

will come—a free earth, free men, and free trade, and a race unshackled to grasp those mightier problems that concern themselves not with earth and time, but with eternity and the spiritual nature of man. This is the goal of freedom set for mankind when the aboriginal prototpye swung his stone axe in the primeval forest. For man is more than a working, producing animal; he is an immortal soul.

THE PRINCIPLE PLAINLY STATED

(*For the Review*)

By **F. M. PADEL FORD**

Sooner or later every important problem in life resolves itself into a question of right and wrong. The Single Tax should be judged by this standard.

Moral responsibility implies free will. Free will, however, does not imply personal, economic, or political liberty. The will may be entirely free even though the person be enslaved. It may be, then, that judging from this standpoint, men cannot claim that liberty is a natural right. Nevertheless, for one man to deprive another of liberty or to exact tribute from him, or for organized society to deprive a man of liberty or property except for some violation of law, is clearly wrong. That it is wrong will not be denied by those who accept as a rule of life the law which reads:—"All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them."

If it is wrong to deprive men of liberty, liberty may be regarded as man's natural heritage—as his by right of birth. Liberty implies the individual's right to air to breathe, to land upon which to live and work, and to the fruits of his own labor. If a man is denied access to land he is thereby deprived of liberty, and just in proportion as access to land is conditioned upon the payment of a part of the fruits of one's labor is liberty abridged.

Those who control the land control the people, and this quite as effectively as under chattel slavery. Chattel slavery is that form of human bondage under which laborers are despoiled while yet there is an abundance of free land. As soon as all land becomes private property or comes under such control as to prevent its being used by those who need it, economic slavery, which is now a much more profitable form of human exploitation, is practically automatically established. Chattel slavery has been almost everywhere abolished. Economic slavery has taken its place. Economic slavery rests upon the monopolization of land. Economic liberty cannot be attained except the monopolization of land be abolished.

Under the law of individual liberty a man may claim the right to use all the land that he needs, and he may claim also the products of his own

labor. Certain labor products are inseparable from land; they can be valued, but they cannot be moved. Laws of order, therefore, make it requisite that a man be given a permanent title to a given section of land. But lands differ in productiveness. These differences in productiveness are due, not to the labor of individuals, but to the presence and activities of the whole people, and to those things which the Creator provides, without cost to us, in and on the earth.

Those who own or control land that is especially productive have an advantage over such of their fellowmen as are less favorably situated—in other words, who enjoy special privileges.

Every organized government has need of revenue. To obtain revenue, obviously, something must be taxed. Taxes levied on special privileges will have a twofold effect: They will provide revenue and, if properly apportioned, equalize the opportunities that men severally enjoy in the commonwealth. Such taxes are, then, strictly in accord with the moral law. This cannot be said of present-day methods of taxation, which violate practically every canon of justice.

The necessity for government implies a science of taxation, and this implies the possibility of measuring, with an approach to scientific accuracy, the value of the advantages which accrue through ownership or control of specified tracts of land. As a matter of fact this valuing has already been done in every civilized country in the world: the sale value of land, which is but the capitalization of its rent, actual or potential, is a practically accurate estimate of the value of the special privileges under consideration.

But today the larger part of land-rent flows into private purses, and governments, to obtain revenue, tax heavily labor-created wealth and capital, thus infringing upon the property rights of individuals. These property rights governments should sacredly preserve, as their violation not only lessens the prosperity of the entire people but endangers the civil State.

It is inexpedient, at this time, to attempt to trace into their many ramifications, the disastrous effects of this unjust practice. That its effects are disastrous, and that neither domestic tranquility nor permanent international peace can come until our taxation laws have been made to conform with the requirements of morals, is beyond question true.

As far as we can see, labor constitutes the only just basis for private ownership of property. Primarily, to the producer belongs what is produced. One's title to property should be traceable, at all times, to the producer.

Land rent is a community-created increment. If individuals would have their rights to own property recognized they must recognize that the principle upon which their property rights are based applies with equal force to what the community creates. Morally speaking, no individual has any claim whatever to the values that attach to land—which is to say that individuals have no right to hold, as private property, wealth or money that is gained through traffic in land.

If the community fails to exercise its right to what it has itself created, it is inevitable that some members of the community will reap where they have not sown, will be given wealth, or its equivalent, to which they have, and can have, no just title while others are deprived of what is clearly theirs. While this injustice exists in the very foundations of the State, disorder must reign in all our social affairs. Minimum-wage laws, old-age pensions, laws for the regulation of trusts, and societies for the suppression of vice and disease, together with the many other nostrums that are enthusiastically advocated, are but palliatives which can never do more than to relieve in part the disorders engendered by this disregard of morals in our fundamental law.

A tax levied on any labor product is, in effect, a penalty imposed upon industry and thrift.

When governments, having recognized the folly of fining men for doing useful work, exercise their property rights in the fund that society creates—and this may be done by levying taxes that will absorb economic rent—land monopolization will be abolished and economic liberty attained.

To bring about this reform, which seems so simple, but which must ultimately result in the betterment of every human being, is the one great task that now confronts us. If we would haste the coming of the reign of the Prince of Peace, let us labor in its behalf.

CURRENT CRITICISM OF THE SINGLE TAX BY THE ECONOMISTS

(For the Review)

By F. LINCOLN HUTCHINS

"Man yields to custom, as he bows to fate,
In all things ruled—mind, body and estate;
In pain, in sickness, we for cure apply
To them we know not, and we know not why."

Crabbe—Tale III. The Gentleman Farmer

It is surprising to note the influence of custom upon the minds of men who have had intensive training along any line of thought. Surely the Single Taxer may be excused if he joins in with the general distrust of opinion coming from scholastics of the present day, when the keenest minds, trained to scientific thinking, appear to be so blinded by conventions as to make it useless to look to them for any progressive ideals. It seems impossible for them to sweep their minds clear of the cobwebs of that evolution that was effective in creation of things as they are; or to avoid that splitting of hairs which befog the fundamental considerations lying at the base of desire for change.

An interesting example of the latter is found in the discussion between