

Since the above was written a friend has sent me an apropos quotation from a book by the British economist, Alfred Marshall, as follows: "But it is easier to interpret the classical doctrine that (rent does not enter into the cost of production) in a sense in which it is not true, and to scoff at it, than in the sense in which it was intended and is true. It seems best, therefore, to avoid the phrase."

Boston, Mass.

JOHN S. CODMAN.

#### WANTED—MORE EXACT INFORMATION

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

"The Dilemma of Communists" in the last number of LAND AND FREEDOM is a timely antidote for Marxian narcotics now so freely distributed in many places. It leads me to suggest that you might fill a long-felt want by tabulating some statistics concerning the condition of labor in Russia.

Quite a number of publications of communistic origin have reached my desk. They are devoted pretty much to depicting Russia as a militious nation of mirth and song. Red armies and athletic girls in shorts, all ablaze with joy and patriotism, swarming about the Kremlin.

Collective farms, factories, power plants and other achievemants illustrated in approved Standard Oil and General Motors fashion. Comely nomads and factory girls surrounding Stalin, like Father Divine at Krum Elbow.

It strikes me these pictures and fulsome praise are not so much to the point in proving the success of communism or failure of "capitalism." One might gather up any amount of such pictures in the illustrated papers and magazines of all "capitalist" countries.

What seems to me so strangely lacking in this Russian propaganda, is data concerning the compensation meted out to these proletariats for the work they do. Following Chodorov's contribution, will you be kind enough to publish some information regarding wages and modes of living in this Russian Eldorado.

Digging the Volga Canal ranks as a great achievement. Can you tell us the class of labor that performed the work and wages received? Do they observe the Marxian rule: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs?"

There is no desire on my part of be captious, but a suspicion that the literature coming to my desk does not show more than one side of the shield. Communism has been in full swing in Russia for twenty years with its planned economy. Wages should be far in advance of what they are in capitalist countries, but are they? Please tell us.

Seattle, Washington.

OLIVER T. ERICKSON.

#### SOME THOUGHTS ON CONCENTRATION ON A SINGLE STATE

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

An excellent circular letter has been received from the Henry George Constitutional "Committee On Organization And Action." The letter "talks turkey" and, in the parlance of the proletariat, it puts every Single Taxer "on the spot." The letter concludes by requesting each recipient to answer one way or another—"count me in or count me out."

Perhaps some of we Single Taxers are too diffident about getting into action—too lackadaisical about centralization of time, energy, finances and location, but there may be some who yet believe that the most logical plan for action has not been advanced. With due respect for the Committee's selection of Michigan as the scene of action, we arise to ask what determined this selection? Does this state offer the line of least resistance? Is it the most representative state?

Our curiosity leads us to learn that the following five States and District present the following situation as of the last federal survey:

State	Urban Pop.	Rural Pop.	Farm and Bldgs. values
District of Columbia.....	100%	0.0%	\$ 0,000,000,
Rhode Island .....	92.4	7.6	34,508,000

Massachusetts .....	90.2	9.8	773,663,000
Michigan .....	68.2	31.8	341,000,000
North Dakota.....	16.6	83.4	951,000,000

U. S. Totals.. .....	56.2	43.8	\$47,879,838,000
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In selecting a state for taxational action, we believe that the prime question is, shall the state be dominantly urban or rural? In other words, which are more vulnerable to taxation talks and legislative action, farmers or flat dwellers? Which class is the immediate victim of ground-rent exactions?

The next question is which state presents the least number of constitutional obstructions to the inauguration, or wider application, of site-value taxation? Personally, I do not know the constitutional limitations set up in any of the five foregoing localities except those of Massachusetts. In the Bay State an old Act of the legislature provides that a "betterment tax" may be levied upon land values which result from public service—an old Act which has been on the books since the early days when the first publicly-constructed turnpike was financed by assessing the value of land resulting from this public service. This Act has passed the Supreme Court's scrutiny as to its constitutionality, and long has been in use in a desultory, incomplete and unpublicized manner. Our Constitution also follows the national custom of requiring the taxing of personal property except in certain exemptions.

The Massachusetts picture thus is shown to be one where half the usual tax battle may be avoided by authority of the "betterment tax" statute. The personal-property-tax obstacle may be coped with by a non-discriminatory reduction in personal-property valuations down to a very nominal amount—an amount which meets with the constitutional requirement to tax this class of wealth—a reduction which would impose the least load upon labor and capital.

Perhaps Michigan offers an equally inviting prospect as to legal limitations. We do not know. Whether or not, Massachusetts' population presents a far greater percentage of immediate victims of ground-rent exploitation than does Michigan; 90.2 per cent in the Bay State as against 68.2 per cent in the Wolverine State. In answer to this comparison it may be argued that such mode of procedure appeals to the tenant's pocket-book rather than to his understanding, but we have to "be shown" that the altruism of Michigan muddlists ranks higher than that of the canned culture of our state of mind.

Many of we Single Taxers cannot afford to attend a Single Tax congress and substitute action for words in a centralized campaign which, in principle, we heartily endorse; nor can we afford immediately to dispatch a devalued dollar to each individual, or nucleus, which advises us of its determination to go over the top pronto, because these number more than a few—a number which at once defeats the centralization principle.

Personally we believe that the Henry George Congress is the most appropriate body about which to centralize for organization and action, because it appears to be the largest representation of all the Single Tax factions. It appears to be the only faction acting in parliamentary-congressional manner periodically at divers points.

This communication is not to be construed as an ultimatum to the effect that if you do not fight in my backyard I won't fight at all. It is offered merely to suggest and to learn about the selection of a state for campaign action. There may be a better battle ground than either Michigan or Massachusetts. In other words, has the Committee on Organization and Action a better campaign outline than any other Single Tax nucleus or free lance?

If LAND AND FREEDOM is in a position to act as a clearing-house, perhaps many Single Taxers would like to learn campaign specifications of each Single Tax group which evidently prefers its own methods. Perhaps each group would inform us why "less than 10,000" of all the Single Taxers in this nation failed to sign up with Secretary Rule on the dotted line (not meaning that Mr. Rule is on the dotted line). Perhaps the great army of silent Single Taxers will inform us why Secretary Rule cannot count them either in or out.

In any event, is there a better place than Massachusetts or Michigan for "Organization and Action?"

Fall River, Mass.

THOMAS N. ASHTON.

## THE MAJOR CRIME OF THE AGES

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

I think it safe to say that a vast majority of our citizens do not know with any precision what the "Single Tax" is. The HGSSS is doing wonderful educational work. But the scattered disciples throughout the country seem not able to accomplish much individually. Would we not accomplish more by stating our case in more aggressive language, forgetting for the time the improved tax aspect of the subject, great as that is?

We propose to abolish landlordism without direct compensation to present land owners. Why not put the proposition in that form directly and often? Landlordism is the major crime of the ages. It is the cause of all class poverty, crime and war, in all countries. It is the cause of classes; class jealousy and bitterness; class want and misery; class pride, extravagances and waste; of huge fortunes, and widespread distress and indigence.

The institution of landlordism was introduced into this country from Europe. Now that land here is all "owned," landlordism is doing here what it has done there. Look at the farmers calling for government dole; the spreading slums in every city; the ten or twelve millions of unemployed; the constant increase of farm tenancy. No New Deal remedies have checked nor even reduced the onward march of these evils.

The Socialists and Communists see this condition and are urging their remedies, and may eventually put them in effect,—by force, if they cannot by the ballot. The fascists also see these growing conditions, and propose to crystalize them into permanence by force, with a standing army and concentration camps. We who believe in democracy, know that the one and only thing that can preserve democracy is to restore free land to the people, as we have free water, free air, free sunshine.

Our proposition, like the avoidance of sin, is one that does not have two sides. Can we not invent more methods of impressing the urgency of the Single Tax upon those who do not know what they need so much to know?—for much good or evil can happen in a generation or two.

Oshkosh, Wis.

JOHN HARRINGTON.

## NEWS NOTES AND PERSONALS

THE death of Andrew P. Canning of Chicago, which occurred on September 10, is a great loss to the Henry George movement. Mr. Canning was born in Glasgow, Scotland. In 1869 he came to America when he was fifteen years old. His death was a shock to his family and friends, for he was apparently recovering from an operation and seemingly on the road to recovery. He was one of the real orators of our movement. He was a friend and subscriber to LAND AND FREEDOM for a long time. He had been active in the real estate business in Chicago since 1893. He is survived by his widow and two sons, Gordon of Evanston, attorney in Chicago, and Graeme Canning, professor of zoology in the University of Tennessee. The notice of his death was received from Mr. Gordon Canning, and we may perhaps be pardoned for quoting from this communication. Mr. Canning writes: "Knowing of your long friendship with my father and his great admiration for you I wanted to convey the notice of his death personally." Andrew Canning was regarded as an authority on Robert Burns and could quote from him *ad libitum*. It is interesting to reflect that at the time he passed away many of his friends from Chicago were gathered in Toronto to uphold the cause to which so many of his years had been devoted.

An admirable review of Professor George Geiger's "Theory of the

Land Question," appears in the *Standard* of Sydney, Australia, from the practised pen of S. V. Larkin.

THE New Frontier Lecture Guild has been started by the Graded Tax Committee of this city. Mr. Walter Fairchild and Mr. Laue are prepared to cover dates in Ohio and Pennsylvania between October 17 and October 29, but both will be available locally after that and before they leave. The work of the Frontier Lecture Guild is purely educational and entirely separate from legislative effort. Several measures sponsored by the Graded Tax Committee are awaiting consideration by the City Council.

THE annual Henry George Birthday Meeting, for many years a feature of the first September Sunday, was held this year at Arden on Sunday, Sept. 4; Harry W. Hetzel presiding. Speakers were Harold Sudell, Julian Hickok, Grace Isabel Colbron, Katherine F. Ross and Thomas Jefferson Davis. There was a very good attendance in the beautiful little open-air theatre designed by Frank Stephens. His ashes lie in front of the big rock that backs the stage.

Another who was sadly missed was Edwin (Ned) Ross, for many years the genial chairman of that Birthday Meeting. This was the first meeting since his death.

THERE are few papers that come to our desk in which fundamental economics are taught so simply and effectively as in *Cause and Effect*, from Foley, Alabama, and edited by C. R. Walker.

WITH the great voice of Peter Witt in Toronto still sounding in our ears we are doubly gratified by the receipt from Mr. Witt of an autographed copy of his pamphlet containing his broadcast over the radio on Abraham Lincoln, the Man of Sorrow. It is published and copyrighted by the William Feather Company. Lancaster Greene, B. W. Burger and Charles H. Ingeisoll are similarly honored.

W. L. CROSMAN of Revere, Mass., writes: "There are the indifferent persons who do not concern themselves about our economic ills. They probably have a steady job and are not concerned about the jobless brother, believing he could find employment if he tried. Such persons are self-satisfied. They belong to the same class as those who think there is something wrong with the economic setup, but 'Let George do it.' What chance is there for progress along the lines of justice and freedom when so many are obsessed with the idea of keeping abreast of the times concerning most all sports? Watch the pages that street-car riders read."

*Land and Liberty* of London, tells us of the determination of the London County Council to promote land values legislation in Parliament. This is good news indeed.

THE Rural Problem is the title of an article which appears in the *Louisiana Teachers' Journal* from the pen of Dr. J. H. Dillard, a lifelong Georgeist. He concludes: "Good schools, good roads and other improvements are all right. But whatever we may do, the basic means for rural advancement and for assuring rural progress is more division of the land and more homes held by the people in their own right."

JOSEPH F. COWERN of St. Paul writes: "You get out a fine paper. It must be quite a job to find so much interesting material."

BOTH the *New York Times* and the *New York Herald Tribune* had long accounts of the purchase of the building for the Henry George School by the trustees of the School. Both accounts were in the form of an interview with Dr. Chodorov.