

"Henry George—of course I've read his books—but a long time ago. Rather radical, aren't they?"

"Rather conservative," I replied "if one understands the real meaning of the term 'private property.'"

While he, busy man that he is, might not feel he has time to read 568 pages of economics, he perhaps will take time for 214 pages so I shall send him a copy of the abridgement of *Progress and Poverty*. I had given my last copy to Lady Astor—who said it was a book she had long wanted to read.

But it was on the continent that I got my biggest thrill and not from already made Single Taxers but from potential ones. At Geneva there are groups of students old and young who are endeavoring to understand and bring about peaceful international relations. One of these groups is the College federation under the able guidance of A. E. Zimmermann. Here I met youngsters from America, England, Germany, France, Denmark, Poland, Sweden, Japan, India, etc., etc., while unfortunately no one that I talked to seemed to be an out and out Single Taxer—they are all groping for a solution to the war problem and hoping to find a way to bring about a proper economic adjustment. I sowed a few seeds there and am now sending across to some of these boys, copies of the *Abridgement*. I am more firmly convinced than ever that *we must get hold of the young, groping, flexible minds*. We have simply got to catch 'em while they're young—and learn 'em in the way they should go—and as soon as I get rested up from this holiday trip—I intend to roll up my sleeves and go to it!

I thought I was a free trader when I left these shores—but now that I've returned I'm a *ferocious* one. The customs business is so SILLY that I wonder when we will ever grow up and develop a sense of humor! But it took all my own sense of humor to prevent me from growing belligerent on the N. Y. dock, when, after declaring my own purchases and paying a heavy duty on the same, I saw passengers whom I knew to be Protectionists, and who had bought five times what I had, sail by the customs officials without paying one cent of fine! Golly! Los Angeles, Calif. ANNA GEORGE de MILLE

TAXATION AND THE FARMER

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Senator Arthur Capper of Kansas had an article on taxation entitled "Overtaxing the Farmer" in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* of August 7. After discussing the findings of a taxation survey made by the United States Department of Agriculture in Tipton, Miami, and Monroe counties of Indiana he declares that "virtually every survey made anywhere shows that an unjust share of the country's burden of taxes is being carried by agriculture and that this has been increasing." He then says that taxes per acre on farm real estate have increased 159% in Kansas from 1910 to 1923 while selling value has advanced only 35%, that taxes on farm lands and farm property are 140% higher throughout the United States than in 1914 while the selling value of farm products has increased less than 60%. He makes no attempt however to show just what percent of the increase in taxes is borne by the land and what percent is borne by the buildings and other improvements.

Now a man who is vitally interested in agriculture and rural conditions of life, as we assume Senator and Editor Capper is, ought to have a pretty thorough understanding of the underlying causes of this unjust burden on the farmer. But has he? He admits that the present system of taxation is unfair. He says that the farmer can not "pass on" his taxes as the merchant does by adding them to the price of the goods but never a word about the landlord who passes his taxes on to the merchant and to the farmer as well as to the ultimate consumer, in increased rents.

He asserts that we have allowed an inefficient and destructive system of taxation to become firmly rooted in American life. What does he consider an equitable taxation system? Merely one based upon the axiom that "taxes should be levied according to ability to pay." He proposes such taxes as a tax on gasoline, a personal property tax, a

gross production tax on oils and minerals, a tax on non-essentials such as tobacco and commercialized entertainments, and a state income tax.

His remedy then is to relieve the farmer of an unjust share of taxes by levying more taxes, all of which will fall upon the farmer as much as on anyone else. Tobacco is taxed already so we may assume that the Senator means additional taxes laid by the State. If such is his idea then two items that are very much used by farmers will cost more to the farmers, that is, the weed, and gas for the tractor, Ford, and gas engine. How in the name of common sense will the farmer receive any benefit from the means proposed? The Senator admits that we must meet the question squarely because taxation is one of the great economic problems of the United States, but he shows clearly that with all his knowledge of farmers' problems he is all at sea as to the remedy for the wrong he condemns. Is it possible that he has never studied the principles of the Single Tax? Or is he just unwilling to know the truth?

He closes his article with a plea for economy in government and a demand that taxation be distributed according to ability to pay. What a howl he would set up if a tradesman used that idea in charging his customers. It is about time that we began to revise our opinions of certain Senators from the West who up to now have been posing as citadels of liberal thought.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

JOHN LUXTON.

KNOWLEDGE THAT UNFITS FOR "PUBLIC SERVICE."

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

How true it is, that knowledge of the Single Tax unfits a man for public service. More truth, as you say, than La Follette ever dreamed.

Many is the time I have thought to myself, "What would I do if I were elected to such-and-such an office on a regular ticket?" I have felt almost foolish at the thought. I would be so out of place that I wouldn't know what to do. My knowledge surely has unfitted me for that kind of public service. But how different it would be to be elected on a Single Tax ticket! Union, N. Y.

C. LEBARON GOELLER.

THE NEED OF FLYING FIELDS.

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Commander John Rogers, with whom I was in constant service night and day before he left on the trans-Pacific Aviation flight to the Hawaiian Islands, told me before he left that I had done my part to make his flight a success, and I replied, "I wish you and all the officers and personnel great good luck." As I write the U. S. Navy and Army Aviation Radio Headquarters here in the Appraisal Building here have no news of the missing men. I trust the next few hours will find them located—and safe.

All cities need "flying fields" but many report that the state of their finances "will not permit them to meet the almost prohibitory cost of the land desired nor approach the required land rental of the land-owners." How this barrier is erected against every department and activity of civilized life! Los Angeles, Calif.

WALDO WERNICKE.

NEWS NOTES AND PERSONALS

MISS LILLIAN CARPENTER, sister of our own Corinne Carpenter, was present and gave an organ recital at the National Association convention of organists which met in Cleveland on August 3.

THE *Wide World* recently published as its leading story, "The Land Sharks," by Hugh Rane. It is significant that writers of fiction are turning to this topic for material.