

The Arena, Volume 3
January, 1891
p. 157-184

A NEW DECLARATION OF RIGHTS.
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On the second and third days of July, 1776, a group of some fifty odd men, representing the slender line of American colonies fringing the Atlantic ocean, came together to discuss and sign a formal Declaration of Independence from Great Britain. They were a picturesque group without the aid of Trumbull's formal arrangement. Long loose coats hardly developed out of the middle-age cloak, white stockings, knee and shoe-buckles, frilled shirts and lace-edged cuffs, wigs and snuff boxes, they were all very much alike to the modern eye. Exteriorly all were of the same age. Equal gravity and equal rank.

But as a matter of fact each man represented a region so far away and so strange that very little of common thought existed. Each man spoke in a quaint dialect, and deeper than that were the wide differences of thought and prejudices. They met each other, as members of the Pan-American Congress of to-day might meet each other; so widely separated by impassable streams and forests were the thirteen original colonies in 1776.

That they were not all equally patriotic, that they were not all equal lovers of freedom, was made painfully apparent before discussion was ended. They met to enunciate a Declaration of Independence from Great Britain — this and no more, — but the genius, the fearless love of freedom of one man almost raised the document to the altitude of a declaration of the rights of man.

There is small record of that discussion and we have only hints of the storm which the slaveholders raised to prevent Jefferson's great edict which would have made that fourth of July a day of mighty jubilee to the slaves of America. But we know it was suppressed as the dangerous utterance of a man imbued with the mad scepticism of the French Encyclopedists, and so mutilated, blotched with lies, the Declaration went out saying: —

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are born free and equal . . . and possessed of certain inalienable rights among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."
And so the bells were rung and bonfires lighted and feasts were given, while the black man looked on with the eyes of the dumb beast who had no part in the general rejoicing, the day for a real demand for freedom was not yet come, the people were still narrow, insular mainly. Jefferson saw it was impossible to utter a genuine plea — the times were not yet filled with a desire for freedom.

I thought of those men, when on September the first, 1890, five hundred citizens of the United States, men and women, representing thirty-five states and territories, gathered in the city of New York. Drawn together, not by political ambitions or political allegiance, coming hundreds of miles, some of them five thousand miles, coming at great personal sacrifice — five hundred of these men gathered in a hall, as their forefathers had done, to shake each other's hands, to look

into each other's faces, and finally, to enunciate a new declaration of human rights.

It had its picturesque phases also. There were broadhatted men from California, Texas, Virginia and Dakota. There were slender young clerks and artisans from Boston, Chicago, Minneapolis, and Memphis. There were lawyers and judges, and earnest women, and deep-eyed laborers in plain clothing, from all the principal cities. Each man wore on his lapel a little bow of white ribbon, and it was all that was needed to bring out a fervent hand-shake and the word "Brother." These men came to meet their great teacher, Henry George, and the magnificent idea of human liberty which called them together and bound them together with a singular and beautiful spirit of camaraderie is called "The Single Tax."

Manifestly there must be something in this idea which the reading public has not grasped, for though the press are pretty nearly done with ridicule — indeed, have reached the point, many of them, of calling it "the ideal form of taxation" — yet the great transforming force that moves forward this cause with unexampled rapidity around the earth is not yet generally perceived. The mighty principle of human brotherhood which brought these men together and called out their thrilling oratory was not a fiscal reform merely, it was a religion, in the highest sense of that abused word. There is a sort of sublimity in their utterances standing simply as utterances.

The glory of this movement is, that it is at once intensely practical, and has all the allurements and intellectual exaltation of a radical humanitarian philosophy. When the word "single-tax" is spoken by single-tax men to each other, there is nothing prosaic in its sound. Vast dreams and gleaming vistas open in their minds. They see sun-lighted fields and shining cities, toward which they are walking and expect to walk, toilsomely (they have no wings), but their limbs are strong, their hearts invincible, their eyes steady and smiling.

With them single-tax equals Liberty — Liberty, not license — not a poor, faint, half-paralytic, but Liberty, standing high as Justice, and commanding the whole earth with her peaceful eyes. We mean by liberty perfect freedom of action so long as the equal rights of others are maintained. We are based upon Spencer there, and upon the immortal Declaration of Independence, whose sounding sentences will come to mean something by-and-by.

We are individualists mainly. Let that be understood at the start. We stand unalterably opposed to the paternal idea in government. We believe in fewer laws and juster interpretation thereof. We believe in less interference with individual liberty, less protection of the rapacious demands of the few, and more freedom of action on the part of the many.

Individualism does not mean each man cutting the throat of the other, any more than freedom means license. Desperate need makes desperate deed, as in this pleasant America of ours, where undue special privilege to rob the millions is given to a few favored sons of a government yet filled with insidious survivals of paternalism. An age that fosters combat, perjury, envy and hate. There will never be so much paternalism again. The age of individualism broadens before us.

The conference began therefore by stating its belief in equality — not in equality of powers, not equality of virtue, not equality of possessions, but *equality of opportunity*, opportunity to acquire virtue, wisdom, and a competency. This is what Jefferson would have said, could he have written

the Declaration according to his own ideas of what freedom should be. As it stands, the sentence is meaningless.

All men are born free and equal, the old Declaration ran. Equal in what? Powers? No, and never can be! Equal in virtue? No, not with the weight of the infinite sorrowful past upon us, not while the bitter struggle for a place merely to set foot on this planet goes on. Equal in possessions? Not in Jefferson's time, much less today, when 25,000 persons own one half of the wealth produced by 60,000,000 of freemen in the United States. Equal before the law? Not in a time when a whole race was held captive, and a whole sex forgotten. What a bitter mockery that declaration would have been to the black men, and to the women of Jefferson's time, if they had had the power to perceive and the courage to resent it.

All men are born free and equal in opportunity, to live, to labor upon the earth, and to enjoy the fruits of their own industry.

This is the reading which we, as single-tax men, put in this latest continental congress, upon that immortal and hollow sounding instrument. We draw no line of color, creed, or sex. We mean *all* men.

What a comment upon human nature it is, that for two generations Fourth of July orators went about shouting with grandiloquent gestures that sentence, "We hold all men born free and equal," while, as they spoke, under the flag of Liberty, one entire sex was ignored in government and education, and from two to three millions of people had no rights at all, and no more freedom than the ox in the furrow, and stood equal only among themselves in their heritage of shame and despair.

And in the North, year after year, it was being bellowed from the stump at barbecues, from the platform at caucuses, and at political ratification meetings, while all the time white slavery was widening in extent, and deepening in distress, the bound girl becoming the white slave, the bound boy becoming the mortgaged farmer; while at the same moment vast monopolies fed upon special privileges, on huge slices of land, on gifts of rights in the public streets, had special warranty to rob every hearth of heat and every home of light by getting and controlling the coal fields and oil wells; while all the time inventions, thriving beyond the wildest dreams, made production so great, so prolific, that to produce became a crime! And the lockout was begun.

But at last, under the leadership of Henry George, the single-tax men of America have made that immortal old parchment blaze with light. Into those epithets, those grandiose periods, is flowing a swift, electric power which makes them full of the thunder roll of prophecy. They have come to mean the abolition of all slavery, white slavery, the slavery of women, the slavery of the farmer. They are to be taken to mean that constitutional robbery of one man by another shall stop.

"We hold that all men are equally entitled to the use and enjoyment of what God has created and of what is gained by the general growth and improvement of the community of which they are a part," read the chairman, and the ringing cheer which arose from the five hundred delegates seated around, thrilled me with awe. These men were in deadly earnest. There they sat, mostly young, less than forty, judges, mechanics, clergymen, teachers, lawyers, men holding high social

and civic honors, seated in their places beside mechanics and craftsmen whose eyes blazed with the same fire. A wonderful development of our society and day.

Then I thought of the mighty bulwark, superstition, behind which the rich and powerful of the earth sit entrenched; and for a moment my heart failed me. Then I thought of the little band of men, who, fifty years before, had proclaimed the approaching death of chattel slavery, and I thrilled again with the memory of their courage in the face of what seemed the hopelessly impossible. This group of men and this meeting too, will be historic; standing as it does for a further extension of individual liberty, it must succeed. These dauntless souls, like those who carried forward the cause of the black slave, will yet abolish the slavery of men, women, and children; will abolish industrial slavery.

Theirs not to ask when it will come; theirs only to enunciate the great principles of liberty and brotherhood, — yet, none so well as these men know the mighty unrest of our nation this day. None better than Henry George knows the terrible convulsion which threatens us; but no class of men has more faith in the power of truth and freedom to avert disaster and death. The need is for fearless, earnest men to lead the blind, reeling millions of our cities, to preach justice and not charity.

Thus it is seen that something vast attaches to the doctrine we hold. It is not a fiscal reform alone, and yet if it meant no more than its fiscal side, the single tax is a reform capable of exciting great enthusiasm. Beginning on the solid earth, it mounts through "Free Trade, Free Production, Free Land, Free Men!" to the highest conception of truth and right. It is a road leading to a land in whose serene air vices die and virtues bloom. It begins where we stand; the swift runner mounts into the air as he runs, like the eagle.

We believe in absolute freedom of exchange. Exchange is a sort of production, and to tax it or burden it in any way, or to allow it to be monopolized, is to oppress industry and to check enterprise. We assert that nations never trade, that individuals trade, and trade because by trading each party to the exchange is made richer and happier. We are free traders, therefore, because we deny the right of a government to come between two individuals peaceably seeking mutual benefit. Free trade is as much a part of our declaration of rights as the freedom to breathe the air.

As fiscal reformers, we denounce the present system of taxation as (1) cumbrous, (2) inexpedient, (3) unequal, (4) unjust, and (5) iniquitous.

That it is *cumbrous* needs no demonstration. That it is *inexpedient* is admitted by those who have knowledge of how generally taxes on personal property are invaded. Thomas G. Shearman, in an address to the Ohio Legislature, conclusively proved that with the growing wealth and complexity of our social system, the greater cities and their great merchants and millionaire proprietors escape taxation more and more completely, throwing heavier burdens upon the villages and the farms each year. In most States, as every assessor can testify, the returns on personal property are decreasing in proportion to the entire wealth of the State, and are directly proportioned to the honesty of the one assessed, who practically assesses himself.* Thus a premium is put on perjury, while honesty pays the tax. The attempt to tax personal property is inexpedient because it fails to raise sufficient revenue to warrant the trouble and expense.

•The estate of Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Hartt, of Brookline, is now held in trust for their minor children by Messrs. A. W. Nickerson of Marion and G. A. Nickerson of Dedham. These gentlemen asked to have the property of their wards assessed at \$1,000,000 instead of \$300,000, at which it had been rated, and on being refused by the Brookline assessors, transferred it to Dedham, where it was assessed at the figures they set. Hereupon it is related that Mr. N. A. Francis, a recently elected member of the Brookline board of assessors, served a notice on the Dedham assessors that their action was illegal, and discovered by examining the probate records that the trust funds amounted to over \$700,000. The Dedham assessors being threatened with prosecution, consented to tax the estate at the value given in the inventories at the probate office.

This is simply one case out of thousands to illustrate the folly of taxing personal property. Suppose this estate had not been on record as an inheritance! Jonathan A. Lane calculated that less than one sixth of the personal property of the State of Massachusetts was assessed. And the New York Evening Post stated that personal property valuations in New York State have fallen off a hundred millions of dollars since '67.

Our system of taxation on personal property and improvements, we charge, is *unequal*. Not only does it fall with the greatest force upon honesty, but upon helplessness. Under the present system, no matter where the tax is levied, it is paid by the consumer, and as the man who consumes his entire income, the maximum rate of tax is paid by the poor man, the minimum rate by the rich man who consumes but part of his income.

We deny the *equality* of a tax levied upon anything, the price of which can be increased by the amount of the tax, and thus fall in the end, with crushing and *invisible* weight upon the farmer and mechanic, and upon women and children. We denounce all indirect taxation as a device of surviving despotism, by means of which the life of the toiler is crushed out, while he groans in wondering dismay and bewilderment.

All of the taxes at present levied upon personal property, improvements, any product of individual industry, are shifted in enhanced prices to be paid in full, with accrued percentages, by the consumer. A tax upon a tenement is paid by the renter. A tax upon a factory is shifted to the price of goods. A tax upon railways, cars, motors, horses, stations, is shifted to the shipper, the traveler, or upon the wages of the employees.*

•There are two ways in which a tax can be shifted — (1) by raising the price of the thing taxed, and (2) by appropriating the wages of labor. This shifting of the tax is not a matter of personal caprice — in fact, most men know very little about it. It is a law, like the law of wages, attendant on wide conditions.

If the workingman, the farmer, once gets to see this law, which all students of taxation recognize, indirect taxation will stop. Let the reader consider this principle, never tax any product whose price can be raised to cover the amount of the tax. This principle will, if applied, kill all indirect taxation.

A writer in the *Standard* states the principle:

The selling price of land depends upon the difference between the annual tax on it and its annual rent. If we should tax it up to its full rental value, it would have no selling price. If we did not tax it at all, its selling value would be its full rental value capitalized. Therefore, the nearer the tax

comes to rental value the lower the price and vice versa. But the price of products of labor is made up of the cost of production and sale, and all taxes upon those must be added to the price. Therefore, the higher the tax the higher the prices. Now since taxing land makes it cheaper, why is it not a good thing to tax for revenue, and since taxing everything else makes the things dearer, why are not such taxes bad? Why should we not raise all our revenues by a tax on the thing that taxation agrees with so well that it cheapens the thing?

J. G. MALCOLM.

That is to say, the actual amount of land cannot be increased or diminished by a tax. It is not a product of human labor. But the amount of *available* land can be increased and the price cheapened by the tax. A tax on land-values is the only tax that cannot be shifted.

The tax upon values produced by individuals is *unjust*, a fine upon industry, a deterrent of enterprise, and a drag on the wheel of progress. A tax upon dogs is supposed to discourage the keeping of dogs, a tax upon windows certainly lessens the number of windows, as in France. A tax upon houses tends to prevent the building of houses, and thus raises rent, but a tax upon the value of the land a man holds, leaves production free.

Tax a man upon his skill and industry, and you lay a weight upon his shoulders. Why should a man be taxed for building a house? Why should he be fined for laying out a garden or rebuilding his wall? If he wants to open a saloon, — a bad business, — he is taxed in order to keep the number of saloons down; and if he opens a store, or builds a block of houses, — a good business, — his burden of tax is three times heavier. There is no virtue in such logic.

The single tax on land values would set all legitimate industry absolutely free. There would be no fine for building houses or manufacturing goods. The man who planted a tree would not be watched like a criminal, and a man might rebuild his garden wall in idyllic peace; for we proceed under the supposition that the man who makes two spears of wheat grow where one grew before, is a public benefactor. We say it is not only bad policy, it is unjust to fine industry. It is taxing a man according to what he produces in theory, and according to his helplessness, in fact. To do this is to make honesty and industry difficult, and crime, and indolence, and vice, natural and necessary.*

* The single-tax philosophy points out that there are two values attaching to land, — a value traceable to the work of some individual's hands, and a value not traceable to individual labor, but due to the labor and presence of the social group. This value can be seen in city lots worth many thousands of dollars, upon which no man has ever put a day's labor. This is *social* value produced by the entire people, belonging to the city, or State. Each man we say should be taxed upon the social value (or deficit) he holds, not upon the value he creates. It may be said, what difference does it make whether a man pays his tax on personal property and land, or on land alone? It would make considerable difference whether he paid two percent on house and land (say \$3,000), or two percent on land alone (\$1,000). Whether he paid sixty dollars on land and personal property, or twenty dollars on land value alone. Who would make up the difference? The speculator, the monopolist, the holder of franchises.

We make a graver charge yet. We charge the present system of taxation to be not merely a fine, a crushing weight on industry, but an iniquitous premium on idleness and greed, for it nurtures and fosters the most dangerous of all idleness, speculation in land, just in proportion as taxation bears

a grinding weight upon the shoulders of enterprise, does it favor and foster the speculator, creating a parasite whose clutch strangles, whose gluttony drains industry of life-blood.

A long series of sales noted in New York City showed that land held purely for speculation was taxed at a valuation of from twenty to forty-five percent of its selling value, while land in use was taxed on a basis from forty-five to eighty-five percent of its value. Other cities will show even a worse state of things. The user of land is punished. The speculator is aided, because, poor fellow! he's not getting any income from his land. Why don't he sell it? might be asked.

In the suburbs of every city are lands held out of use, or used merely as pastures, which are taxed at acre rates, but when a man buys a lot he pays by the foot, and thereafter is taxed by the foot, and the instant they are used taxes begin. Thus is speculation made more profitable and alluring than legitimate business. Thus is our greatest national vice fostered, and the eyes of industry filled with lust of unearned wealth. When it becomes understood that when a man taking a dollar by a rise in land-values takes that which somebody else has earned, then will speculation appear as it is, a crime against society.

Speculation in land — what harm has it done? What has it not done? In the first century of our nation's life it has scattered us out from sea to sea, pushing men on into the wilderness, into the forest and on the plain, keeping us a nation of pioneers, holding the body of our people against the inclemency, the rigors, the solitudes of our land, when we might have been living east of the Mississippi River, or even east of the Alleghanies, in a state of civilization so high that its actuality would be a dreamer's vision. Speculation in land! It has created vast corporations and privileged classes. It has created artificial scarcity of land, air, and water. It has opposed progress and enslaved labor by shutting industry from Nature's vast storehouse. It has reduced wages, raised rents, and made of the body of the American people tenants, and mortgaged farmers. It has created the tenement house and the settler's lonely cabin. It has put a greater pressure upon a square mile of earth in New York (two hundred and ninety thousand to the square mile) than in any other city in the world, while half the site of the city is vacant. It produces the North End rookery, with its overcrowding, and the settler's shanty, with its loneliness and despair. It has bred vice and crime in our city streets, and madness and brutality in the backwoods, and on the plain. It has scattered the rural population, and piled business men into fourteen-story buildings in the city.

It makes coal high and the miners' wages low. It holds a sword over capital, and puts a fetter on the wrist of labor. It produces colossal fortunes without toil, and supports giant corporations to dominate our legislature. It gives the many into the hands of the few, produces the millionaire and the tramp, — producing in two generations the richest men the world has ever seen. It builds hospitals, and denies justice. It has made us a nation of landless and homeless families, dependent upon the caprice, the avarice of a smaller class.*

* One family in New York owns houses enough to reach from Castle Garden to Harlem river. Only 40 percent of the rest of the families of New York live in separate houses. It is the menace of our land this day. It is a vast vampire, under whose brooding wings our nation is being robbed of its life-blood. It is the curse of Italy, the death of Spain, the outrage of Ireland. It forces the emigrant from his native valley into competition with American labor. It turns the

crofter's cottage on the hills of Scotland into sheep-sheds, and draws a river of gold from starving Ireland.

It is a relic of feudalism. It possesses the old world, and we have permitted it to come in and work us shame and terror till today we stand facing it, as Beowulf faced the serpent in the sea. It is the greatest heritage of evil transmitted to us out of the sinister past, and progress will consist in destroying it as we destroyed chattel slavery. Its abolition will be the abolition of industrial slavery.

Why? Because speculation in land employs no labor, but stands in the way of labor. It is a sort of piracy. It says to the manufacturer, farmer, artisan, "Before you build, till, or fashion, you must pay me a tribute. 'I am Caesar, whose claims must be met first.'"

It supports a plutocracy, as dependent upon the labor of others as the paupers in the almshouses.

Thus we show that, by means of the present machinery of taxation, we can strike a blow at a business whose iniquity thousands are beginning to understand at last. It is not necessary to make socialistic laws regulating the amount of land a man may hold, nor to declare against excessive rents. It is only necessary to tax the holder of vacant land just as if it were used, just the same as a neighboring lot of the same site-value, and the business of holding land out of use for a higher price will be less profitable than industry. This is the "singletax, limited;" this is the fiscal side of a reform whose ethics strike at the root of evil lying deep in the darkness of the past.

Land speculation springs from the unrestricted ownership of lands by individuals, and our entire system of taxation is based on the interests of the landed class. Private ownership of land, as Mr. Spencer has stated in "Social Statics," is based not upon right, but might. It is an accompaniment of militancy; fundamentally it is based on the superstition that one man has a diviner right to the earth than another. It will disappear when men come to see that we are all equally-endowed children of the earth and the air.

I am loath to criticise any theory held by sincere men, but I believe the whole socialistic theory is based upon a misconception of the tendency of society — a misconception springing from an imperfect study of history. The history of property is undoubtedly opposed to the socialistic idea. The past is not individualistic, but socialistic. The age of socialism is not coming on, but departing. The past, the tribal state, the feudal age, was the age when the individual belonged to the state, and forcible co-operation was at its greatest. The state — it was the people. Individuality counted for little. Names were of little account save among the rulers.

Nothing is more mistaken and absurd than the attack upon Mr. Spencer as "the advocate of war between man and man." What the Nationalists anathematize as "individualism" we, as individualists, are as ready to condemn as they, because it is not individualism at all, but the surviving and slowly retreating effect of socialism, paternalism, and special privilege. Let me call the attention of those socialistically inclined to the following passage from Spencer's "Political Institutions," Chapter XV.

"Complete individualization of ownership is an accompaniment of industrial progress. From the

beginning things identified as products of a man's labor are identified as his, and throughout the course of civilization, communal possession and joint household living have not excluded the recognition of a *peculium* obtained by individual effort."

But "the individualization of ownership extended and made more definite by trading transactions under contract eventually affects the ownership of land. Bought and sold by measure, and for money, land is assimilated in this respect to the personal property produced by labor, and thus becomes in general apprehension confounded with it."

And so would air, if it could have been physically handled and laid off in parcels

"But there is reason to suspect that while *private possession* of things *produced by labor* will grow even *more definite* and sacred than at present, *the inhabited area* which cannot be produced by labor *will eventually be distinguished as something which may not be privately possessed.*"

Thus the claim that society has been moving toward socialistic ownership and government, Mr. Spencer finds, after vast research, to be untrue. On the contrary, as the rigors of militant regulation have softened or given way, as the age of industrialism draws on in Europe and has fully appeared in America, there results greater and greater freedom of the individual, greater and greater definiteness in the lines which divide him and his from the State and the property of the State. That there is a tendency toward the abolition of private property in land, there can be no doubt, but that tendency only makes more definite and sacred the right of the individual to the fruits of his labor.

Voluntary co-operation, also, everywhere goes on with the expanding individuality of the citizen, together with his increasing freedom from governmental or military control. It is this unconscious, voluntary, and spontaneous co-operation which the nationalist mistakes as leading toward more general governmental control of individuals and individual property.

"But," writes a nationalist, "Nationalism is not paternalism, it is fraternalism." Very well, then, why organize a vast and intricate system of military machinery? Can you not trust freedom and fraternalism? I, for one, have such faith in human nature, such trust in the ever-growing altruism of expanding individuality, that I am content to work for freedom, for less government, less militancy, less meddling with spontaneous co-operation among the units of society. I do not care to see a society where all direction of affairs comes from some personification of a crowd. I find myself suspicious of the hard and fast arrangement of the Nationalists for forcing fraternity. I prefer to kill the trusts and monopolies rather than nurture them, in hope of "finally getting one enormous trust, the State." I have small reason to believe that the big trust would be any more clearly managed in the interests of the consumer than these smaller trusts it is proposed to absorb.

No, free competition is not the evil. *There is no free competition, and never has been, and never will be, till all men are put on an equality as regards natural opportunities.* If the pressure of the air were only upon one side of the body, man would be crushed to the earth, but the pressure being equally exerted on all sides, he is as free to move as if no pressure existed. So of competition. It is not an evil if it is free and universal.

It is the unnatural, deepening, ferocious need of labor for a job, the struggle of an ordinary industry against a privileged industry, that is mistaken for free competition.

If competition were really free, if every industry were strong only by reason of its producing power, the strife of each man to enrich himself would only result in enriching the world. Great fortunes do not arise out of free competition, but the lack of it.

Show us any great fortune, any overtopping industry, and we will show (if the inner facts are open to us) that it was built up, not by industry, brains, and skill, but by special privilege, by the extension of license and not the assertion of liberty.*

• In the biography of the Stewarts, the Vanderbilts, the Girards, the Goulds, will come a significant sentence like this: "This year Mr. G. put a few thousand dollars into some land in Harlem, which has since sold for a quarter of a million." Or "Mr. V.'s land, at the corner of Broadway and Seventh Streets, has increased in yearly value in proportion to the population of the city, and now brings a rental of two hundred thousand dollars per year." This is what we mean by unearned increment, growth in value not dependent on the monopolist's skill, industry, or virtue, exacted by him from the toiling masses, who press upon the special piece of Nature which he has appropriated, and joined with this, there goes on the appropriation of the earnings of labor, getting each year more easy because of the tightening coil of monopolies. And it is this value which the single-tax would levy upon, this unearned increment.

We would tax the woollen mills, Jay Gould, and the working man upon the value of the monopoly each holds. The mill would not be able to shift its tax upon the price of its cotton, the wages of its employees, nor by raising the rents of their houses. This tax would be levied upon the value of their water privilege, their land-values, but they would be left free to manufacture; for the more they produced, the cheaper their product, and the higher wages would rise. We believe in the governmental control of all monopolies, (industries that in their natures deny the equal rights of all men), such as privileges in the streets, water privileges, right of way for railways, wharves, and in general, any private or corporate right in land. (Every man is a monopolist just to the extent that he possesses land to the exclusion of others, at the last analysis.)

Under the single tax these monopolies would not be owned or necessarily run by the government in all cases, but they would be obliged to pay the entire annual value of the special monopoly they held, into the treasury of the State or city. And here we are nearly in accord with the Nationalists. Here is our point of agreement, — that all industries in their nature monopolies should not be left in private or corporate hands,— at least not without governmental control.

But a cotton mill is not a monopoly in itself. If it appears to be a monopoly it is by virtue of special privilege and not by virtue of the power to produce. Free competition among cotton mills would only result in more cotton and better clothing. The trouble is, there is no free competition in any industry today. It is a war between special privilege on one side, with capital and labor quarreling among themselves on the other. Out of privilege the trust is born.

Suppose conditions of freedom. Suppose every laboring man in the United States to have the choice of two jobs. Suppose every cotton mill to be stripped of its special monopoly of land and water. And then suppose these mills competing among themselves, and what is the result? Each miller says, "I'm going to produce more cloth and better cloth than any other man." What happens?

Wages rise, because to produce more he must employ more men, and to get men he must bid for a man already with a job. The price of his product will fall, because he cannot control the price. Others are as anxious to sell as he. He can't take his profits out of his men, for they have other and equally as good jobs open to them. He can't recoup himself out of unearned increment. He is placed on a level with every other business man. A free field and no favor. That would be free competition.

How is it now? What gives the millers of Lawrence, for convenient example, their enormous power? What makes it possible for them to crowd out smaller firms? Their privileges in land and water, first of all, and second, their despotic power over their men and women, from whose hands they take every year a larger percent of wages, so that less than fifteen percent of the product of their hands remains to their own use.

What gives them this power over the men? Simply the unnatural, forced competition among laborers to find employment, because all over this broad, generous land, men and women wander, seeking work, because there are too many men, and not work enough to go around. A million and a half of men out of work, bidding against the men who are in work! This eager, pitifully-meek crowd of jostling men and women at the employer's gate, allows him to fix things to suit himself. Their desperate need makes his majestic and lordly arrogance. Their meekness is the making of his insolent greed or paternal patronage.

The socialists beg the whole question by constantly speaking of "labor" as if only the digger or chopper were labor. Labor with them means evidently a common hand without tools. Labor with the individualist means men and women as they are today, with all the producing powers, all their skill, thought, *fraternity* and *high purpose*. Labor is the producing cause, producing all capital, all wealth — all things but Nature. To suppose that unaided capital can oppress labor is to suppose the shovel capable of knocking its user down. It is land-monopoly wearing the mask of capital that oppresses. Capital has no "divine right." It wastes, decays, but the land owner never fails to get the best of the bargain. In the air of freedom the trust will die.

Under free and equal conditions no millionnaires can rise and no laborer be forced into poverty, because men do not differ so greatly in powers as would seem to be indicated by the vast fortunes of our day. In the eyes of science Mr. Gould varies from one of his engineers very much as one grasshopper varies from another, just as one blackbird develops a longer wing or a larger thigh than another. Stripped of his advantages — the privileges with which a superstitious age endows him — and Mr. Gould would become what he is, a rather smallish man, differing slightly from the type. His wealth, the product of an unswerving law, himself the chance owner, because, so long as land remains limited in amount and population increases, somebody must be enriched without labor, and the greater the invention, the intelligence, the morality of the people, the higher will the price of land go, and the deeper and broader will be the gulf between the man

enriched and the man impoverished by landlordism. It is of no value to point out here and there an apparent exception. Somebody in a sale of land, always gets what he has not earned, and it is the worker, the user, who pays all the bills.*

* Here comes in also the fact, which men like Edward Atkinson fail to comprehend. They are always saying, "There are no landless men except of choice; that practically free land is now to be had in the suburbs and on the borders." Suppose this were true, and suppose a mechanic by spending two extra hours on a horse-car, could obtain a little home in the suburbs. Suppose this to be true, it does not affect the real question; the curse of the system is, that the moment any such movement is generally taken up, land rises in value till the poor man is unable to buy. The moment any considerable number of men attempt to settle at any point, the price of land goes up, and the few are always enriched at the expense of the rest. This principle is well understood by the boomers of New Hampshire who are planning to raise the price of land by the importation of Swedish colonists.

This must continue as long as the value of land due to the pressure of population is allowed to go into private pockets. It has all the effect of an inexorable law. All inventions, freedom of commerce, ownership of railways, education, sanitation are powerless to fulfill their mission in enriching the average man, so long as speculation in land continues. They will only result in raising rents and ultimately in enriching the landowner. Freedom, equality, and fraternity are impossible under such conditions, because the whole struggle to live is so bitter, so ferocious.

Now to destroy monopoly, establish justice, give fraternity an opportunity to bloom, and bring about free competition in fact, we offer the single tax. We offer it as a practical, gradual *method* of restoring social equilibrium. We take taxation as a means to do this, because the right to tax is generally admitted, and forms the best instrument possible to readjust conditions.

How would the single tax destroy speculation, free labor, and establish justice? Is it not absurd to say that so simple a measure will do so much? Its simplicity is its magnificent virtue. It is not a new law nor a set of laws. It is not a new restriction, nor an extension of the powers of government; it is a vast stride toward freedom. It argues results from proved tendencies; its influences can be tested by reference to the motives of men now. It does not require the transformation of greed into gratitude.

Its partial application as fiscal reform would begin at once to produce the most important effects.

Let us note a few of these effects. First the effect on industry has been noted. Being released from tax, production will everywhere receive a new impetus. This does not need demonstration. This activity in trade and manufacturing will cheapen the price of products at the same time that a greater demand for labor tends to raise wages.* This would not mean that the increase of wages should come out of the business man, but that it would come out of the landlord. A mine-owner for example would be taxed as a mine-owner, not as mine-*user*. His tools and shafts would be untaxed, his privilege would be taxed just the same whether he used it or not. Result, he would use, or sell to someone who would use. Our coal-barons are taxed but a few cents per acre upon their vast holdings of incalculably valuable lands; this is why they can regulate the out-put of coal and "pluck" the helpless miner. Tax them according to the value they hold, tax them to the

full of the annual value of each acre of mining land, and the coal-barons would give way to a thousand co-operative mining companies. Miners would have higher wages and steadier work, while we in Boston would find coal cheaper.

- To show the misapprehension about the *necessities* of the case I clip an objection and its answer.

The essence of what labor wants, of course, is a larger share in the proceeds of production, and this obviously, is to be obtained only by the allotment of a smaller share to capital.— *Providence Journal*.

This might be correct if it did not ignore the third factor of production, land. Land is neither capital nor labor, and yet its owners absorb a large proportion of what labor and capital jointly produce from land.—*Boston Globe*.

The naked facts of our mining regions are so ghastly, so horrifying, that it seems impossible under the stars and stripes. A frightful avocation at its best; when joined with low wages, uncertain employment, miserable living in a tenement home in a desolate region, it reaches the heights of tragedy. These coal-barons standing there above the great seams of coal Nature has put there for all men, collect from free Americans untold millions of tribute, while the miner who toils in the darkness and damp gets just pay enough to live and produce children to take his place when he dies.

In the face of one of these men the boasted American civilization fades into mist. This measureless wrong we call freedom — freedom to toil like a slave and die like a dog!

The effect on wages. Not only would the single tax raise wages, it would free labor. On this point alone it rises above a fiscal reform to become a peaceful revolution. The slavery of labor consists in its dependency upon the employer. In the vast increasingly complex machinery of society, the artisan feels himself more and more a cog, without power to move aside from his place. The employer fixes wages, buying his labor as he buys his lumber, at the lowest market rate, a rate which labor has little or no power to alter.

The laborer is not only powerless to fix the rate at which he will work, but powerless to keep down the rising rent that is ready to swallow him up. He says, "Please, mister, can't y' give me a job?" and he huddles his family into two or three rooms in a miasmatic alley. The employer could not stir a wheel or move a car without him, and yet so abject is labor, the employer knows he can set the price of a day's work. This spectacle of the producing agent of society begging for the chance to create wealth for the opportunity of receiving back fifteen percent of it, is a pitiable result of a hundred years of "freedom."

To give labor the power to make a free contract with the employer will amount to a complete revolution of the wheel. "Free contract, he has it now," someone says. "No one forces him to take a dollar and a half per day." No "one" does, but society and the sinister shadow of want and suffering do. No slave ever had such relentless overseer. There is no lash so cruel as hunger, no subduer of rebellious hearts like the gleam of a tear on the cheek of a hungry child. Free

contract? How can there be free contract where a man has a wife and children depending upon his daily labor at any price?

This is why all strikes are so futile. Great as protests of labor, they fail because "while capital wastes, labor *starves*;" because the supply of men eager to work is limitless apparently — men so eager they will take their lives in their hands to get the place left by the striker. The whole theory of labor organization from the times of Chaucer to the present has been, "there are too many men — too little work. We must keep the number of workmen down." This is the feeling lying at the heart of the opposition to emigration, the opposition to labor-saving machinery and the opposition to women in trades. "Keep the number of hands down. There is only so much work. There must not be too many men."

But in the single tax a new idea appears, *Why not increase the number of jobs?* How! By taxing speculation out of existence, and releasing all industry. By bringing mines, forests, lots, into the market at low prices, by putting raw Nature into the hands of industry and out of the hands of the speculator who employs no labor.

The more men the less work, is not true, necessarily. Under the single tax the more men the more work; two men working together can produce more than twice as much as one man, a hundred men much more than a hundred times as much as two men. The trouble is the landlord comes in between and shares the wealth but not the toil.

Not work enough! What is work? It is the application of a living hand directed by a creative brain, upon matter. It creates nothing, it destroys nothing. It simply takes from the vast ebb and flow of Nature a portion of her abundance — a modicum of matter — fashions it, transports it, puts it to use, and then at last, sooner or later it is reabsorbed into the endless cycle. Men and the things they need are only forms of matter, and Nature is inexhaustible, generous, and impartial. How comes it that work is scarce, hunger plenty, and nakedness common? Not because work or food is scarce, but because to support himself, the toiler must support the family of his land-owner first, because he is not free to take and fashion the indestructible material that lies just at his hand. The opportunity for labor is illimitable, but a despotic law bars the laborer out.

We call upon organized labor to turn its attention to the speculator as the "scab" to be driven out. Free Nature and labor is free. Give each man the choice of two jobs at equal prices, have two employers bidding for his work and you have a free man to make a free contract. When the employer sends out on the street for men (as I have seen happen temporarily in western towns), then there is no cringing of labor, no appeal, "Please mister, give me a job." It is man to man and face to face, a free contract.

The American workman does not need protection, paternalism. What he needs is absolute equality as regards "a chance" and then freedom. I suspect the reader will begin to think that the single tax is going to the root of things. If labor were free to choose its job and practically to fix its own wages, what would result?

It may be inferred men would not "stake coal" in the hell of a steamer's hold, or collect garbage, or work amid red-hot iron *out of choice*. It would not need Bellamyism to equalize things. The

highest wages would necessarily be paid for the most disagreeable jobs, and *invention would be turned for a while upon making them horrible jobs a little more tolerable*. It would be discovered that the hold of a vessel might be ventilated, that the coal might be moved by machinery, that the foundry or press-basement might be differently situated, and the wind let in some way.

I think a little consideration of this point will satisfy that to free labor is to do it all. The desires of the free man may be trusted to abolish the horrors that now surround almost all kinds of manual labor. A governmental regulation of these things is so far away around, and so very uncertain of getting around, that single-tax men would rather try the effect of freedom. Freedom will shorten the hours of labor, raise wages, dignify work, and make the wage-earner a man among men, for free-men prefer short hours to long, high wages to low.

Will he not abuse his freedom? Who is to say what the mechanic or craftsman shall demand? Would he not destroy business by demanding too much? That will regulate itself. Supply and demand — under free conditions — will regulate that. But who will collect our garbage? Who will do our menial tasks when the laboring man is free? This question is often asked as if a God-given prerogative were about to be taken away. I say if a task is so menial that only abject want will drive a human being to it, it is an outrage to require it, and the sooner it is done away with the better. I do not ask anyone to do what I would not do myself if I were physically able. I never go by a gang of men in the street working under the flaming sun and amid the deadly fumes of gas, that I do not say, "Those men under freedom would demand and get the highest wages paid." The pyramid now stands on its apex, as Shelley said. The easiest task gets the highest pay.

I believe all paid bodily attendance, all menial duties will disappear when labor is free. There must come in a change. The treatment of servants in many homes is an outrage on humanity. The life the servant girls lead is appalling to a mind not vitiated by flunkeyism. Ten to sixteen hours per day labor; beds in the basement, damp, mouldy, or up in the garret in bare, unwarmed rooms, — and worse than all, no home, no little nook of their own, pitifully alien in the midst of all the comfort and elegance around them. No wonder they prefer the shop or the store, and a poor, little rented room and a sort of freedom. This cannot endure; the human heart rebels at it; the womanly soul cries out against it. Labor must be honorable when the workman is free, or he will not do it. Once the pressure of want is taken off him, he will stand tall in his manhood. He will wear no man's livery. He will follow his own desires with no man to say him nay, till he infringes upon the rights of someone else. So far as I am personally concerned, I say that any part of our so-called civilization which rests upon the enforced degradation, the homelessness, the brutalizing toil of my fellow men and women, is only the vanity and pride of a plutocracy whose abolition will be the flower of freedom and the triumph of truth.

The effect of the single tax in cities I have indicated. They would level down, and cut over the vacant lots, the huge ten-story building would not stand beside the old rookery. The tenement house would disappear. Individual homes would multiply. There would be a gradual shifting of population from the heart of the city to the suburbs, because the most valuable lands would necessarily be used for the most productive business. Slowly the saloon and the schoolhouse would part company. The terrible North Ends and South Ends would disappear. Rapid transit (by the municipal railways) would no longer enrich real-estate boomers, but would make it easy for

the mechanic to possess a Queen Anne cottage in the suburbs, his only tax being levied upon the site value of his little lot. *

•The assertion of Edward Atkinson that to raise the present tax of Boston would require under the single tax a levy of \$33 per thousand, shows how absurd a man can be when trying to combat a great reform with partial statement of fact. The glaring evil is the under-valuation of lands held out of use. The franchises of Boston are now given away, under the single tax their entire annual value would come into the treasury.

But if the entire annual rental of all land and land privileges in Boston were insufficient to run the government it would not affect the vital part of the question. To whom does the ground rent belong, to the people of Boston, or to private individuals? That is the contention.

The need of escaping rent crowds people together on one lot in the city, but it scatters them in the country. Under the single tax the farming population would draw together. The speculator being taxed into selling or using his land, population would aggregate into cities and towns and a new era begin for the farmer.

It is not the poverty, the endless and ferocious work of the farm and shop that appalls. It is the waste of human life. The solitude, brutalizing surroundings, the barrenness and monotony, the scream of planes, the howl of cog-wheels — these things that tend to make man only a brute or a machine — these are the things that horrify the thinker. They are not civilization. I agree with William Morris there. It is because into the life of the farmer the single tax would bring music, painting, song, the theatre, that I advocate it with such persistent enthusiasm. I am a farmer by training, and my sympathies go out to these trusting, sober, frugal men and women in their joyless lives. It is my hope to see them enjoying some of the intellectual delights which make life worth living. With the rise of towns and the concentration of the rural population, swift strides in civilization will come.

"But will not a tax on land-values rest heavily on the farmer?" asks someone. No: the land-value of the working farmer is very much less than the value of his tillage, buildings, machinery, etc. His direct tax would, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, be less than now. If he is a *speculative* farmer, like those Edward Atkinson represents, his tax will be heavier, as it ought to be. The single tax hits the speculator's head, wherever it sees one. The working farmer will find his direct tax reduced from twenty-five percent to seventy-five percent, and *his indirect taxes will be wiped out.*

It is the indirect tax that lays with such invisible weight upon him, not merely the tax proper to the government with all its percentages of increase from hand to hand, but the still greater private tax of the monopolist of mines, forests, mill-privileges, and city lots, all of whose exactions of tribute come back upon the farmer with crushing weight in the price of his tools, clothing, building materials, etc. Under the single tax, his entire tax would be less than he now pays' to some monopolist in buying a mowing machine or his winter clothing.

The farmer of all men is to be benefited by this reform.

But will not the rich man, the bond-holder escape? objects the farmer. No. Stocks and bonds derive their value mainly from land values, and they would be taxed at the source of their value by the single tax. So far as they relate to improvements they ought not to be taxed; in so far as they relate to privileges on land they would infallibly be reached by the tax on social value, or ground-rent.

In the South the idea of this further extension of freedom is making way. Already the young men of Virginia are taking up and carrying forward the work Jefferson and Garrison laid down,— for although the South would share in all that comes with concentration and comfort, it would benefit specially, because the single-tax idea would solve the negro problem.

The single tax will solve the black man's problem by opening the storehouse of Mother Earth to him, without the necessity of a tribute to some private individual. His slavery admittedly is still abject, and his suffering greater than before. I don't mean to belittle what has been done, but he seems to me to stand at present between a dire half-slavery and freedom. He is freed from his master, but is enslaved like his white brother to the "boss," and the land-owner. As an Individualist I do not assert that the black is equal in virtue to the white. I do not assert he should be equal in political power, or equal socially, or equal in wealth. I simply assert his equality with every other man as regards his heritage in the gifts of air, sun, water, and land. We say give him equality of opportunity. Let him see industry untaxed and idle speculation abolished; give him freedom and incentive to be industrious, sober, and honest; then he will see that his failure lies with himself. The South will yet see that a completer freedom will solve the negro problem.

So the individualistic single-tax idea would have solved the Indian problem. But God help us! we've almost solved it by annihilating the race. I say the greed of the speculator in land, the boomer, has everywhere thrust the knife into the Indian's heart. Boomers have given him drink, bought his lands for a few beads, lobbied Congress to push him farther west. Boomers, speculators have kept him from being civilized, have stood between the real settler and the Indian with rifle and whiskey jug in hand. We had no real need of these lands. It was an artificial scarcity of land, created by the power of the boomer, to get and hold more than he could use, or intended to use. I say that proceeding naturally, we would not yet have reached the Mississippi River, and that by bringing the virtues, and not the vices, of civilization to bear on the Indian, our century would not have been one of dishonor. We say, therefore, that by instituting private property in land among the Indians, their ruin is complete. This the boomers know. The single tax would teach them art, and science, and the rights of property, which forbid private ownership in lands.

It will thus be seen that the reform we advocate is simple, but it is the simplicity of a great natural principle. "It begins where two and two make four, it mounts to the region where the lightnings sit." It consists in saying one man shall not be forced to feed another. It puts justice in the seat of charity and says to wronged and cheated human nature: go breathe the free air and drink the pure water, till disease and deformity vanish. The single tax would destroy greed by making it impotent. It would leave virtue and intelligence room to develop, putting them above stupidity, greed, and governmentally-aided selfishness.

Our reform is not a palliative. We believe there are two essentials in the ideal state of society,

free nature and liberty. Land *must* become practically free. Land is limited in amount, population is unlimited. When we have two hundred millions of people, the oceans will not be one foot farther apart. The need of land grows and its price rises continually. Every year the struggle for a place on American soil will intensify. No nation of earth with equal natural resource ever began in so short a time to feel the need of land as we are feeling it today.

If with land partially monopolized, we have swarms of beggars, tramps, asylums, hospitals, — if these signs of a bitter struggle to live are so great now, what will they be fifty years from now? If land is worth \$14,000,000 per acre in New York today, what will it be worth in 1920? In short, looking at this question from the broadest, possible point of view, what is the problem?

Just this: as the struggle for natural resources is ever intensifying and as the possession of land gives greater and greater power to the owner and enslaves the renter, therefore it follows that the present system of land-ownership is sweeping us toward a ferocious and fratricidal war for the possession of the earth. This struggle will result in one of two conditions. Either a vast and all-powerful landed aristocracy will enslave the American masses, or the present system of land-holding must give way.

For us there is only one issue, the monopoly of Nature must go. It will give way with far less of storm and stress than slavery gave in dying. It will be seen to be the next great step in the evolution of the race. The value of the individual increases from age to age; he will soon be sovereign. No one need be alarmed, no one need be taken by surprise. Reforms are growths, they bud before bursting into bloom. No reform can succeed that does not constantly prove its claims to be the best thing for the time.

"Liberty, fraternity, equality!" cried the great French revolutionists, and threw their titles, badges, 'scutcheons, coats-of-arms into the smelting pot. Liberty, fraternity, equality! And they left untouched the mother of all injustice, the source of all inequality at birth, the root of all aristocracies, — the private ownership of the soil of France. They destroyed a monarchical aristocracy supported by peasants, serfs. They established a republican plutocracy supported by "free" farmers, and women and children toiling in factories. O, great and beneficent change! O, blind philosophers!

The one inalienable right upon which all else depends, they did not secure. The Declaration of Independence which we are reading today to the world does not make that mistake. It believes that the evolution of society is bringing a day when the ultimate tenet of single-taxers will be held reasonable, — the right of each man to space.

Out of space we are come, into space we are born. We move in space, we must have space to set our feet, space to breathe and space to sleep. The need of space is as undeniable as the fact of weight and coherency of our bodies, and to allow any part of a social group, short of the entire membership of that group, to have absolute monopoly of space is a social crime, and human reason revolts against it as against the most vital infringement of the rights of man.

We believe that every child born into the world has at least the same rights as the rattlesnake, the right to himself, the right to breathe the air, to drink the water, and to obtain his food and shelter

by his labor upon the materials which make up the world exterior to man. We are content to take the polished professor of political economy at his word. Man has no more natural rights than a rattlesnake.

Give man these rights, and you give him all that government can or ought to give him. Voluntary service and cooperation may be trusted to do the rest. How is it now? Suppose the little rattlesnake coming into the world to find all the snug corners, and nice swamps, and beetle pastures, monopolized by some big rattlesnake, or owned by some other little rattlesnake inheriting an estate, and you have a parallel to the condition of the average child born under the American Flag and the Declaration of Independence.

"The land belongs in usufruct to the living," cried Jefferson, (our first great single-taxer) "the dead have no control over it." And with him we deny the right of one generation to enslave another yet unborn. The use of land to the living, to the unborn the same free legacy. We believe in use not ownership, we would have land *settled*, not bought. We would have men secure in possession of land, but robbed of the power to levy tribute.

In this free air, woman will rise to nobler stature. With individualists the right of woman to vote is reckoned a small part of her rights as an individual, only a minor question. The real question is, was woman born free and equal in opportunities to obtain happiness, acquire virtue, and secure a competency? In other words is she included in the new declaration of rights? If I may answer for the single-tax men of America, I say yes. Women sat in this last convention of patriots with the same powers and the same privileges with the men.

It is now more than a century since that immortal old Declaration was read, and today, with rare misgivings, woman is *allowed* to vote on the school question! Man, his head yet filled with the survivals of the middle ages with its measureless lust and cruelty, arrogates to himself the right to say what woman shall do — and this in the face of the sentence which he applauds — "All men are created free and equal," — applauds because it never occurs to him to mean women, too.

As a single-tax man I say: As I deny the right of any woman to define my sphere, deny me what I earn, or sit in judgment on my rights, so I deny the justice of any custom, law, or edict of a man's government to say what a woman's work shall be, to suppress her vote or discriminate against her in any way whatsoever. It is not a question whether woman will use the ballot, it is a question of liberty. She must have the liberty to do as she pleases so long as she does not interfere with the equal rights of others. It is not a question of her desires as a woman, it is a question of her rights as a human being.

But the illimitable widening of the field of opportunity, the freedom of industry from tax, the growing liberty and independence of labor will do more for woman than place her equal before the law with man. It will release her from her dependence upon him as a bread-winner, and never till that is done can woman stand a free soul, individual and self-responsible.

Paid in full for her work without regard to sex, — with the same rights before the law, with the power and the free opportunity to earn her own living independently of man, woman will at last come to have the right to herself, and be the free agent of her own destiny. Then marriage will be

a mutual co-partnership between equals. Prostitution will disappear, and marrying for a home, that first cousin of prostitution, will also disappear. It is woman's dependency, her fear of the world, fear of want, of the terrible struggle outside that enslaves her. In the freedom and abundance of the ideal individualistic world she will become sovereign of herself and the friend of man.

It is impossible in a single magazine article to give more than a hint at the high philosophy, the altruism, the logic, the grace, the humor of the great reform, called for convenience The Single Tax. If the reader gets a glimpse of our earnestness, and a desire to learn more of our cause, I shall feel satisfied with my work in writing. There are many objections, rising from imperfect understanding of what we advocate, which I could state and answer if I had space; but they would refer to dollars and cents, to expediency. The intent of this article is rather to present the ethical principles upon which it is based — on self-evident truths, conceptions high as justice and broad as humanity.

The thoughtful man this day is standing at the parting of two ways, one leading confessedly through trusts, combines, monopolies, to one giant monopoly of all industry, controlled by the state, to be carried on by military regime; the other leading through abolition of laws, through free trade, free production, free opportunity, to free men. The land doctrine or single-tax philosophy means a destruction of all monopoly, a minimum tax levied upon social not individual values and the greatest individual liberty consistent with the equal rights of the rest.

In short, the time is upon us when a man must choose between paternalism of a government liable to corruption and tyranny, and the fraternal, spontaneous, unconscious co-operation of individualism. We stand before each thoughtful man and woman, still pondering this choice, and say: —

"There is no law that will work, as it is expected to work, except a law which liberates. The system that sets free, will surprise by its beneficence, and exalt with its ever-renewed power of developing the good of human nature."

As for myself, I hold truth to be good, Nature impartial, liberty and loftier individual development the end of all human government and all right human action.

A response to this, page 601, April 1891:

NATIONALISM VERSUS INDIVIDUALISM.

NO-NAME PAPER.

The January number of The Arena contained, on pages 156-184, a brilliantly written article from the pen of Mr. Hamlin Garland, entitled, "A New Declaration of Rights." The contribution deserved to be read carefully by the intelligent subscribers to The Arena, and I have, therefore, no doubt that the reader's of my essay will be familiar with the one to which it refers. Mr. Garland eloquently describes in it the miseries which are the outcome of the present social order,

and his heart, glowing with sympathy for the oppressed, urges him to look for a remedy. A disciple of Mr. Henry George, he feels sure that the solution of the whole social problem is to be found in the single-tax theory, and that if the indirect taxes, now borne by the people, were replaced by a tax levied on land values, poverty, and with it crime, would at once be wiped from the face of the earth.

I agree with him that our social conditions are not what they ought to be; I agree with him that they are bad enough to stir the heart of every man who feels for humanity, and to make him search for a remedy; I concede that Mr. Garland has a right to believe that his theory, or rather that of his master, is the only cure of the social disease. I do not question his right to imagine how the scenes would shift, or to describe his fancies in glowing terms. It is surely not his fault that I cannot see how the mere introduction of the single tax on land would change at once all features of society. I cannot see how it would give work to all, even to unskilled labor; how it would force the employer to go into the labor market and to entice, by promises of all kinds, the laborers to accept a job from him. Neither can I see how a government could be trusted with the levying of such a tax, or to whom should be given the immense power to discriminate between the values of lots of land. A friend of mine occupied lately a store on Washington Street, adjoining the Herald building. He paid a fair rent for it, yet found he was unsuccessful. He removed, leasing another store at a higher rent, two houses from his former location, on the other side of the Herald building, and here met with brilliant success. He ascribes his success merely to the location of his new store. It is self-evident that one lot of land is more desirable than another merely on account of its location, and that consequently there will be more applicants for the one than for the other. The value of such a lot will rise accordingly, and with it the tax levied upon it, but who is to determine the value? One lot, by itself, looks exactly as does the other, the houses built upon them may be precisely the same in construction, the space between them may be but a few feet, and yet it is a fact that my friend would be willing to pay a thousand dollars more a year for the one than he would for the other. Would not somebody have to assume paternal functions? Still I concede that it is, perhaps, my own fault that I cannot see things as Mr. Garland does, and I shall not try my lance on that part of his armor.

Neither can I expect him to accept the solution of the problem which I favor, *viz*: nationalism or socialism pure and simple. As I cannot see with his eyes, I must not expect him to see with mine, although he concedes voluntarily and without hesitation, that the great monopolies of forests, mines, telegraphs, and railroads, electric lighting, etc., should be taken out of the hands of individuals or corporations and be administered by the government. This shows that he might easily be persuaded to burden the government without fear of paternalism, with a few more functions; that he may trust it also with the administration of some industries, such as the smelting of the ore taken from the public mines, or the hammering of metals into rails, plates or cannons. If we should coax him still more he might even assent to let the government raise crops of wheat and other cereals on public land as long as he permits it to raise trees. In fact, Mr. Garland offering the nationalists his little finger, may soon allow them to grasp his whole hand. I have, therefore, no cause to cross swords with him in regard to his attitude towards nationalists.

Where I take issue with him, and have a right to do so, is in regard to his interpretation of *Individualism* and *Socialism*. In his desire to defend his remedy against the remedies proposed by others, and especially against that proposed by nationalists, he seeks to find shelter behind the breastworks of individualism. Afraid that he might be drawn over into the other camp, he denounces socialism and makes that the point of issue between himself and them. He declares proudly that he is an individualist and takes pains to interpret what that means; yea, more, to show historically that individualism is the result of the highest civilization of man, while socialism belongs to barbarism. The gist of his contention is, that the farther back we go the more we find people steeped in socialism, while the advance of mankind in culture and civilization is entirely due to a more developed individualism. Hence the conclusion that socialism, being a relic of barbarism, ought to be shunned, and individualism lifted upon the throne.

If this was said in jest and not in earnest, I would consider it a good joke, and applaud it .as such; but as the writer seems to be serious and may carry the conviction with which he is so imbued into the hearts of as many readers as his otherwise able article must find, I consider it a duty to cry: "Stop! so far and no further!" Such interpretation of history is misleading, and starting from such wrong premises we can never arrive at sound conclusions. Far be it from me to insinuate that Mr. Garland wittingly corrupts or misquotes history; I am positive that he merely misinterprets facts, and in consequence persuades himself that socialism was first, and was followed by individualism as an improvement. This one error having found a way into his logic, the rest naturally off at a tangent.

Let us see how Mr. Garland arrived at his premises. He had read that in ancient times tribes were formed on account of the gregarious habit of the human being, and that these tribes were under the leadership of a patriarch or a chief; that the individuals, not even the wife or the child, held any rights of their own, but were dependent upon the head of the tribe. The chief would assign to them duties, and hold them strictly to their performance, but on the other hand he would apportion to them whatever was needed for their support. They held no private property but all belonged to the tribe, or rather solely to the head of the tribe. Mr. Garland had, furthermore, read that the condition of such tribes was a most pitiable one; that the individual led a life that could not be called a human life. In course of time, however, all this was changed. Tribes dissolved or became parts of an empire, slavery was abolished, serfdom was annulled, feudalism destroyed; in a word the individual received rights in the modern community which he never had held in the tribe. Looking upon the high rate of civilization which we have attained, Mr. Garland said to himself, "It was socialism which made of man a barbarian, and it is individualism which has made of him a civilized being. Who dares dispute that proposition, so well established by historical facts?" My dear Mr. Garland, you are utterly wrong. The very thing that you describe as socialism is individualism; and the very thing which you describe as individualism is socialism; you merely employ the use of wrong terms. Socialism must not be confounded with communism, and individualism must not be confounded with the extended possibilities of a man to assert his rights. Socialism has grown out of individualism. The ancient tribe may have owned land or other property in common, but it was far from being a society. Socialistic tendencies showed themselves at that early period only in minor traits, and wherever they came to the

surface they brought about that success which finally granted to the individual better opportunities. The real historical facts are, that the farther back we go, the more we find man *self-sufficient* to himself, and *this self-sufficiency is individualism*. The savage is able to stand out alone and for himself; he can supply all his wants; he can find his food, prepare his meals, make his scanty clothing and weapons; wherever he is placed he will be at home.

The members of the family and of the tribe, yea, even the members of the vast empires of a more cultured period, were all individuals, each of whom could rely upon his own faculties to supply all his needs. Humanity, of course, could not rise in civilization as long as every individual worked only for himself and in opposition to all the rest. The tendencies were to advance from such an individualism to socialism. When it was found that a number of men could defend themselves better against the attack of animals or other men, they formed a tribe with the view of obtaining that safety which, single-handed, they could not obtain. They surrendered part of their rights and if the head of the tribe abused his privileges he could only do so because the tribe was not a perfect society, since outside of this one common purpose its members had still remained individuals. With every step forward in the direction of a division of labor, people became interdependent and learned to feel themselves parts of a social unity. The oldest socialistic enterprise was the army, and even in its earliest construction it was shown that a few thousand well-drilled and well-organized soldiers could conquer the world, as they did under Alexander the Great. With every century we behold people stepping more and more out of the sphere of individualism into that of socialism, and every step which made the individual less self-sufficient, and forced him to unite his efforts with others for common purposes, brought about not alone a higher state of culture or an increase of wealth, but also an increase of individual rights. What a man lost by yielding up a part of his will he received back with large interest, in the shape of a wider circle of opportunities. The building of public roads, the introduction of a mail service, the institution of schools were the outcome of a better understanding of what could be gained by system and organization; yet it was left to our century to behold socialism in its (so far) highest development. Not before the invention and introduction of machinery driven by steam or electricity did labor become so subdivided that the production of one article required the work of a thousand hands. Through this subdivision of labor, man has lost his self-sufficiency and no longer stands out for himself. The adventures of a Selkirk, alias Robinson Crusoe, show how inferior a person accustomed to interdependence stands in self-sufficiency to his man, Friday, the savage. No sooner, however, is Crusoe brought again into touch with society, no sooner does he obtain implements produced by society, than he becomes equal to a host of barbarians. It is not Crusoe who vanquished the savages; it is society which is embodied in him. If Friday is the representative of individualism, and Crusoe that of socialism, what becomes of Mr. Garland's proud declaration, "I am an individualist"?

I do not doubt that Mr. Garland will agree with me that since the many have worked together for a common purpose, more commodities have been created, and life, therefore, has been made more pleasant than it ever was before. If, notwithstanding, we find our social conditions tangled, it is simply because socialism has not become fully developed. We have the choice only, between the self-sufficiency of the savage, or the interdependence of the civilized man. In the first case,

we may remain individualists with perfect freedom of competition and with the motto: "Everyone for himself and let the big fish eat the small fry." In the other case, we must turn socialists; we must form one large society which produces as one body all that it needs; but then each member must be carried by it, and must receive his share of the common product. Our social conditions are distorted merely because we have an organized society and force the individual to serve it and to give up his identity for it, while this same society fails to fulfil its duties and obligations towards each member. Humanity having risen from individualism to socialism, has not yet thrown off the old individualistic principles of competition, property, legacy, self-sufficiency, etc.; and so society looks like a butterfly, which, piercing the chrysalis, has not yet been able to shake off the cumbersome cocoon. As soon as society shall be held to fulfill its part of the contract; as soon as in exchange for the labor, be it physical or mental, which the individual brings into the enterprise he shall be indemnified to the full extent, he will also obtain all the liberties that are compatible with an organization. That at present his liberties are restricted, that the so-called free men of today are in a worse condition than slaves or serfs were formerly, is not because of the socialistic tendencies of our age, but of the individualistic legacies which have still survived and which hinder the development of socialism. The principles of competition, of property, of the right of bequest, and above all, the exaltation of the rights of the strong to suppress the weak, coupled with the division of labor, have brought about the unfortunate and unhealthy condition of society as we find it. Socialism has so far civilized man and not individualism. Let it reach maturity; let it shake off the last trammels of individualistic barbarism and the problem will be solved.

One more word. Mr. Garland fears paternalism to be a necessary but unwelcome "*conditio sine qua non*" of socialism. He is not mollified even by the promise of nationalists that fraternalism and not paternalism will form the foundation of the new social order. He claims, and with good right, that someone will have to stand at the head, and that the temptation will be always near to abuse such powers. Would he object also to Parentalism which includes a self-sacrificing love of the parents and the support of the members of the family from the day of birth to the day of death? "Everybody's business is nobody's business," is an old adage. Someone will always be needed to direct affairs, and without a government of some kind, an orderly state of society is inconceivable. Yet it must not be overlooked that in developed socialism the functions of the government will be far different than they are now, and the fear of abuse of power will have vanished, because individual accumulations will have ceased to be a necessity. The government will then not assume the appearance of a stern and arbitrary patriarch to whose individual will the members of the tribe must yield obedience, but rather that of fatherly and motherly care and love for the welfare and the happiness of the family.