

The Single Tax

A JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF TAXING LAND VALUES.

VOL. IV.—No. 40.

GLASGOW, SEPTEMBER, 1897.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

A MAN AND A BROTHER.

THE wood of the forest, the grass of the field, and all the natural fruits of the earth, which, when land was in common, cost the labourer only the trouble of gathering them, come even to him to have an additional price fixed upon them, when land has become private property. He must then pay for license to gather them, and must give up to the landlord a portion of what his labour either collects or produces. This portion, or what comes to the same thing, the price of this portion, constitutes the rent of land."—Adam Smith.



IF one man can command the land upon which others labour, he can appropriate the produce of their labour as the price of his permission to labour. The fundamental law of nature that the enjoyment by man shall be consequent upon his exertion is thus violated. The one receives without producing, the others produce without receiving. The one is unjustly enriched; the others are robbed."

—Henry George.

Notes and Comments.

We learn that, on the invitation of the Rhymney (Merthyr Tydvil) Urban District Council, no fewer than 70 local authorities in England and Wales have petitioned Parliament in favour of the Taxation of Ground Rents and Land Values. The list is made up of the following:—12 Town Councils—West Ham, Sunderland, Huddersfield, Hastings, Devonport, Swindon, Lowestoft, Ryde, Ventnor, Dewsbury, Port Talbot, and Rawtenstall—40 urban District Councils, 15 rural District Councils, 1 County Council, 2 Vestries—Camberwell and St. Mary's, Battersea. A number of Boards of Guardians have also sent in a similar petition, and we hope to give particulars as to these next month.

This is encouraging. It will act as a tonic to all who are active in spreading the gospel of the Taxation of Land Values. This advance by so many local representative bodies is significant of the progress the question is making in the public mind. The straight resolution passed at the public demonstration held recently in Portsmouth under the auspices of the local Trades' Council, and the resolution on the agenda of the Trades' Congress are other indications of the headway our ideas are making. Time is on our side. Let us be persistent in our efforts in the future as in the past, and we are bound to win.

If you desire to have the fullest information regarding the action of the Glasgow Corporation on the question of securing powers from Parliament to make Land Values the basis of local taxation, secure a copy of the report of the Scottish Land Restoration Union, 1896-97. It will be posted to any address for One Penny.

An Interesting Deal.

John Batman's title deed for the land on which the city of Melbourne, Australia, now stands, has been bought by the British Museum for £25. It records his purchase, June 6, 1835, from three brothers, all called Jaga-jaga, of a tract called Dutigalla, 500,000 acres in extent, near Port Philip. The boundaries are carefully defined. The consideration given in

return was 20 pairs of blankets, 30 tomahawks, 100 knives, 50 pairs of scissors, 30 looking glasses, 200 handkerchiefs, 100 pounds of flour, 6 shirts; with an additional yearly tribute of 100 pairs of blankets, 100 knives, 100 tomahawks, 50 suits of clothes, 50 looking glasses, 50 pairs of scissors, 5 tons of flour.

Some of this land during the Melbourne boom was sold at £500,000 to £600,000 an acre, and some of it at the rate of £2,000 a square foot.

£43,500 for 43½ Acres.

Referring to the resolution on land values, to be moved at the Trades' Congress this month, the *Glasgow Herald* asks—"Would it not be well for them to define what is ground value apart from the taxable subjects upon it?"

Two days following, the same paper states that the Corporation of Glasgow has decided to purchase 43½ acres, between the river Clyde and Rutherglen Road, as an addition to the Glasgow Green, at a cost of £1,000 per acre. If the *G.H.* abstracts the value of the improvements already on this piece of swamp land, it will discover that the "ground value, apart from the taxable subjects upon it," amounts to exactly the price paid by the Corporation—£43,500. A respected and reputed valuator declared this to be the value. The Trades' Congress policy is to tax these acres on this declared value of the land, "apart from improvements."

A Phase of the Question.

As showing the peculiar nature and working of our land system in Edinburgh and Glasgow, a correspondent writes:—"In Edinburgh, with a population of 261,225 in 1891, they have no fewer than 7,210 owners of houses, while Glasgow (parliamentary) with a population of 564,981 in 1891 has only 1,772 owners. In Edinburgh the ground landlords split the feu duty over every half flat or even third part of a flat, but the ground landowners in Glasgow refuse; thence you cannot purchase a flat or half flat, but take a whole tenement at a cost of £1,400 as a minimum. There is no inducement in Glasgow for any working or person of moderate means acquiring a house such as exists in Edinburgh—it is a monopoly."

The custom referred to in Edinburgh may have its advantages to those who can invest in the ownership of a flat or part of a flat, but it does nothing to meet the wants of those who are rack-rented and forced into the congested districts. If land values were taxed, the land speculators would go, and all vacant building sites would be opened up for use at their normal value. This would give every man an opportunity to purchase or rent decent house accommodation.

Count Tolstoi on Henry George.

Ernest Howard Crosby in the August number of the "Progressive Review," tells of a "two days with Count Tolstoi." Speaking of Henry George, the Count said—"I like his works especially for the strong Christian feeling running through them." The Single Tax appeared to him the only practical scheme of reform now before the public; and in a letter written to Mr. Crosby, Tolstoi says—"Henry George has sent me all his books; I knew some of them, but some others, as the "Perplexed Philosopher," and others, were new to me. The more I know of him the more I esteem him, and am astonished at the indifference of the civilised world to his work. If the new Tsar were to ask me what I would advise him to do, I would say to him—"Use your autocratic power to abolish the landed property in Russia, and to introduce the Single Tax system, and then give up your power, and give the people a liberal constitution."

Klondike and Glasgow.

"Old miners who realise the state of affairs in Klondike predict death and distress during winter. Those who are returning now, however, admit that the strike of gold was and is one of the greatest in the world's history. They also predict further finds in the future, but add that all the land has been staked out long ago, and those who go up to Klondike now must prospect for themselves, and buy claims from their present owners or else work for them."—*Reuters' Telegram in Herald, 31st August.*

We also predict death and distress during the winter in the Glasgow goldfields—a part of the most valuable gold "strike" in the world's history. That there will be other and greater

"finds" of "unearned increment" in the future is an absolute certainty as every man can understand. All of the land has been "staked" out long ago, some hundreds of years ago, in the Glasgow goldfields, in this inexhaustible mine which gets richer as time goes on. In the neighbourhood of Klondike the people can prospect for themselves, but our fields have all been monopolised, and now we must buy the claims of the holders, or else work for them and on their terms. Besides which we have to pay £500,000 in rates to keep the fields in good order, so that "the owners may be induced to remain and give us employment."

A Single Tax Conference.

We would like to direct attention to the letter appearing in another column from Mr. J. S. Jamieson in favour of a meeting of Single Taxers. It has our approval. Such a gathering should bring together a great number of the active Single Taxmen and Land Reformers in Britain, and would certainly result to the advantage of the movement. Our policy, as Mr. Jamieson says, is one of education or permeation; and, while we are satisfied with the progress that has been made, we feel sure it would be of some benefit to the cause for Single Taxers to take counsel together for more united action. There are now many reformers throughout the country who are heartily with us in our work and aspirations. It is surely advisable that we should make the most of such friends. Such a conference would bring together the men who are regarded as pioneers and leaders in the movement, many of whom only know each other through our publications, and by the medium of that agency of civilisation—the Post Office. We hope Mr. Jamieson's timely suggestion will meet with a hearty response, and that as a result our members and friends throughout Britain will soon have the pleasure of meeting in conference at some central town.

Causes of Poverty.

Statistics issued by the Charity Organisation Society of New York, confirm the inference which the Recorder recently drew from the penitentiary statistics of Illinois, that crime is due in most part neither to intemperance nor to illiteracy.

The Charity Organisation statistics cover the period from July 1, 1895, to July 1, 1896, and concern 2,060 persons. The individuals referred to varied in age from under 14 to over 70 years. All the cases upon which the statistics are based were carefully investigated by the society, which certainly could have no motive in exonerating illiteracy and intemperance from responsibility for poverty. But that is the result of the figures. As to illiteracy, 90 per cent. could read and 86 per cent. could both read and write; and as to causes of poverty, intemperance figured in only 12 per cent. of the cases.

The chief cause of the poverty in these cases seems to have been lack of employment, the percentage being 34. And this indication that a glutted labour market is the prime cause of poverty is confirmed by the decisions of the society as to the relief required. In the category of those "needing work rather than relief," the percentage is 48.

These statistics are a rebuke to the classes who, because they are comfortable, imagine that no one need be poor. They tell the story eloquently of a state of society which is not only pathetic in its shadows, but infamous in its high lights,—of a state of society in which the rich actually produce and flourish upon the poverty for which they cast responsibility upon the poor.—*Cleveland Recorder.*

Leader of the Knights of Labour.

A LIVE ADVOCATE OF THE SINGLE TAX.

The following letter, from the General Master Workman of the Knights of Labour, speaks for itself:—

Office of General Master Workman, Order of Knights of Labour, Surplus Springs, Ark., May 25, 1897.
To Chas. A. Brothers, Dover, Del.:

Your favour of May 9th, came to my office while I was absent in Ohio, which is the cause of the delay in answering it. I consider the work being done by our friends in Wilmington as a starting point for a great National victory along those lines. I am not only in sympathy with the Single Tax movement, but a real live Single Taxer as well, and you may rest assured I will urge all my personal friends and Knights of

Labour in Wilmington to give the movement all possible support. Wishing you and the cause in Delaware the greatest possible measure of success.—I am, fraternally yours,

J. R. SOVEREIGN, G. M. W.

We commend this attitude to the Labour leaders of Britain. It is about time they were making the discovery that in the solution of the Land Question lies the solution of the labour problem. At present, trades' union leaders are fighting strenuously to better the condition of labour. But it is all in vain so long as the Land Question is untouched. Every improvement results in raising rent and increasing the values of land. This naturally begets land monopoly, which forces both capital and labour out of employment at every turn. A tax on land values would destroy this power that so insiduously waylays the active partners in the production of wealth; and until it is destroyed all other schemes for the emancipation of labour, even when successful, can only bring concessions which will but strengthen the power of the land monopolist to take the fullest advantage of the new arrangement. Mr. Sovereign is to be congratulated on seeing this so clearly. It will be well for the cause of labour here when the leaders take such a square look at the bottom cause of our industrial strife.

Robinson Crusoe and the Protectionist.

Robinson Crusoe, we will suppose, is still alone on his island. Let us suppose an American Protectionist is the first to break his solitude with the long-yearned-for music of human speech. Crusoe's delight we can well imagine. But now that he has been there so long he does not care to leave, the less since his visitor tells him that the island, having now been discovered, will often be visited by passing ships. Let us suppose that—after hearing Crusoe's story, seen his island, enjoyed such hospitality as he could offer, told him in return of the wonderful changes in the great world, and left him books and papers,—our Protectionist prepares to depart, but, before going, seeks to offer some kindly warning of the danger Crusoe will be exposed to from the "deluge of cheap goods" that passing ships will seek to exchange for fruit and goats. Imagine him to tell Crusoe just what Protectionists tell larger communities, and to warn him that, unless he takes measures to make it difficult to bring these goods ashore, his industry will be entirely ruined. "In fact," we may imagine the Protectionist to say—"so cheaply can all the things you require be produced abroad, that unless you make it hard to land them, I do not see how you will be able to employ your own industry at all.

"Will they give me all these things?" Robinson Crusoe would naturally exclaim. "Do you mean that I shall get all these things for nothing, and have no work at all to do? That will suit me completely. I shall rest and read and go fishing for the fun of it. I am not anxious to work, if without work I can get the things I want."

"No, I don't quite mean that," the Protectionist would be forced to explain; "they will not give you such things for nothing. They will, of course, want something in return; but they will bring you so much, and take away so little, that your imports will vastly exceed your exports, and it will soon be difficult for you to find employment for your labour."

"But I don't want to find employment for my labour," Crusoe would naturally reply, "I did not spend months in digging out my canoe, and weeks in tanning and sewing these goat skins, because I wanted employment for my labour, but because I wanted the things. If I can get what I want with less labour, so much the better, and the more I get and the less I give in the trade you tell me I am to carry on—or, as you phrase it, the more my imports exceeds my exports, the easier I can live and the richer I shall be. I am not afraid of being overwhelmed with goods. The more they bring the better it will suit me."

And so the two might part, for it is certain that no matter how long our Protectionist talked, the notion that his industry would be ruined by getting things with less labour than before would never frighten Crusoe.—*Henry George, Chap. 12, "Protection or Free Trade."*

The Battle of Hastings.

BY MAJOR EDWARDS.

The following is from a letter of recent date in a Dover paper:—

Hast thou considered, Dover dear, the resolution passed by the Town Council of neighbour Hastings, dated July 2nd? Here it is:—

"That, in the opinion of this Council, a great anomaly exists in the fact that ground landlords are exempt from any liability to contribute towards local taxation on ground rents, ground values, royalties, and way leaves, and that, in justice to those who are already heavily assessed, and in order that local government may be carried out more thoroughly and efficiently, this question should be dealt with by Parliament at an early date.

"Your petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that you will be pleased, at the earliest possible moment, to introduce into your honourable house, and pass into law, a measure authorising local authorities to assess to all local and parochial rates all incomes derived from ground rents, ground values, royalties, and way leaves."

Such is the resolution of the Hastings Town Council, which has received the benediction of the Tory press of Hastings in the words:—

"This is by no means a dangerous Radical measure, to be repudiated by all true Conservatives, etc."

A similar, though more drastic, resolution is about to be submitted to the Portsmouth Trades Council meeting on the 31st July, concluding thus:—

"(3). As an instalment of justice, and as a first and most necessary step towards improving the condition of Labour, we demand that all rates and taxes be removed from production and trade, and imposed on the value of land independent of improvements."

* * * *

Use it progressively—that is, let the tax on land values be one shilling in the pound the first year, two shillings the second year, and so on, until the whole annual value of land, apart from improvements, is swept into the public purse for public purposes.

In order that the public appetite may be whetted for the huge meal which such a progressive tax will ultimately provide, it will be advisable to do something which will at once strike the public imagination, and show how the toast is to be buttered. Thus land values are shown by the income tax returns to be worth considerably over £220,000,000 a year. One shilling in the pound, £11,000,000 the first year, and such a sum is sufficient to abolish the tobacco duties at one stroke, so that the poor man would get his ounce screw of tobacco for about one halfpenny instead of threepence! Surely this would wake up even that remarkable political prodigy, the Conservative working man.

Anyhow his wife will wake up the following year when the tea and other "breakfast table duties" are knocked off, and the new "battle of Hastings" will be finally fought and won when the excise duties are abolished in the course of the next year or two, and the poor man finds his pot of beer costing him only fourpence instead of fivepence.

Local rates will be lowered and finally abolished as the reform goes on, and, as a glorious result of the courageous first step of the Hastings Town Council, England will finally emerge as a genuine free trade country, without a single custom house to darken her white cliffs, nor a rate collector to darken the lives of her householders.

* * * *

There is something delightfully in accordance with the "eternal fitness of things" that the feudal yoke should have been laid upon our necks at Hastings in 1066, and that Hastings should now, in this year of Jubilee (*c.f.* Leviticus xxv. 8—24), be taking the lead in shaking off that same yoke!

The Triumph of Stagnation.

In an article in the "Progressive Review" on "the Decadence of the House of Commons," Mr. R. Wallace, M.P., Edinburgh, says:—

"It may be doubted whether the prevailing Liberalism of the House of Commons is prepared for democracy of this advanced order, and this state of things is another among the causes of the lack of interest alleged of the

Ask all Candidates for Municipal and Parliamentary Honours this Question—

present Parliament. There is no energetic lead, just as there is no really great man, on either side. From a Conservative Parliament, especially with an overwhelming Conservative majority, one expects only the triumph of stagnation. But in these circumstances Liberal leaders should be exceptionally progressive. Have they been so here? Even the *Daily News* complains that there is a 'general impression that the Liberals in the House of Commons are not led with sufficient pertinacity and vigour.' How can they be? 'What policy can they plead for? True Liberalism demands that its tradition should be carried on, and that its principles should be worked out to their full democratic conclusions. How can the existing leaders do this? They are practical aristocrats, members of an oligarchy, self appointed, not democratically chosen. The chief of them are lawyers or ex-lawyers, and the lawyer instinct is conservative, while the lawyer habit of twisting the mind into making the worse appear the better reason is not conducive to love of truth for its own sake, or audacity in developing ideas to their complete and legitimate applications. What, then, have they to offer? The 'New Liberalism' can only mutter 'social reform,' more Factory Acts, more Compensation Bills. But Mr. Chamberlain can outbid them on that ground, and they will perish of impotence unless they can muster up courage to attack the whole aristocratic system alike on its religious and civil sides, with the aim of ultimately making the people master in its own house.'

The Trades' Union Congress and the Land Question.

In an editorial the *London Echo*, August 5th, says—"In season and out of season *The Echo* has noted and encouraged the growing tendency of labour to recognise the supreme importance of the Land Question. This tendency has its latest manifestation on the agenda paper of the Trades' Union Congress, to be held in Birmingham next month. The Parliamentary Committee has found a prominent place in the programme which they will submit to the Congress for a resolution in favour of the Taxation of Ground Values. This will be moved by Mr. W. Inskip, J.P., the treasurer of the Parliamentary Committee, and, if carried, will instruct that Committee 'to promote a Bill with this object in view.' The General Union of Associations of Power-Loom Overlookers has given notice of the following resolution:—"That, in the opinion of this Congress, it is essential for the maintenance of British industries to nationalise the land, mines, minerals, royalty rents, railways, waterways, and docks, and to municipalise all water, artificial light, and tramway undertakings, within their several authorities, and that the Parliamentary Committee be instructed to promote and support legislation with the above object." A similar resolution, but dealing only with mining royalties, stands on the agenda in the name of another association. The National Hosiery Federation, which has rendered good service to the Penrhyn quarrymen, has a resolution condemning the action of Lord Penrhyn, and asking the Parliamentary Committee to make a special national appeal, and to receive subscriptions on behalf of the quarrymen. It is certain, therefore, that the Land Question will be offered for discussion in more than one form at the Birmingham Congress. No more important subject could well engage the attention of Trade Unionists."

We had not been long at sea before we spoke an Irish Gunneaman from Belfast, loaded with emigrants, for the United States; I think about seventeen families. These were contraband. Our captain had twenty thousand acres on the island of St. John, or Prince Edward's as it is called, a grant to some of his ancestors which had been bequeathed to him, and from which he had never received a penny of rent, for the very best of reasons in the world, because there were no tenants to cultivate the soil. It occurred to our noble captain that this was the very sort of cargo he wanted, and that these Irish people would make good cleaners of his land and improve his estate.—*Captain Marryatt, in "Frank Mildmay."*

Taxation of Land Values in Operation.

PARTIAL APPLICATION IN NEW SOUTH WALES ALREADY YIELDING SUBSTANTIAL BENEFITS.

Sydney, N.S.W., 1st July.

The solid progress which the finances indicated last half year is still in evidence, although the drought, which had then so fearfully handicapped us, still continues to play havoc with our great primary industries.

The Government account-book which, since the downfall of protectionism and its ledger trickery, has been made a cash-book in fact as well as in theory, shows that the Treasurer has received £104,000 more revenue than he has paid out for the year's national expenditure.

REDUCTION IN CUSTOM TAXES.

In 1893, the disastrous panic year, and one of the worst in the colony's history, the people paid £841,000 more to the customs in hard cash than they were called upon to pay this year. That is equal to 3 dollars 25 cents. per capita directly, and the relief thus given from protected manufacturers' imposts must equal at least 5 dollars per capita altogether. By typographical error this was stated at 500 dols. in the issue of March 3.

"Daily Telegraph" on the Land Tax.

The following editorial from the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, June 28, entitled "The Land Tax in Operation," will give a good idea of the situation here up to date:—

"When the present land tax was under discussion the one great objection urged against it was that it would drive away settlers from the soil and turn the country into a sheepwalk. There is no doubt that this view was in many cases sincerely held. Possibly it is so held still. Numbers of people schooled themselves, or allowed others to school them, into the fixed belief that land taxation would cause the great source of production to be locked up, and on that ground they honestly opposed it. It may be expected, therefore, that amongst this class such results are being looked for with some degree of genuine alarm. Indeed, if we are to regard half of what was said in opposition to the tax as the expression of sincere conviction, there must be a considerable number of persons agreeably

SURPRISED TO FIND

that the farming districts of the colony are not already showing signs of blight and desolation. As the tax has now fairly settled on the land, these effects, if they are to follow, should certainly have begun to make their appearance. It is not as if it was the result of a mere catch vote in an unrepresentative Parliament like the late protective duties for which it has been substituted. Land taxation has come not 'like a thief in the night;' it has come in open political daylight as the effect of a deliberate and reiterated vote by an overwhelming majority of the people. It has, therefore, every appearance of permanency, so that there cannot be many settlers on the soil who are holding out in the hope of its being within measureable time abolished. Hence, if the predicted exodus of farmers is to take place at all there is nothing for them to wait for. Is there any manifestation of people either fleeing or being about to flee from the operation of the land tax?

DIRE PROPHECIES UNFULFILLED.

"Can any part of the colony be pointed to where the fulfilment of the dismal prophecies concerning it has commenced? Where are the abandoned farms and the rusting ploughshare and the empty barns that were to bear witness to the effects of making the large freehold owners of land take more equitable share in the burdens of taxation? None of these things have as yet appeared. On the contrary we see people as eager as ever to get hold of eligible farming land, which is rushed by tax-defying applicants as soon as it is thrown open. This alone ought to go a long way towards reassuring those honestly mistaken citizens who believed in the alarmist prophecies to which we have referred.

HARD ON SPECULATORS.

"There are now, however, other distinct effects of the tax beginning to appear, which go further to dissipate any fear of the land being thrown out of use, as was predicted. Amongst these is the opening up of the vast Peel River estate at Tamworth, where nearly five thousand acres of agricultural country are announced for auction sale in farm lots. This land is the property of an absentee company, which while it was subject to no tax could afford to keep an immense estate locked up while the expenditure of public money all around was increasing its value. Since the land was acquired its value has been largely enhanced by the running of the railway through Tamworth, towards which the company contributed nothing. Now the tax comes in, and upon this enormous amount of increased wealth a penny in the pound has to be paid. It becomes necessary, therefore, to put the land to its most remunerative use, and for that reason it is to be thrown open to close settlement. Here we have an instance of the people not being driven from the land by the operation of the tax, but being invited to settle where hitherto access has been denied to them.

SINGLE TAX PREDICTIONS PROVED.

"And it is only one case out of many of the same kind that are noticed in different parts of the country. In order to pay the tax the land must be worked, hence a demand for productive labour in the farming industry which previously did not exist. During all the years that settlers were going into the remote bush, and struggling against the drawbacks of isolation, here was all this land in the vicinity of a large town like Tamworth, with river frontage and railway communication, closed against them. The land tax has opened it. In other parts of the country it is doing the same thing, while no case has yet been recorded of land being thrown out of use because of the tax. These are actual facts, not theories or prophecies, and by such persons as desire to judge the present fiscal policy of the country on its merits they will be duly appreciated.

"The tax does not affect the productive capacity of the land, consequently the wealth that is in it remains for the gathering the same as before. If the effect was to reduce the possible output by so much per acre, the fears of those who anticipated a collapse of the farming industry would have been justified. That would diminish the actual value of the land, and the amount of such diminution would be the measure of the country's loss. No such effect is produced by land taxation. The land that is cultivated will give in produce the same return for the same amount of labour, tax or no tax. The land which is not cultivated but merely held for speculative purposes will, however, not give an equal profit to the speculator. Hence the stimulus is to the use of land, whereby the result of the tax is to increase instead of to retard agricultural settlement. This is now being proved by practical demonstration. The case of the Peel River Company is merely a straw showing the way in which the current is setting

LAND OPENED TO INDUSTRY.

"Instead of the workers moving away from the land and leaving it idle we find monopoly, which kept it locked up, beginning to stand aside in order that they may come and occupy it. This is an effect so totally different to that which we were told would result from land taxation by its opponents that they will now require to find some other reason for the faith that is in them. It is not much use to go on arguing that land taxation must kill agriculture in face of the fact that since the introduction of the tax the farming industry has thriven. When in place of workers being put off the land through the operation of the present fiscal policy, new openings are seen to be made for them to go on it, the cry about hindrance to production caused by the tax calls for no answer. Facts from which there is no appeal stifle it. And the number of these facts as typified by the case of the great Peel River estate must increase as the owners of other large monopolies begin to realise that the land tax has come to stay."

"Are you in favour of Taxing Land Values?"

The Single Tax.

Published at the beginning of each Month.
PRICE ONE PENNY. Post Free, 1/6 per annum,
payable in advance.
All Communications to be addressed to the EDITOR,
Single Tax, 56 GEORGE SQUARE, GLASGOW.

Will Correspondents who send us Newspapers please
pencil-mark the matter they wish us to notice.

PROGRESS.

One of the most pleasing and encouraging features of the propaganda on behalf of the Taxation of Land Values is the manner in which local bodies throughout Great Britain are tackling the question. Not long ago, at the instance of the Glasgow Town Council, 62 assessing authorities in Scotland, comprising 7 Town Councils, 8 Police Burghs, 1 County Council, and 46 Parish Councils representing the ratepayers of the principal Scottish centres, including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Dundee, Greenock, and Paisley agreed to join the Glasgow Corporation in petitioning Parliament in favour of making Land Values a basis of local taxation. And now in England and Wales no fewer than 70 local authorities have resolved to petition Parliament in favour of the same policy. These comprise 12 Town Councils, 40 urban District Councils, 15 rural District Councils, 1 County Council, and 2 Vestries.

These responsible bodies have discussed the question in all its bearings. They were not influenced by political considerations, but acted solely as the elected representatives of the ratepayers, who are beginning to see how they are bamboozled and cheated by the present system of rating. They have come to understand that they must make improvements for the public good, and that this work cannot be done without price. The rates are consequently rising and pressing upon the tenants with more and more severity. But they have also discovered—it has been brought home to them in their everyday experience—that every public improvement, every extension of industry and the growth of population results in increasing the values of land.

If public improvements must be made to meet the wants of growing communities, a greater revenue is needed; and if with this progress there comes an added value to the land it is just and expedient that such value should be taken in taxation to meet the cost of these improvements. The people are beginning to see this clearly, and hence the action of these public bodies on the question. The step has not been forced by any special organisation. It has come in the course of events, and come to stay until land values as such contribute to the maintenance of local government.

What have our leading politicians of the Reform party, who so strongly favour the Taxation of Land Values, to say on the subject? They know, and publicly profess to know, that the land question lies at the root of most social evils. Excessive rents and congested districts grievously afflict the poor, and the monopoly price of vacant building land is a constant barrier to their relief. The Taxation of Land Values will overthrow this system of land monopoly besides reducing the rates levied on the rentals of all business and house property. A tax of one penny in the pound on land values is already in operation in New South Wales, and the effects there are seen in the land speculator letting his land for cultivation. Formerly he could afford to keep it idle; now he is called upon to pay taxation on its value, and it is already burning his fingers. It is more

profitable to let the land for use that the assessor's demands may be met, than to keep it idle and pay the assessor for the privilege.

This is the way to bring the land into cultivation, and what is being done in New South Wales can be done in Britain. Land acquires a value independent of any action on the part of the owner, yet when the tax-gatherer comes round he passes by this unearned increment and takes only from the occupier. The Taxation of Land Values only means that those who now appropriate these values should contribute to the rates, and contribute in a way that would force desirable land into use. It would be sending the rate collector on a new mission, and one that would not only bring a new source of income to the public exchequer, but access to the land, so necessary to the expansion of all industrial centres.

This public sentiment growing now so rapidly in favour of this "new tax" is an education in itself on the question. No true politician can afford to ignore it. The question of social reform is now more and more before us at every Parliamentary contest; and it is not yet forgotten that the Tory party owe their position in Parliament to-day to the promises they so lavishly made at the general election, 1895, as pioneers and leaders of a coming social millennium. They have not attempted in any way to redeem those pledges, and likely never will; for old age pensions mean either new taxation on industry, or the taxation of the "unearned increment." Industry will refuse to bear such a burden, and the temper of the Tory party will only enable its leaders, as we have already seen, to touch the Land Question in favour of the landowners.

The better housing of the working classes cannot be touched till land monopoly is overthrown. We are waiting for the voice of the leaders of the Liberal party on these questions. In the Taxation of Land Values the Liberal party have a policy that can rouse the people from their apathy—what other question can? Let them speak out and advocate it. Let them provide their speakers and organisers with suitable literature on the land question, and they will meet with a ready response. The people are discontented, and rightly so, when so many of them are the victims of so much social misery and despair. All this can be swept away by removing the cause—the monopoly of the natural opportunities to the employment of both capital and labour. This is the question that must be faced if we are to have any measure of social salvation.

These public bodies, representing so many of the electors, of every political colour, are doing their best to bring this question to the front. In asking Parliament for powers to Tax Land Values, they are taking the only action possible with their limited administrative powers. They must be encouraged. It remains for the Liberal party, already so much identified with the advocacy of this policy, to come out into the open and insist on its urgency, as a practical step in the direction of a just social order.

My God! when I read o'er the bitter lives of men whose eager hearts were quite too great to beat beneath the cramped mode of the day; and see them mocked at by the world they love, haggling with prejudice for pennyworths of that reform which their hard toil will make the common birthright of the age to come—when I see this, spite of my faith in God, I marvel how their hearts bear up so long; nor could they but for the same prophecy, this inward feeling of the glorious end.—*James Russell Lowell.*

Here and There.

We would direct attention to the article in another column from the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, which tells how a tax on land values of one penny in the pound is already removing the "dead hand" of the land speculator, and opening up much suitable land for cultivation and use.

Report of the Scottish Land Restoration Union.

The executive of the Scottish Land Restoration Union have just published, in pamphlet form, a report of their work during the year 1896-97, a copy of which will be posted to the members and subscribers to the *Single Tax*. Besides dealing with the Land Question and the Taxation of Land Values, it contains a concise history of the finding and the action taken by the Glasgow Corporation on the question of Taxing Land Values. The secretary will post a copy to any address for One Penny, and will be glad to send quantities for distribution at the rate of Sixpence per dozen.

Seven hundred villagers belonging to Marano, Italy, have just demanded a redistribution of the estates of Patrician families which are lying uncultivated. The reply of the Italian Government was to send four companies of troops to repress any possible disturbance. Under the Single Tax such uncultivated ground will come into use at the instance of the assessor, the troops notwithstanding.

Twenty enterprising citizens of Indianapolis have just contributed 1000 dollars each to send twenty insured miners to Klondyke, the calculation being that a sufficient number would die to reimburse the investors by the insurance money whether any gold is found or not.

The island upon which New York city stands was bought, two centuries and a half ago, for £4 15s. To-day it is worth some £400,000,000, and is the property of a few who take its annual value from the toiling citizens.

Dundee Town Council are taking steps to abolish the right of Lord Deans of Guild to representation in the Town Councils of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Dundee, and Perth.

When men learn what they want they can have it by voting for it. To-day nothing seems to be wanted and we are getting it.

The N.S.W. Government have just imposed a tax of One Penny in the £ on Land Values, and big estates formerly held out of use like these Italian acres are being opened up for cultivation. Take one instance given by the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*. Some 5,000 acres at Tamworth held by an absentee company which, while it was subject to no tax, could afford to keep an immense estate locked up. Now the tax comes in and the estate seems now to be burning the fingers of its owners judging from their sudden desire to dispose of it in farm lots.

The Glasgow Free Presbytery have authorised the erection of a new church at the corner of Garscube Road and Gairbraid Street, Glasgow—a working class district. But the fact that this small corner of the earth is wanted as a place of worship to the Creator stands for nothing with the owner of this part of the earth by law, and his price is £1,800 for a quarter of an acre.

The Earl of Derby draws, it is said, from his tenant farmers upwards of £170,000 a year. This is supplemented by his Liverpool property. In 1710 the waste lands of Kirkdale and Bootle, Liverpool, were purchased from the Moore family for £12,000—a good investment, when it is remembered that £300,000 has been paid by the corporation of that town for strips of the foreshore as the dock extension became necessary. Bootle and Kirkdale are now mostly let out in building leases at so much a foot. This fortunate family also owns nearly all the town of Bury. The total income of the Earls of Derby must be close on £350,000 a year.—*Daily Paper.*

SERVE THE CAUSE BY HANDING THE PAPER TO A FRIEND.

Andrew Carnegie said:—"The greatest discovery of my life is that the men who do the work never get rich."

It was stated at the conference of the British Pharmaceutical Society, held in Glasgow last month, that the people of Great Britain expended nearly £3,000,000 sterling on secret remedies. Most ailments are caused to-day by the stress and worry of business life and degrading social conditions. The Taxation of Land Values is the real cure and the salvation it will bring can be had without price.

The wind-up concerts of the Bethesda Choir (Penrhyn quarrymen) were given at Hastings last week. In spite of very unfavourable weather £37 was cleared in the four days' visit. The arrangements were made by local Land Reformers.

The law courts will not allow the Chicago city fathers to tax cycles. Why not try Land Values? asks the *London Echo*.

A report issued by the Roxburgh, Berwick, and Selkirk Lunacy Board contains items for land for the asylum property amounting to some £4,000 paid to the Duke of Buccleuch and Mr. Sexton Karr, M.P.

There is a corner in wheat just now and the price of bread is rising—*Daily Paper*.

Everybody sees this, though it has only lasted a month. There is a corner in land, and ground rents and land values are always going up. This is the bottom "corner" of all speculation though it is not so readily seen; but one of these days it will stand boldly out as such. The Taxation of Land Values is already written on the walls of this kingdom of landlordism.

It is stated that the Chinese of San Francisco are donating food to aid the unemployed natives of that city.

Cunninghame Graham writes to the daily papers that ignorance is a quality worthy of the highest respect of the majority of mankind.

Mr. Robert Wallace, M.P., Edinburgh, says—
I have long held that a large section of the House of Commons ought not to be there at all. Two-thirds of it at least is impossible to regard with anything like intellectual respect.

Mr. A. L. Brown, ex-M.P., speaking at a Liberal demonstration at Hawick, recently, said "a programme was wanted. It must be drawn out by them and handed to their leaders. They would lay one down during the coming winter."

Mr. T. S. Cree, writing to *Glasgow Herald*, says, "Eviction has been for many, and might have been for very many more, an opportunity of prosperity both to those who went and to those who remained behind; and that there is always plenty of land to be had by builders if they like to pay the price." Of course you can get all the land you want if you like to pay the price.

This reminds us of the man who seriously advised us that there was plenty of work to be had if the men would only do it cheap enough. Certainly, you can get all the work on the same principle if you do it for nothing.

Commenting on the Royal visit to the Green Isle, *The New Age* says, "George the Fourth once landed in Ireland, drunk as usual."

The British estate covers a fourth part of the habitable area of the globe, and the Queen's subjects number over 400,000,000. Commenting on this, Mark Twain says he perceives now that the English are mentioned in the bible—"Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth."

By a majority of 13 to 7 the Norwich Board of Guardians has passed a resolution in favour of the local rating of ground values, royalties, and wayleaves being dealt with by Parliament at an early date.

The *Daily Chronicle* is glad to see that Glasgow Town Council, "which has already done so much for municipal government," is considering the question of Land Values.

Francis E. Willard says:—

I believe the present economic condition of the country, the misery of millions of our people, the vast number of the unemployed, call for reforms which, if they could but be brought about, would vastly diminish the tendency to drink, and that one of those reforms of far-reaching and unspeakable beneficence is the Single Tax, as set forth by its great apostle, Henry George.

TO LAND REFORMERS AND RADICALS!

We have reprinted Mr. H. S. Murray's Address on "The Land Question," in pamphlet form.

May be had from "SINGLE TAX" OFFICE, at 3s. per 100, carriage paid. *Sample copies free on application.*

The Receipt of a copy of this paper from the office is an invitation to subscribe.

If the space below contains a Blue Pencil mark, please take it as an indication that your Subscription is due. In remitting, will you try to send us the name of a new Subscriber?



TO LAND REFORMERS.

The Executive of the Scottish Land Restoration Union appeal to all sympathisers throughout Scotland to become members of the Union.

Minimum Annual Subscription, 1s. 2s. 6d. secures membership of the Union and a copy of the "Single Tax," post free, for a twelvemonth. 5s. secures membership, the "Single Tax" for twelve months, and an assortment of Single Tax Pamphlets and Leaflets, including those published during the year.

Taxing Bicycles.

Chicago proposes, says the *Cleveland Recorder*, a tax of a dollar a year on bicycles for the purpose of raising a fund to improve the streets. A similar proposition was made in Cleveland about a year ago. All such propositions should be summarily condemned.

Two classes of people are eager to tax vehicles for street maintenance. One class consists of those who do not think below the surface of things. They see that vehicles use the streets, and from that they thoughtlessly argue that the owners of vehicles ought to pay for repairing streets. The other class consists of people who do think below the surface, but who use their intellect for the purpose of making others pay what they owe. These people, who are interested in real estate value, understand clearly enough that while the owners of vehicles enjoy the use of street, the owners of adjacent real estate alone are pecuniarily profited by good streets. They realise, therefore, that real estate owners, and not vehicle owners, should keep up the streets. But in their selfish greed they avail themselves of the thoughtlessness of the first class to shift their own just burdens to other shoulders.

The question is a very simple one. If there were no street in the city, it is true enough that vehicle users would be unable to ride through the city; but it is also true that in those circumstances land would be worth but little if any more than agricultural prices. While vehicle owners would be deprived of street accommodation, real estate owners would be deprived of cash. And in this deprivation the real estate owners would suffer most. For the vehicle owners could remove their vehicles to a city where there were streets, whereas the real estate owners could not remove their land. Similarly of repairing and improving the streets. Good streets are a comfort to the owners of vehicles, but to the owners of real estate they are more than a comfort—they are profitable. Improving the streets of a city does not add a dollar to the value of vehicles; but it does add many dollars to the value of lots.

The real estate owners, therefore, and not vehicle owners, should both build and repair as well as improve the streets of the city. To impose those burdens upon the owners of bicycles is to make them pay twice for the same thing. It is to tax them first for the street repairing fund, and then to enable real estate

owners to tax them a second time in higher rents for the privilege of living in a city of good streets.

The bicycle owner, if bicycles were taxed as proposed in Chicago, would at the end of a few years not only have lost his bicycle, through wear and tear, but he would have paid, in addition to the original price of the wheel, as many dollars in taxes as it had lasted him years. The lot owner, on the other hand, would at the end of the same time not only have his lot in good repair, but as a result of the bicycle tax expended in street improvements he would be able to sell his lot for a higher price than ever.

To tax bicycles, then, would confiscate the money of bicycle owners to give it to lot owners. Such a proposition cannot be defended except by the dishonest and the thoughtless.

Notes on Men and Things.

BY T. SCANLON.

The Single Tax cause has made very little progress in Liverpool yet. It is I suppose due to national characteristics mainly. The Single Tax is a logical doctrine, and requires logical people to understand it. That is why the Glasgow people have taken it up and the Liverpool people have not. It is, I suppose, some consolation to Scotchmen to know that if they cannot see a joke they can see an argument a long way off.

I read of a case the other day in a London paper where a poor woman earning seven shillings a week allowed her child to starve to death rather than apply for relief to the authorities. It turned out that she paid three shillings per week for rent, and two shillings to a woman who "looked after" the baby, living on the remaining two shillings herself. Such is life in "the largest and richest city in the world." To such depths of misery, immorality, and crime is humanity driven by that economic monster, Landlordism!

We are great respecters of artificial rights. The artificial right of the landlord to the land and all it contains goes before the natural right of man sanctioned by the Almighty. We are frequently met with this question by the opponents of the Single Tax, "Would it be just to deprive the landlord class of the advantages they have enjoyed for centuries under the protection of government, in order to benefit the working man?" The sufferings of hundreds of thousands of starving people are but as nothing compared with the sacrilege of interfering with the vested rights of the land robbers! How much longer this slavish idolatry will prevent people from recovering their own possessions goodness only knows.

Really, Napoleon was not far wrong in saying that no people ever were worse governed than they deserved to be. Just take the case of a lord who owns half a large town, and skims every year the whole cream off its industry in the shape of ground rents, royalties, tolls, etc., reducing the population to a bare subsistence level. Of how many territorial magnates can this not be said? And yet, look at the newspaper comments, and the remarks of the local sycophants, whenever one of these exalted beings condescends to show himself to the people. "It was extremely gracious of Lord So-and-so to patronise the opening of the New Home for Lost Dogs on Saturday night, and is only one more instance of his lordship's kindly interest in the town and its inhabitants." As long as people talk like this, what hope is there for them?

The Duke and Duchess of York are in Ireland, and now we are told that Irish grievances should cease. Poverty and discontent are, it appears, something like the disease known as King's Evil, which was supposed to vanish at the touch of a King. One would think from reading the daily papers that all the Irish people wanted was a little real live royalty now and again to soothe and pacify them. And yet England, which enjoys a plentiful dose of royalty all the year round, has grievances of her own notwithstanding.

READ THE APPEAL TO LAND REFORMERS.

The Penrhyn Quarry dispute is settled for the present, so the newspapers say. It may be settled as far as the master and men are concerned, but there are wider issues arising out of it which are still pending. In this country a great many so called "rights" are tolerated so long as they are not pushed to the last extremity when their genuineness would be called in question. Lord Penrhyn has gone dangerously near this point, by insisting upon locking up the treasures of the earth for several months and bringing hundreds of families to destitution. He has shown the country what one obstinate man can do whenever he feels disposed, and it is for the country to say how long one obstinate man can be permitted to wield such a power.

Duty, not Self Interest, the Power.

And I am firmly convinced, as I have already said, that to effect any great social improvement, it is sympathy rather than self-interest, the sense of duty rather than the desire for self-advancement, that must be appealed to. Envy is akin to admiration, and it is the admiration that the rich and powerful excite which secures the perpetuation of aristocracies. Where tenpenny Jack looks with contempt upon ninepenny Joe, the social injustice which makes the masses of the people hewers of wood and drawers of water for a privileged few, has the strongest bulwarks. It is told of a certain Florentine agitator that when he had received a new pair of boots, he concluded that all popular grievances were satisfied. How often do we see this story illustrated anew in workmen's movements and trade union struggles? This is the weakness of all movements that appeal only to self-interest.

And as man is so constituted that it is utterly impossible for him to attain happiness save by seeking the happiness of others, so does it seem to be of the nature of things that individuals and classes can obtain their own just rights only by struggling for the rights of others. To illustrate: When workmen in any trade form a trade union, they gain, by subordinating the individual interests of each to the common interests of all, the power of making better terms with employers. But this power goes only a little way when the combination of the trade union is met and checked by the pressure for employment of those outside its limits. No combination of workmen can raise their own wages much above the level of ordinary wages. The attempt to do so is like the attempt to bail out a boat without stopping up the seams. For this reason it is necessary, if workmen would accomplish anything real and permanent for themselves, not merely that each trade should seek the common interests of all trades, but that skilled workmen should address themselves to those general measures which will improve the condition of unskilled workmen. Those who are most to be considered, those for whose help the struggle must be made, if labour is to be enfranchised and social justice won, are those least able to help or struggle for themselves, those who have no advantage of property or skill or intelligence—the men and women who are at the very bottom of the social scale. In securing the equal rights of these we shall secure the equal rights of all.

Hence it is, as Mazzini said, that it is around the standard of duty rather than around the standard of self-interest that men must rally to win the rights of man. And herein may we see the deep philosophy of Him who bade men love their neighbours as themselves.

In that spirit, and in no other, is the answer to solve social problems and carry civilisation onward.—Henry George in "Social Problems."

Mark Twain, according to the writer of "a character sketch" in the new number of "The Review of Reviews," thinks himself very lucky if he gets two good laughs a month. Here is one story which amused him—There was once a contest between a Chicago liar and a St. Louis liar. It was won by the St. Louis man, who began by saying, "there was once upon a time a gentlemen in St. Louis—" whereupon the Chicago man gave up and declared that no one could possibly tell a greater lie than that.

As Others See Us.

BY T. SCANLAN.

The following series of letters have appeared in one of the great daily papers published in the Moon, under the heading of "Special Correspondence from the Earth." As the letters relate mainly to economic subjects, they are here reproduced for the benefit of the readers of the *Single Tax*, in the hope that they will assist them "to see themselves as others see them."

London, 21st June, 1897.

Conformably to my promise, I now furnish you with the first instalment of my correspondence respecting the production and distribution of wealth on this planet. I chose London, the capital of England, as the centre of my observation, as it is the largest city on the earth, and the centre of all commerce; so that its commercial, economic, and industrial character may be said to be fairly representative of the rest of the world. At the time I write, the people are in a state of ecstasy over the jubilee of their monarch, an old lady of some seventy-seven winters, so that their commercial character, as a nation of shopkeepers, is for the moment obscured; consequently I have to look beneath the surface for the information I require. Without any jubilee at all, however, there is no doubt that the English are a wonderfully busy people; ever hurrying to and fro like ants, scraping, boring, building, and tampering with the earth's surface, leaving nothing as it is, and stamping everything they touch with the hall-mark of their dogged perseverance and skill.

Looking down upon their country from the height of a couple of miles, one sees on every side little black clouds of smoke issuing from their factories and foundries; one hears the roaring of their engines crossing and re-crossing their country in every direction, dragging after them long trains of waggons filled with people; one sees round the coast their myriads of boats, big and little, busy on their respective errands to distant waters carrying goods or human freight. It makes one long to form an acquaintance with such a people, and I can assure you I lost no time in so doing. The first thing I did after alighting and partaking of the necessary refreshments and rest, was to put myself in touch with an intelligent native, whom I met in one of the public parks, smoking a pipe and watching some athletic games.

"You are a wonderful people," said I, "you appear to know everything—in short, you are a nation of magicians, for the powers of nature seem to be but wax in your hands. Tell me, for I am a stranger from a far-off land, tell me why it is that such a skilful people as you work so hard? Or is it recreation that prompts you to be so busy as you are?"

The native shook his head, and said: "My good friend, no man works in England who can help it. The reason why our people work is simply to make a living."

The reply staggered me. "Why," said I, "in a country where steam ploughs your soil, carries your burdens, grinds your corn, and condescends to do all your menial errands, your lives ought to be mere sport. How then can 'a living' be so difficult to make?"

"I can only say," replied the native, "that it is extremely hard to make a living in this country, and as far as steam and electricity and such things are concerned, why, they only make it harder. Steam and electricity are powers of nature, and in my opinion they ought to keep their place and compete only with powers of nature, and not with human beings. Steam and electricity haven't got any wives and families to keep, and we working chaps have, and if they didn't grind our corn, as you say, there might be more corn for us to grind, and more to eat, too, perhaps: that's what I think."

"My good friend," said I, "you astonish me. Inventions surely were sent into the world to benefit mankind. By what strange process have they become perverted to such wicked uses as to prevent men from earning a living? I don't quite see why the doing away with work is an evil when, by machinery, you can produce wealth without work."

"Sir," said my friend, "I can see you are a stranger, and one whose education has been much neglected, otherwise you would see the

connection between work and bread. The fact is, sir, that according to one of our great economists, John Stuart Mill, all the machinery in the world has hardly lessened the labour of a single human being, and it is to-day harder for me to make my living than it was for Adam in the days when he had no spade to dig his garden."

"You have told me that machinery is an evil, but you do not explain why or how it becomes an evil," said I, looking him straight in the face.

"Well," said he, after a pause, "it's a difficult matter to explain, but I'll endeavour to give you an idea. You see, Sir, if everybody owned their own machinery for doing their work it would save them a lot of labour and enable them to get their living just as well as before. But one man owns the machinery, and a thousand others work it, and they work as hard as if there was no machinery at all. Land, machinery, and capital are all in the hands of a few favoured individuals, and any increase or improvement in either of them would only make these few individuals richer, while it would make us common folk poorer, or at least no better off."

In a further conversation with this stranger I learnt several interesting facts which threw a lurid light upon the civilisation of this strange people. It appears that, roughly speaking, the people here consist of two classes—those who *own* and those who *are owned*. According to the fiction of the law only property can be owned, and the silly people don't know that whoever owns the property must own them as well. Indeed I had a very apt illustration of this. While I was talking to my friend, a crowd of jubilating tailors' slaves marched down the park singing "Britons never shall be slaves." Nobody laughed at them. Nobody accused them of blasphemy. They were serious, and the people around them were serious too. People here think that because they are not chained and marked and numbered, they are free men; they cannot see that *hunger* and *want* bind them more effectively to their posts than the strongest links of iron can do. However, I see it reported that in a spot called Zanzibar, slavery has lately been abolished. Who knows but England will yet follow suit?

The distinction between the *owned* and the *owning* classes is really startling. There is hardly anything in common between them beyond the body and soul with which Nature equally endowed them. The former are only kept in such numbers as the latter require, or can find work for; they are spoken of conveniently as "hands," instead of saying "I employ fifty men." They say "I employ fifty hands," because the hands are the only organs which have a commercial value; if they have heads and hearts and stomachs that is no concern of the employers, who could employ men without these encumbrances, if any such could be had in the market.

The Portsmouth Trades' Council Demands the Taxation of Land Values.

The annual demonstration of the Portsmouth Trades' and Labour Council was held on Saturday last. Some twenty societies marched in procession, with bands and banners, round the town, and a mass meeting was afterwards held on a piece of vacant Government land opposite the *Evening News* office, from the balcony of which the various speakers addressed the gathering.

Mr. R. Gould occupied the chair, and a resolution urging all non-unionists to join the movement was first passed on the motion of Mr. R. Brewer (organiser of the General Labourers' Union), seconded by Mr. Baker (of the General Horsemen and Carmen's Union), and supported by Alderman H. R. Taylor, L.C.C. (Operative Bricklayers).

LAND AND LABOUR.

Mr. J. H. M'Guigan (Shipwrights' Association) then moved the following resolution, which was seconded by Mr. White and supported by Mr. James Macdonald (of the Amalgamated Tailors and secretary of the London Trades' Council), and carried unanimously amid loud applause:—

Our Natural Storehouse, the Land, is Locked.

That we, the members of the several Trades' and Labour Unions of Portsmouth and district in joint public meeting assembled hold that—

1. All men have a common right to life, and that as the land is the only source from which material to sustain man's life can be procured, it should be treated as the common heritage of the whole people.

2. We condemn as most iniquitous the present system of tenure which, permitting a small number of people to monopolise the land without compensating those who are excluded, divorces land and labour, overcrowds our cities, creates an army of unemployed, and reduces wages to a minimum.

3. As an instalment of justice, and a first and most necessary step to improve the condition of labour, we demand that all rates and taxes be removed from production and trade, and imposed on the value of land independent of improvements.

The tone of the meeting is best shown by Mr. M'Guigan's speech, in the course of which he was frequently applauded. He said that the policy of strike had often been forced upon the workers whether they liked it or no. He considered, however, that the policy of strike could not touch many of the evils from which they suffered. It could not touch the unemployed question, and even as a means of securing higher wages and improving the conditions of labour, it was too costly and caused an incalculable amount of suffering in the ranks of labour. And, worse still, it was becoming more and more inefficient. Take for example the manner in which Lord Penrhyn had for the past eight months defied, not only the Bethesda quarrymen, but all the forces the trades' unions of the country could bring to bear. It was time that a more progressive method of dealing with

MEN OF THE PENRHYN CLASS

should be adopted. Lord Penrhyn's position challenged not only the right of combination, but the right to live. And they, as trade unionists, must either endorse Lord Penrhyn's claim to do as he pleased with his land and exclude from it whom he pleased—a principle which, if carried to its logical conclusion, meant that the few land-owners had the right to exclude from their land, and therefore to starve, the millions of the workers—or they must endorse the common right of all to the land as asserted by the resolution he had just moved. The Taxation of Land Values would soon bring men like Lord Penrhyn to their bearings. They could not get what they wanted all at once, but they should demand as large an instalment as possible. A tax of even 4s. in the £ on land values would not only relieve the workers of the present heavy taxes on the necessities of life, but would allow of other improvements, and would effectually prevent men like Lord Penrhyn from excluding the workers from the soil, their only means of subsistence.

Bellamy's Wooden Men.

"We give space," says the *National Single Taxer*, in reply to a correspondent, "to Bellamy's new book, because it brings to the front the socialistic fallacy that there is a social value or unearned increment attaching to other things besides land. It would appear a hopeless task to pin Socialists down to serious argument on this vital point, which clearly denotes the lines between those who would socialise private property and the class who would not, but it is one which must be repeated and emphasised for the sake of that large number of truth seekers, who, unlike State Socialists, have not reached the fossilised stage.

"The 'social machinery,' exclusive of land, to which Bellamy refers, is nothing more nor less than wealth, and is susceptible to infinite change and increase in quantity. It is monopolised to-day in some instances, and apparently made an instrument of tyranny, because the source from which all wealth is drawn is cornered. These are two facts which Bellamyites stubbornly decline to take into consideration, probably because their admission is fatal to the socialistic theory.

"Ordinary people also recognise that the surface of the earth is limited, and that the consequent effect of population upon any part of its area is to increase its value, whereas the same growth of population has a directly opposite effect upon the things which the people take from the land and which they call wealth. This is true of all forms of wealth, the 'social organism' of the Socialist included. Under conditions of real competition and equal opportunity to get at the earth, the social organism is no more liable to monopoly than

the air we breathe. What, then, becomes of the 'unearned increment' attaching to wealth?

"The vital and persistent difference in nature between land—the source of wealth—and the multiplicity of things we take from that source, is so plain that no abstract reasoning is necessary to see it. Concrete examples may be seen on every hand. Wherever competition is free, capital in every form is steadily increased and cheapened to meet the growing demands of the people. It is not now and never has been cornered; never has been used as an instrument of oppression, *except when associated with a monopoly privilege.* A little reflection will show that the laws of the universe unite to prevent monopoly of the 'social organism' so far as it consists of capital. From the moment capital is brought forth it begins to disintegrate and return to its original elements; it must be frequently replaced by the labour of man. And this frequency is accelerated by each new advance in science. The constant march of invention and improvement even under our monopoly system of land, tariffs, and patents of to-day, embarrasses those who seek to corner machinery. Make it impossible for capitalists to corner the source of wealth, and how impotent they would be to get an advantage over competitors by which to despoil the people.

"Util Socialists learn to distinguish between the storehouse of wealth and wealth itself, between the life and death power implied by the ownership of one and the ephemeral character of the other, they will be in the position of the child wrestling with fractions who has not yet mastered addition or the multiplication table. It will be a hit or miss game all through; they will not be certain of their conclusions because they have not tested the foundation.

"Bellamy is not an economist; he is a mere spinner of entertaining yarns, the plans of which are impossible of application, because not in unison with the nature of things. He has not even interpreted aright the law of co-operation, for co-operation needs no central authority—no government—to guide or give it vigor. Men will co-operate in spite of government; all that they ask of government is that it secure to them equal opportunity to apply their labour to the bounties of nature, and then the natural law of distribution will do more for the individual than any governmental scheme invented by man.

"It is idle to think of harmony between Socialists and Single Taxers. As well talk of harmonising protective tariffs and free trade. Those who comprehend the central truth of the Single Tax philosophy and its principal corollaries can easily predict that Henry George's forthcoming book will, if possible, take firmer ground than ever against State Socialism and its brood of errors. There can be no compromise between freedom and tyranny, even if the latter be idealised, to the unthinking, in an alluring story of wooden men.

Letters to the Editor.

Where are we now?

(To the Editor of the Single Tax.)

DEAR SIR,—It is now a considerable number of years since I first began to take an interest in the Land Question and the incidence of taxation generally. When I look back to the glowing years of '84 and '85, it is always with a feeling of exhilaration at the remembrance of the enthusiasm, devotion, and self-sacrifice that was there exhibited by so many devoted Scotchmen during that period. These glowing demonstrations were no doubt attributable to the natural enthusiasm of a great body of men who had just had revealed to them one of the greatest truths that men can know and cherish, viz.:—the equal right of all to the use of natural elements. Since those days many changes have taken place. Many of the brave soldiers who then raised the standard of "equality of opportunity," have fallen in the fight. Many of the younger men have done and are doing good work all over the country on the Land Question. In the year 1885 the Single Taxers fought the Liberal Party for all they were worth. Naturally, they were numerically defeated, but the splendid audiences their speakers had, and the spontaneous response of those immense audiences to the doctrines of the Single Taxers, was in itself a sufficient reward for their trouble and full of promise for the future.

Since then we have left off the policy of "bursting the Liberal Party," and adopted the more reasonable and insidious policy of "permeation." Single Taxers have, by the natural force and reasonableness of their ideas, captured the great bulk of intelligent Liberals,—that is amongst the followers, and a few—a very few—M.P.'s

are just a little bit enthusiastic on the subject, but the great bulk of Liberal M.P.'s and the men who control the party generally are openly or secretly bitterly opposed to any unholy laying of hands on the Sacred Ark of Landlordism. So that to use the language of an able English weekly—"British Liberalism covers before landlordism as before omnipotence." The position the Single Taxers have to face to-day is that of after having educated the bulk of the followers of the Liberal Party, the *leaders* openly ignore the question or burk the discussion of it on the public platforms. This being the position of affairs at present, I would earnestly suggest that a conference of all classes of land reformers be called together at some central city. If the conference be limited to Scotland, then Edinburgh would be the best place; but if the English societies are to be included, then perhaps Carlisle or Liverpool would be more suitable. I trust Single Taxers will give this matter their earnest consideration, as at present, when a section of Liberal forwards are showing dissatisfaction with the old policy and methods, and are crying out for a new programme, it behoves Single Taxers in particular and land reformers generally to give them a programme that, whilst in harmony with the spirit of justice, will also work along the lines of least resistance. With best regards, I am, yours fraternally,

J. S. JAMIESON.

Glasgow Parliament and the Single Taxers.

(To the Editor of the Single Tax.)

SIR,—May I be allowed, through the columns of your valuable paper, to draw the attention of your readers to the claims of the Glasgow Parliamentary Debating Association. This useful society has just completed twenty-one years of its work. The Association has had a record of useful history, having been the training school of so many public men, who owe their fluency and power, as speakers, largely to the training they received as members of this Association. The debates are conducted on the lines of the House of Commons. Though principally of a political nature, they also include *social and economic questions*, so that no one who attends them can fail to get an insight into and opportunity to discuss all problems dealing with the welfare of the people of this country. To young men who are interested in the Land Question, the incidence of taxation, and social problems generally, this association affords them an opportunity of expressing their opinions on these subjects before an interested audience. New members are especially welcome, and every facility is given them for acquiring that fluency of speech and that confidence in debate which practice in such an association alone can give. The opening debate will take place on Thursday, 14th October, at 7.45 p.m., in the large hall of the Christian Institute, and every Thursday thereafter throughout the session. Annual subscription is reduced to the moderate sum of 5s. per session. I hope to see a large body of Single Taxers seated in the cross benches this session, educating both political parties on the great principles of land and taxation reform.—Yours very truly,

THE MACE.

(To the Editor of the Single Tax.)

SIR,—Notwithstanding the splendid work *The Single Tax* has done, both as an education to the ignorant and an inspiration to those who know the truth as it is in "Progress and Poverty," yet few, I think, will question the fact that the paper very largely addresses itself to the already converted. This, of course, is the case in many papers besides *The Single Tax*. "Nunquam" stated recently that *The Clarion* was read only by Socialists. My object in writing you is to suggest a field of larger effort, whereby Single Taxers and land reformers generally might use their knowledge and talent for the propagation of the great idea of equality of opportunity. My proposal is no new one; it is simply the old one of education and inspiration by personal contact. I am sure there are large numbers of young men who would gladly take part in a Grand Lecture Scheme, which, I feel, if properly promoted, would do immense service to the cause of land reform. There are at present a large mass of people even in Scotland who never hear of or see *The Single Tax*. These people could be got at more readily by means of lectures and debates. I would, therefore, propose that an extensive list of lectures and debates be compiled, printed, and posted to every political club (no matter what colour), Socialist body, literary society, &c., over Scotland and the North of England—the lectures, of course, being free, with the exception of railway fare and a night's lodging where the distance was great. I feel sure, sir, that if a list of the kind I suggest was compiled and circulated, it would result in a large accession to the ranks of Single Taxers, an increase in the popularity and circulation of the *Single Tax*, and a hastening of the time we all desire,

"When wealth no more shall rest in mounded heaps,
But, smit with freer light, shall slowly melt
In many streams to fatten lower lands
Through all the seasons of the golden year."

—Yours faithfully,

CALEB GRANT.

The Case for New South Wales.

Mr. John Hindle, a prominent merchant of Sydney, New South Wales, and an ex-M.P., recently visiting San Francisco, was interviewed by a representative of the *San Francisco Call*. He was asked, "Are the industrial conditions in New South Wales perceptibly better now than they were a year or two years ago?"

The Single Tax is the Key to Open it.

To which he replied, "Yes, they are decidedly better and constantly improving. Legitimate business of all kinds is more active, money circulates more freely, collections are easier, wages are higher, and there are few, if any, involuntary idle workers. Those who do not find satisfactory employment in the cities can have recourse to the land, since the grip of the landlord has been slightly loosened. This tax on land values is producing good results, not only directly but indirectly."

"The feeling among owners of large tracts and valuable ground in the cities is that the penny-a-pound tax means a great deal more than that. They regard it as an entering wedge destined to split the monopoly log. They readily foresee that as the first step toward raising public revenue from land values has been taken, it will inevitably be followed by other and longer strides until the Single Tax system in its entirety is reached. Hence their eagerness to either relinquish or improve their real estate holdings. Thus it will appear that the Single Tax in our country is producing good results in advance of its coming."

"Are the Single Taxers in your country numerous?"

"They are very numerous, though comparatively few who believe in the principle are known as Single Taxers. Thousands are such without really knowing it themselves. The idea is in their heads and it dominates their actions. So that no matter what they call themselves or think they are, they are practically with us, and the reform goes on with irresistible force toward the goal of complete industrial freedom."

Books by Henry George.

INTERESTING REVIEW OF THE MASTER-PIECES AT THE FOUNDATION OF THE SINGLE TAX MOVEMENT.

BY JAMES T. BARNARD.

Henry George is not an originator. He disclaims the title. "The man who points to a star does not in that act create it. To recall a long forgotten truth is not to invent it. Whatever there is true in my writings is not new." In some such words does Henry George define his status. And yet, his first great work, "Progress and Poverty," more studied than any book except the Bible, and already a classic, has created a distinct school of economics far in advance of the best of its predecessors.

When Louis F. Post, Henry George's first openly declared disciple on the Atlantic coast, was asked to prepare a compendium of "Progress and Poverty," he said: "A comprehensive summary of that work is impossible; it is itself a condensation." A volume of five hundred pages, admitting of no satisfactory digest, assailing economic fallacies usually deemed axioms, is a book to be studied, not merely read. From the ranks of the "once" readers are drawn most of Henry George's critics; failing fully to comprehend it, they also fail to see that their superficial objections have all been anticipated and answered in the book itself. A less charitable estimate of some critics exonerate them from ignorance but accuses them of misrepresentation.

Although "Progress and Poverty" is a book involving careful reading and much study, its great aim may almost be summed up in a sentence—The value of land being solely a public creation, it is therefore public property and the sole rightful source of public revenue.

TO WHOM "PROGRESS AND POVERTY" APPEALS.

To the comfortably circumstanced and selfish, "Progress and Poverty" is dry reading. To the righteously discontented, either with their own lot or with that of their unhappy fellow-beings, it is musical as a "lark's note in the dawn." Hope dispels despondency with those who have learned the lesson it teaches. To such students the current political economy is a valley of dry bones, and Godlike truth, the theme of "Progress and Poverty," is the "noise and the shaking" with which they come together and the breath by which they are made to live.

Next in importance, perhaps, among Henry George's earlier works is "Social Problems." Of this book the writer says:—

"My endeavour has been to present the momentous social problems of our time * *

without abstract reasoning." The New York *Sun*, no friendly critic, said of it:—"There is not a dull page in the book, nor is there a paragraph but will compel attention." Its twenty-two chapters are so many cameos presenting vivid reliefs of what is of social wrong, and of what would be as a result of social right.

PLAYED THE DUKE OF ARGYLE.

These two works—"Progress and Poverty" and "Social Problems" are the parents of a third—"Property in Land," a dialectic assault-at-arms. The combatants—Aristos and Demos, choose their weapons; the former selecting the sandbag, worthless for defence, the latter, a rapier of keenest edge—both sword and shield. The courtly peer is past master in billingsgate, the plebeian printer a very Chesterfield in thrust and parry.

Which was victor?

Single Tax propagandists regard as among the most effective of their agencies "Property in Land"—a passage-at-arms between the Duke of Argyle and Henry George. If ever landlordism thus uses it in defence, then ask which was victor. The Prophet of San Francisco—the brochure intended to annihilate Land Restorers—might now be placed by its author, the Duke, among Punch's long list of things best left unsaid. His Grace is his own personal enemy, fulfilling against himself Job's aspiration and writing a book.

Perhaps antedating both "Social Problems" and "Property in Land" was "the Land Question," first called "the Irish Land Question." The local term was dropped, for the Irish Land Question is the universal Land Question. The true basis of earthlord rights and the source of their strength is exquisitely unfolded in chapter vii. "The great-great-grandson of Captain Kidd," an extended reply to Herbert Spencer's memorable question, asked while he was yet a sturdy lover of right ways—"How long does it take for what was originally a wrong to grow into a right? At what rate per annum do invalid claims become valid? If a title gets perfect in a thousand years, how much more than perfect will it be in two thousand years?" Sarcasms that rend their author in these, his weaker days.

REPLY TO THE POPE.

Pope Leo's encyclical on the "Condition of Labour" afforded Henry George an inestimable opportunity of securing a still more extended hearing. The "Open Letter to Pope Leo XIII." was published simultaneously in four different languages. It commanded, and still commands, an enormous sale. Those who respect righteousness, those who recognise economics as a branch of ethics, prize this effort of Henry George as the most precious of his minor works. Like all the rest of his productions, it is assailable only through misrepresentation. The Pope's encyclical is published in full with the open letter, and the contrast between the logical strength of the one and the amiable weakness of the other illustrates the force of truth.

"Protection or free trade is an argument for Single Tax from the fiscal side. In it the fallacy of protection and the inadequacy of free trade "as it is in England," are both exposed in masterly fashion, interesting to all but the hide bound heblers of both parties. It proves that the strength of protection is earthlordism; cutting this off will shear away the strength of protection—all other means are "new ropes, weavers' beams and green withes." Toleration of earthlordism involves the permanence of protection. With land monopoly rampant, protection may be scotched—never killed. Witness its revival in England, where it is said eighty-five members of the Commons are openly pledged to it. Twenty-five years ago a protectionist M.P. in England was as little in evidence as an annexation M.P. in Canada to-day.

SPENCER'S HUMILIATION.

The humiliating spectacle of Herbert Spencer's evasion, repudiation, recantation—but never refutation—of his celebrated chapter ix. of "Social Statics" afforded Henry George another splendid opportunity, and "A Perplexed Philosopher" shows with what ability it was seized. In Spencer's latest work, "Justice," the author answers his own unanswerable questions, and

with all the elaboration of an uneasy conscience shows how wrong may at last become right! George's arraignment is merciless. Spencer, never slack to defend, has in this instance shown remarkably indiscreet discretion. He relegated his defence to four or five admirers in the United States, and now he ought to wish he had enjoined silence on them too. For the sake of Single Tax, a reply from Herbert Spencer would be very useful. But it will never appear.

These complete the record of Henry George's more permanent works. There remains yet one to come, his chef d'œuvre, it is hoped—a systematic treatise on political economy, with a right to the use of the earth as a constantly recognised postulate, and the method of preserving that right in highly developed civilisations as a chief feature of the treatment.

To Henry George has been committed precious truth, and faithfully has he sown them—on both good and barren soils.

This question of the "unearned increment," as it is commonly called, is rapidly coming to the front; and the people are beginning to realise that this increment in land values, though unearned as far as the landlords are concerned, is created by—that is to say, *earned* by—and therefore belongs to the whole community, and it should be appropriated to public purposes. At their meeting on the 2nd inst., the Hastings Town Council adopted a petition to Parliament in favour of the introduction of a measure authorising local authorities to assess to all local and parochial rates all incomes derived from ground rents, ground values, royalties, and wayleaves.

The Nantwich Rural District Council has recently adopted a petition on the same lines, and we may mention that the London County Council has repeatedly affirmed the principle, while the City Councils or Town Councils of Manchester, Bury, Birmingham, Rochdale, Southport, West Hartlepool, and other places in England have declared themselves in its favour. In Glasgow, the City Council has a majority of 23 in favour of the local rating of land values, and the Parliamentary Committee is now engaged in preparing a draft Bill to empower local bodies to rate such values. A petition to Parliament in its favour has been endorsed by no less than 62 Scottish assessing authorities, representing, it is stated, some two-thirds of the electors.—*Portsmouth Evening News*.

THE SCOTTISH CO-OPERATOR.

A Journal of Progress and Economy.

This paper is issued fortnightly, and is representative of Co-operative thought and action in Scotland.

ARTICLES BRIGHT AND INTERESTING ON ALL SOCIAL AND CO-OPERATIVE QUESTIONS.

Reports of Business and Conference Meetings.
CARTOONS AND SKETCHES.

Single Copies may be had by application to the OFFICE, 137 NORFOLK STREET, S.S., GLASGOW.

PRICE, 1½d. POST FREE.

Ask for the Scottish Co-operator and see that you get it.

To Advertisers.

We have NO WASTE COPIES WHATEVER, all our Returns being distributed at Political, Literary, Social Reform, and other Public Meetings.

The "Single Tax" finds a place in the Public Libraries and Reading Rooms, and in Social and Reform circles in the Cities and Towns throughout Britain, in all British Colonies, and in the United States of America.

NOTICE.—"Single Tax" readers are respectfully recommended to patronise the advertisers. Mention the paper, where possible, when making purchases.

LONDON AGENT—

W. REEVE, 185 Fleet St., London, E.C.

Published for the Proprietors by JOHN PAUL, 56 George Square, Glasgow, and printed by MURRAY & DONNELLY, 74 Argyle Street, Glasgow, SEPTEMBER, 1897.

THE "SINGLE TAX" FINDS ITS WAY INTO ALL SOCIAL AND POLITICAL REFORM CIRCLES THROUGHOUT SCOTLAND.