

Our Common Aims.

THE Pulpit and the Press gush about the wonderful "progress" of the past and the expectation in the future. This "progress," so far, has resulted in making for our selves and for our fellows the most perfect of hells. With our labor-saving and man-destroying machines, with our devices for intensifying fierce and unnatural competition, we have made it practically impossible for anyone to be happy. We have only to look in the faces of our fellows and see how we are feeding each other with fire.

Therefore "all such as are religiously and devoutly disposed" set themselves—to allay suffering and to relieve want. I do not. While we live as we do, we ought to thank God that we and our brethren do suffer so, for only so can we learn that our lives are wrong. We are in want and misery or in affluence and deeper want, and we ought to be in want—every one of us—for we are of one flesh and together, as a community, we disregard the natural law, which we call the law of God, by which our wants might be supplied.

To me the most encouraging feature of the beginning of the New Century is; not the hospitals and the charities, the civil service and the absence of war in our borders; not the increased production and the better education; no, it is the manifest misery and sickness and pauperism, the dishonesty of government, the industrial war, the "over production" and the ignorance, that threaten to overwhelm us. These are the voices of our brother's blood that still cry from the ground until we recognize our sin. The promise of the New Century is that in it we may sweep away all this progress toward perdition and all the evil conditions that we create.

Our hope of the coming century is that it will see a peaceful but tremendous revolution. A total doing away with things as they are and the introduction of the Economic Kingdom of Heaven upon Earth. We say, as Jesus said two thousand years ago, "Behold the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." As Herron says (Introduction to "Things as They Are").

"Subjectively—that is, as regards our own minds—the kingdom of Heaven is a state in which man loves all his kind, and lives in communion with the love that is the substance of all things, without regard to reward or return. Self is eliminated from the horizon of thought and purpose. The affections enter that region of boundless selflessness in which one bestows all there is of himself upon the evil and the good, the loving and the

unloving, the farthest and the nearest, without estimating the worth of one above the other. He does not value his personal existence. He has no "interests." He lives in a universal communism of love. He dwells in a realm in which there is neither "mine" nor "thine," a realm beyond the reach of weights and measures, morals and laws. All there is of God's is his, and all there is of himself is his brethren's. Nothing can happen to him, for he has nothing to do with happenings. From his point of view nothing is evil. Beneath the shadows and the appearances of things, he abides in eternal love and life. Where he is, there is only good, love, and liberty."

"Objectively—that is, as regards the universe—the kingdom of heaven is a society in which all men work for the common good, and each receives according to his needs or power to use; a society in which no man calls anything his own because all belongs to every one; a society in which there is neither wage nor interest, neither price nor bargain; a society in which there is no more question about how much one shall have over and above another than there is question about a division of the air for individual breathing. The coming kingdom of heaven on earth will realize, in all economic facts, the highest inward aspirations of the soul."

We believe that this kingdom of heaven is to be reached by the broad way of Liberty and, as the fundamental of man's life is the land, we believe that this liberty must begin, but not end, with the liberation of the land.

The single tax on land values then is a means toward equal freedom; it is not an end in itself but a way of working out righteousness.

Let me say in a few words about what it is. We believe, as all Socialists believe, that men have equal rights, and that no man is more entitled than his brother to the use of the resources of the earth, which were here before he came and will be here equally after he is gone. Nor is he more entitled than the rest to what value the general growth and improvement of the community creates. Therefore, we hold that everyone should pay all the rest for any special advantage of situation on the earth, and we should accordingly take, in taxes for the community, the entire value of land.

We believe that each man is entitled to all that his labor produces, and that therefore no tax should be levied on the products of labor. For further particulars we refer to the single tax platform in that admirable little book, "The Shortest Road to the Single Tax."

Most of us have so much understanding of what the single

tax is, but few even of the most advanced realize how much it means.

I think it is clear that the taxation of land up to its full annual value would abolish interest.

Socialists have done a great work by abundantly showing that if the wastes of business were done away with, two or three hours' work per day each man would produce all the wealth we now produce; and also that the fierce competition, born of monopoly, is responsible for most of these wastes. But the revolution will not stop at mere economies, however vast.

Not only would the freeing of the land, by taxing it to its full value, and taxing nothing else, destroy speculation in land and therefore destroy the monopolies of natural resources which breed this fierce competition with its attendant waste, but it would open to all labor the very best opportunities to work, thereby incredibly increasing production.

This would make wealth so abundant that instead of men getting a price or premium for the use of it, they would be willing to give a part of it for its mere safe keeping.

Mr. George, in "Progress and Poverty," destroyed the theory of the basis of interest and then painfully built interest up again on a false foundation, thereby destroying the common ground, almost the starting point, from which reformers might work together for the destruction of our present system of organized iniquity.

We may leave to the imagination the far-reaching efforts of the abolition of speculation in land and the discontinuance of interest. No man to-day knows the changes that it will make.

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The Accomplishments of Opportunism.

From the *Neue Zeit*.

THE idea of the supremacy of the proletariat, which forms the climax of the revolutionary policy of the social democracy, may be summed up in these essential outlines: the proletariat, having become the majority of the nation, takes possession of the political powers. The political and military institutions of the state will be reorganized on the basis of the most far-reaching democracy. The abuse of the coercive power of the state will be forestalled so that it can no longer enforce the will of an economically ruling minority on the masses. One department of production after another passes into the hands of the state. Under these circumstances the state is transformed from a machine for the oppression of the people into an administrative organism. The proletariat will promote the development of communal property, of communal plants and co-operatives with all the political and economic power at its disposal. Private property in the means of production disappears and capitalist production makes room for socialism.

Now it is precisely the supremacy of the proletariat that is most criticized by opportunists. Not that they absolutely deny the possibility of this supremacy, but they question it, remove it into the far distance and want to eliminate it above all from the considerations of the present. According to them, the conditions are still so immature that the proletariat would only blunder in its legislation if it assumed control of the machinery of state. And its advent to power would end in a colossal defeat of the working class. For the present, therefore, they say, we must leave the control of the state in the hands of those who are now holding it, the landed aristocracy, the bankers, the captains of industry. We should view every electoral victory with evil forebodings because it brings us a step nearer to our—defeat. But with his characteristic inconsistency, the opportunist avoids as a matter of course to draw the logical conclusion from his premises. What has opportunism to offer instead of the supremacy of the proletariat, which it refuses to consider? If not by the conquest of the political powers, how should the proletariat abolish capitalist exploitation? What is to be done, how must the working class begin in order to realize this aim? In short, what is the essence of the much vaunted practical policy of opportunism? Let us try to obtain an answer to these questions from practical opportunism.

It is natural that opportunism, in giving up the hope of a