the laws of equal justice. The revolt against these conditions gathering force as time went on resulted in the organization of an Anti Railroad party which in 1873 swept the entire state, electing its entire list of nominees from constable to governor.

In this campaign Henry George was the leading spirit. The press of the entire coast was heart and soul with the new movement, which gave him a large and hospitable field for his writings which were vigorous but never coarse or abusive. He was just as effective upon the stump. He was even at this early age a master in debate, a worthy leader in a worthy cause. George was not a member of the legislature, though he could have been elected at any

time to almost any official position. But though always present with his counsel and advice, he declined all political preferment.

The legislature enacted some very just and beneficial laws, among them being the Australian ballot. If I am not mistaken it created the first railroad commission. Many legislative acts of minor importance are to be credited to this period.

This population of honest and hardy pioneers had some very able leaders. The names have escaped me after all these years. One stands out in memory as a sturdy champion of the people's rights, Newton Booth, who was elected governor, and later United States Senator. I believe he was the only real progressive ever elected to that body. With the advent of the new party peace and harmony settled upon the state. But this condition was of short duration.

How it was changed an incident that came under my own personal observation will disclose. I happened in the Palace Hotel in San Francisco and noted a group of gentlemen in animated conversation. I edged toward the group and overheard the following: "Well, you have got the best of us this time, but we have learned something."

"Well, what have you learned, Charlie?"

"We have learned that it is cheaper to buy legislators than to elect them. We will show you that we will have more privileges and less restrictions than in the past."

The speaker was Charles Crocker, Jr., who afterwards became President of the Southern Pacific Railroad, which was built with money obtained from the sale of the Low Lands obtained in exchange for worthless mountain land.

Forgetting that vigilance is the price of liberty, the people, content with the victory obtained by almost unanimous vote, went about their usual occupations. It is true that the elections of 1874 resulted in a victory for the anti Railroad ticket over the Republicans, the Democrats having no ticket in the field, they being at this time in a small minority on the coast. The railroad people affected no interest in the outcome.

When the Legislature convened it was soon discovered that the people had been betrayed. Before that body adjourned all the anti Railroad legislation of the former assembly had been repealed, or amended so as to render it impotent. Only the Australian ballot remained.

The shock was so overwhelming that the people seemed stunned. It is no exaggeration to say that from that day to this they have never again made a united effort to free themselves from the yoke of the master. The blow was so paralyzing that it seemed to rob the people of all initiative, and they lapsed into a condition of hopeless apathy which they have been unable to shake off to this day.

There remained a few courageous souls who refused to bend the knee to the power of the interests. Among them was the one destined to be known in future years

as the Prophet of San Francisco. Wherever the few were gathered who refused to bend the knee to the modern Baal, he was ever present with his inspiring presence, quiet, dignified, and with that gentle smile and searching eye that distinguished Henry George.

At this time the good old custom prevailed of family gatherings in the evenings, at which social and economic problems were discussed. Henry George was often present at these gatherings and always welcome. The land question was the chief topic of consideration. At these meetings they got no further than limited land ownership, upon which no two could agree owing to the different purposes to which the land must be put, and differences in the capacity of the owner, etc. At this time Henry George wrote his first book on the Land Question, and it was at one of these gatherings at which I was present that Henry George expounded his solution of the question, in his quiet and unassuming manner. It was here I was converted by his short and lucid talk to what is known as the Single Tax, which was received by the company with a hearty and unanimous approval. Soon after this Henry George went to New York and published his great work, "Progress and Poverty."

I see in the not distant future a monument wrought in enduring bronze to this young man whom it was my privilege to know in these early years. It will stand as a reproach to those who rejected the message for the inauguration of a better, sweeter, purer civilization that he preached to the world in his immortal work, "Progress and Poverty."

F. J. TRAPP.

Not Through The Pressure Of Population

THE principal justification for concern about the growth of tenant farming lies in the change in the underlying economic conditions of the country. Till recently, there has been a relationship between tenant farming and the opening up of new lands. But the last of the good farm lands have now been taken up. No longer is the wastefulness which characterized the growth of American agriculture economically profitable. No longer are tenant farmers transient pioneers. As the urban communities develop, the demand for fixed agricultural settlements increases. Gradually the country is being driven toward conditions of production similar to those brought about in Europe through the pressure of population. The great danger is that at the same time the European tenancy system may be adopted. This, unlike our own, is dependent upon permanent rather than on changing conditions inherent in the growth of a pioneer nation.

N. Y. Times.

Our Case Plainly Stated

(Address Delivered Sept. 11, 1924, by William J. Wallace, Candidate for President Commonwealth Land Party.)

WHEN the question of taxation is settled justly the world will enter into a period of happiness and comfort far beyond any experience of the past. The universal dissatisfaction with methods of taxation is convincing proof that unjust methods are still employed. Any light on this dark subject should be welcomed by all.

The Commonwealth Land Party considers it to be the most important question of the time and as they know the correct answer, they have adopted a platform and have nominated Presidential Candidates.

We call attention to these indisputable facts.

The people of every community create land values by living in the community and by trading, manufacturing, keeping store, practicing law or medicine, teaching or doing any work or rendering any service that is or may be an assistance to others.

No one in that community can tell how much of the total land value was made by him. It is not an individual product. It is not consciously produced. It arises as the unconscious product of general activities carried on with other purposes in view. As an individual no man has earned it. It is a public product, created by all, and can be justly used for no other purpose than the general welfare.

It is the ideal source from which the government of the community should obtain the revenue needed for its support.

The rent of the land belongs to the people and the first duty of the government is to collect it.

This simple truth, that a child can understand, solves the question of taxation.

All natural resources, bestowed upon humanity by a beneficent Creator, should be the property of the people.

Royalties and rents of natural resources and city and town lots would amply support all governmental activities, without intruding on the rights of any individual to have and to hold what he has individually produced, or the values which, under free competitive conditions, he has justly obtained.

Security of tenure would come by paying the annual rent instead of the annual taxes.

This is true socialism, the recognition of the cooperative production of land values, which places the revenues of the state on a just basis, and makes the state the protector of the individual in his individual rights instead of extorting from him unjustly values which do not belong to it, through the income tax and other methods of public plunder which oppress and dishearten effort in every useful industry that benefits mankind.

The product of the individual for the support of the individual.