

John S. Codman, Hollis C. Joy, Charles H. Porter, Francis C. Goodale, Alexander MacKendrick, Professor John R. Nichols and Professor Comfort A. Adams.

DR. FRANCIS H. ROWLEY in that admirable periodical *Dumb Animals*, says in allusion to the European war: "May the victory come to those through whom it can best be used to hasten the day of reason among the nations of the earth, to serve the rights of man, and to bring the dawn of universal peace." As "a point of information" and in no spirit of caviling, what do you interpret, Doctor, these rights of man to be?

WAS A GREAT NEGRO THE FIRST FREE TRADER?

It was further decreed that all religious qualifications should be abolished, and, most remarkable of all, that the ports of San Domingo should be thrown open to the world. It may therefore be not unfairly claimed for Toussaint that he was the first practical Free Trader!—*Splendid Failures*, by Henry Graham, London, Eng., 1913.

THE Fels Fund has sent several kinds of packages of literature to the 135 high schools in the State of Washington, where the pupils are taking part in debates.

THE National Farmers' Association in convention at Fort Worth, Texas, adopted a report of its committee on farm ownership which asserts that there is no hope for the landless, penniless man save in the adoption of those reforms which have proved so successful in New Zealand. If we avoid the mistakes into which the land reformers of New Zealand fell, and adopt such features of its legislation as have proven successful, we will have the beginnings of a true system of land reform.

A SINGLE Tax Sunday school meets in the public library at Cleveland. W. F. Bien is the superintendent.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NATURAL ADVANTAGES AND RENT.

EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

The article in July-August number by Philip H. Cornick once more brings forward the question, "Do natural advantages help in the fixing of rent?"

There are two widely differing conditions of rent; that under the present tenure of "fee simple," or rent to a private landlord, and that under the system of "absolute freehold," which Henry George contemplated and which his followers desire to bring about.

That those who formulated the "Ricardian law" thought only in terms of "fee simple," we are quite assured, and that that law takes cognizance of natural advantages is equally certain, for the private landlord takes all wealth produced beyond a bare living for those who have produced it.

We may say that the idea presented to the average man is somewhat thus:

This is the private landlord's world; if so it is very good of the private landlord to let us use his world on any conditions whatever.

Some few have decided that it is not the private landlord's world, and have made up their minds that it is everybody's world, but those who have even a small knowledge of the true relationship of man to man, know that this world does not belong to man at all, but that all men are free to use it as they may require; nothing belongs to man, except that which owes its origin to man.

Now, the rent we wish to assess is not a payment for permission to use the earth, for every man's right being to use all natural opportunities freely, no man may charge men for using the earth. What, then, is this new rent?

All that a man produces is his, all that all men produce is all men's; when a man works away from his fellows, or entirely without their aid, all that he makes is his absolutely, and it is stealing for individual man as for all men to take from him by force, fraud or stealth what is his.

But when a man works where he has all the advantages offered by the community, so that little work wins a large reward, the part of that large reward is rent, the price of the co-operation of the community with him. Ergo, rent is the price to be paid for all the advantages, *made by man*, that is reflected in the value of sites. But if it is the price of advantages made by man it has no relation to *natural advantages*. As soon as we take for public use the whole rent the rigid lines which bound each block and mark where each fee simple title ends, will become at once elastic. The man with a little too much space will be able to let the man next him have the surplus, the governing bodies will soon understand that it is no business of theirs who occupy land and how they use it, since every man will be free to do as he wills, so long as he hurts no one. The payment of rent where rental value has arisen, will be the only condition of occupancy. Natural advantages may be freely used by all; none may tie up what he is not using from use by others.—G. R. HARRISON, New South Wales, Aus.

THE TAXATION OF MINERAL LANDS.

EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

I cannot agree with the conclusions arrived at by Mr. Philip H. Cornick in the July-August REVIEW, concerning the taxation of mining lands, as they are too much of a socialistic nature.

Quite recently our members have been discussing this subject, and there has been a great difference of opinion. As we were not unanimous I decided to write to Sydney and Melbourne to ascertain the views of our co-workers there. The Sydney people agreed with my view of the question, but the Melbourne folks put forth the following proposition:

"An alleged auriferous area to be put up at auction. The price to be a percentage of the gold won after wages and all working expenses are paid. The Government not to receive any dividend till the whole of the capital provided by the investors has been returned to the shareholders. Provision would have to be made to prevent the prof-

its being absorbed by means of high wages to the owners."

I am of the opinion that the above proposition would not prove effective in destroying the monopoly of mineral lands. A person might agree to pay a "percentage of the gold won," but instead of developing the property, he might keep it idle, and hold the land out of use. As there would be no gold won, the holder, under the suggested scheme could not be called upon to contribute anything to the Government. Furthermore, if the Government are not to "receive any dividend till the whole of the capital provided by the investors has been returned to the shareholders," the Government might never participate. Profits from mining operations might be used to pay for development work, and for buildings and treatment plants, and because of these extra assets the market value of the shares might be five times the amount actually subscribed by the original shareholders; yet until the "whole of the capital provided by the investors had been returned" the Government could not claim any share of that natural wealth which rightly belongs to the community. These two points are the weak spots in the scheme proposed by our Victorian friends, and I do not think the scheme is a satisfactory solution of the problem.

The idea held by some of our own members is that mineral lands cannot be assessed under any definite Single Tax principle, and that a compromise is necessary. They contend that by taxing the value attaching to land in a town which grows as a result of the mine, you get the economic rent of the mineral land as well. They say the town is brought into existence because of the mine, and if there were no mine there would be no town land values.

I cannot agree with this aspect of the question. We may have a mine returning mineral wealth worth, say, £200,000 a year, and there may be only a few men living in tents getting the whole of the proceeds. As in this case there would be practically no town values, the aforesaid scheme would not secure to the community the economic rent of the mineral land. Another mine may be returning miner_a1