

are widely divergent. Mr. W. D. Stapleton, one of the "boys" referred to, was asked to put a price on the land adjoining Fairhope and he refused to make any offer.

Mr. Norton "cheerfully admits that the Fairhope plan is as well applied as our present State laws will allow, but the facts and figures given above show that this plan does not equalize, etc." I submit that thus far he has failed to give any facts worthy of the name and that his testimony is, as a lawyer would say, "incompetent, irrelevant and no foundation laid." In not one illustration has he proven anything except his lack of knowledge and his inability to state a fact.

In conclusion I wish to say that Mr. Norton's attention has been called to some of the more glaring inaccuracies of his article and he has been asked to remedy them. His answer has been that if something was written to which he could reply he would consider it, but that a few mistakes could make no difference in his argument. As he has restricted free press and free speech in his paper by saying that he would publish no communications containing personalities or sarcasm, and his article in the REVIEW cannot be answered in an abstract way, but only by showing how utterly reckless are his statements, I have written this reply.

I very much regret that I have been compelled to make this article as long as it is, but in no other way could it cover all his errors without continued argument and correspondence.

Mr. Norton's suggested changes are like his "facts," incompetent. Fairhope is a corporation founded with the avowed intention of administering the land so as to equalize the varying advantages, etc., and the events of the past few months have proven conclusively the folly of allowing any others than Single Taxers to direct its policy. We are a small community, working to demonstrate our theories, and have never made the slightest effort to take advantage of any one's ignorance to rent them land. Those who are objecting the hardest, came here of their own volition and leased the land, as they would of any corporation, and if the affairs of the corporation had been administered on strictly modern business principles, if J. D. Rockefeller had been at the head and all the rental value had gone into the pocket of the corporation landlord, no protests would ever have appeared. The protestants would be too busy trying to pay their rents and keep on the right side of the landlord. The opposition is not to Fairhope, but to the Single Tax, and one of the leaders of the opposition has declared his intention to "bust the d—— colony," and his application for membership has been on file for months with that end in view. That the talk of reform is insincere is evidenced by the fact that the first opposition was to high rents; afterwards the slogan was "Taxa-

tion without representation," and to-day they are squabbling among themselves as to whether the land should be deeded to the members. This last is the pet theory of the individual who is to "bust the d—— colony" and its object is apparent.

Fairhope does not pretend to govern its people. That is not the province of the Single Tax or of a corporation. It is simply renting its lands at the full rental value and expending the money for public benefits. The members and lessees are amenable to the same laws, and have the same rights, as citizens, as the rest of the people of Alabama.

WILLIAM CALL.

Fairhope, Ala.

FROM J. BELLANGE.

Editor *Single Tax Review*:

In your editorial upon Fairhope in the summer number of the REVIEW you say "that the semblance of personality is unavoidable in this discussion." This is very true. Indeed there is seldom any trouble among men where personal considerations do not enter more largely into the case than principle.

It is because we cannot adjust our personal feelings and antipathies to the requirements of principle that our differences become so acute. But however desirable it may be to "remember that both sides have the real good of the cause at heart," it may not be the exact truth. Usually it is not unqualifiedly so.

There are generally some on both sides who are sincere and quite as frequently some of the most active on both sides are prompted by very unworthy motives.

The true story of Fairhope's troubles cannot be told without full recognition of a degree of human weakness and folly that will show conclusively that no plan, no matter how ideally perfect, can hope to escape their evil effects. Personal interests, personal pride and ambition, and above all personal antipathies founded on social, political and business relations are sure to be a large factor in every human enterprise. No system can eliminate them. It will be fortunate if it may survive in spite of them.

Because our troubles partake so largely of these elements the public at large cannot see them in their true perspective and will therefore very likely attribute them to wrong causes.

Those who are bent on making mischief, whether on the inside or outside of the colony, appreciate this, and naturally appeal for sympathy to the outside public that they can hope to influence by their representations. They know that only by an appearance and profession of candor can they secure attention.

It seems to me the part of wisdom for the outside world to recognize these facts, and before giving ear to complaints to enquire if it is not possible that the enemies of the

principle of the Single Tax are using the frailties of human nature to promote disintegrating discord. They might even very properly go further and question whether the proneness of men and women to fuss had not in fact stirred up troubles that really are not germane to the differences on the principles involved in the plan of Fairhope.

Had the Single Tax public proved itself wise enough to prudently raise these questions and left us to settle our differences among ourselves in our own way, we could have done so much more quickly than is now possible, and we would have been spared the necessity of making public accusation of any one, "even an enemy."

Now that we have been dragged before the public it seems necessary that we should say that we have mischief breeders both on the inside and outside of Fairhope, that are trying to do her harm. The hair splitters on the outside are quite willing allies of the hair pullers on the inside, and they mutually encourage each other to renewed efforts. But for this our trouble would long since have ceased.

This is not fair to us, but it is the thing to be expected. It is a part of the history of every attempt to better human conditions and anticipated at every step in human progress.

Ever since the serpent took it upon himself to give to Eve the "inside facts" regarding the administration of Eden we have had officious meddlers with every good enterprise ready to push others into trouble. They have never prevailed against the powers of truth though they may and sometimes do succeed in shutting the gates of Paradise upon those who listen to them.

Mr. Norton has a perfect right to his opinion about Fairhope. He has a perfect right to express it. He has, if his conscience so permits, a perfect right to oppose Fairhope as a Single Tax experiment, but he has no right to claim friendship for what he is striving to destroy, or for those whose interests and financial prosperity he is trying to injure. Most of us have our all involved in the prosperity of Fairhope. Above all, he has no right to make misstatements either through intention or carelessness. Especially when he asks the confidence of the public, not in his mere opinion, but in what he claims are "inside facts," any error, however slight, is inexcusable. His setting forth of these "inside facts," promised three months before, is so false in its conclusions, so carelessly compiled, and errors are so ingeniously made to support his conclusions as to make it impossible to attribute them entirely to carelessness.

At the time of our late Single Tax conference one of our committee on programme, who had recently settled among us, informally suggested to Mr. Norton that he would doubtless be expected to address us.

However, when the committee met to arrange a programme it was thought best to

reserve as many places upon it for our visitors as possible. So it was arranged that our president, F. L. Brown, should make the address of welcome at the first meeting and one of the visitors the reply. The second evening was to be devoted to a discussion of the "Fairhope Plan." Mr. Gaston was to support it. Dr. Greeno, probably the foremost and ablest of the resident malcontents, had consented to represent the opposition. With these two speakers provided to lead the plan was to give the discussion over to the house. The rest of the programme was arranged from day to day, only one speaker, Mr. Bolton Hall, being assured for the occasion, though several others participated.

Mr. Norton was invited to be present and participate in such discussion as he might choose, but was not given a formal place on the programme. We did not need him, nor did we discriminate against him. He was present at several of the meetings, including I believe the one devoted to the discussion of the "Fairhope Plan." He sulked and seemed greatly insulted that the Alabama Committeeman on the National Single Tax League should be so shabbily treated.

Although Dr. Greeno failed to appear one whole evening was given up to the discussion of the "Fairhope Plan," but Mr. Norton charged in his paper, the *Standard*, that the management sought to shut out such discussion. Thinking that he might not have been there that evening, I wrote him and informed him of his error, but so far as I know he never corrected it. Several of our people are confident that he was there that evening.

I also insisted that he should correct his misstatements in his REVIEW article, republished in the *Standard*, but up to the present writing he has not done so. In this request I was formally joined by a number of our representative men and we agreed that if he would make due correction in the *Standard* and also in the REVIEW we would not take the matter up. That he has not seemed inclined to do so is our excuse for bringing him before the public in such a personal way. We feel that this article and that of Mr. Call, dealing more specifically with his mistakes, are necessary in self defence.

His insinuation that Fairhope had not dealt fairly and frankly with the public was an insult to every one who had assisted making public her history and policy. When his statement came forth and proved to be such a wide deviation from the truth we felt that the limit of forbearance had been reached.

We do not expect to follow Mr. Norton in his future iterations and reiterations. Life is too short. We trust, however, that this will be sufficient warning to the public to be on guard in the future.

As to your objection to Fairhope's semi-socialistic feature concerning the boat it would seem only necessary to say that it

would obviously be bad form and a suicidal policy to reject any proffered help that was cheerfully given. In the handling of that matter Fairhope's interests have never been financially involved, while she has been benefited much more than the cost of the boat even if she never again earned a cent. The truth is that until quite recently business has not been sufficient to meet the expenses of such an enterprise. Her losses however, have not fallen upon Fairhope, but upon those who so generously gave us the benefit of the enterprise. They have nobly stood behind it without quibbling or hair splitting as to whether or not it was *socialistic* and proving unequivocally that no spirit of *monopoly* governed their action.

Fairhope is not "apart from the great stream of human progress," but in the midst of it, manfully buffeting the waves with which the adverse winds of criticism and selfishness would overwhelm her, and she will outlive the storm.

J. BELLANGER.

Fairhope, Ala.

THE QUESTION OF ISOLATION.

Editor *Single Tax Review* :

In your issue of July 15th you say: " * * * Is it indeed written that nothing shall succeed apart from the great stream of human progress? That no man or collection of men can withdraw from their fellows and by themselves demonstrate any great theory of human life and conduct? Fourierite communities failed alike with Thoreau and his colony of one. These have passed with the early Christian communisms, the monastic communities, individualistic and socialistic alike." Farther on you say that Fairhope is different, but you leave the impression that the Fairhope people are all Single Taxers, and isolated from others. This is erroneous.

There are people living here (and some of them are lessees) who were here when Fairhope was founded, who had never heard of the Single Tax before that time. Some of them are not Single Taxers now, and some are avowedly antagonistic. A second class are those who have come here from Mobile, from places in our vicinity and from all parts of the country; attracted here because there is more business here than in any other town in our county, which is larger than the State of Rhode Island; and because Fairhope has public improvements which are not yet dreamed of by any other towns in this county, not even by the City of Mobile. Of this second class many do not pretend to be Single Taxers. Others do, but there sincerity is perhaps to be questioned, because it is to their pecuniary advantage to gain our good will, as they depend upon us to be supplied with labor. There is a third class here who are a sort of floating population such as reporters, both summer

and winter, etc. Some are lessees, but many are not, and they are probably mostly not Single Taxers. A fourth class of people living here are those who live among us but own their own land, and do not profess to be Single Taxers. There is furthermore a fifth class of people here who thought they were Single Taxers when they joined the colony, and perhaps were, but short-sighted self interest caused them to backslide. Some of them want the colony to sell out, as they figure that they can then realize \$800 from a share of stock for which they have only paid \$100. One of them demanded \$50 for the improvements on a 65 foot lot, said improvements consisting only of clearing and partial fencing worth at the most \$5. The remaining \$45 represented unearned increment, which this quasi Single Taxer wished to pocket. This class is now demanding deeds to the lands they have leased.

These five or more different classes of people mingle with us in our churches, lodges, schools, etc. They come into contact with us in our business and social life at every point, and they influence us in many ways. We are, therefore, no more isolated from other people than the members of lodges and churches are isolated from the rest of mankind. The sweeping assertion which you make concerning the failure of all isolated institutions does not, therefore, apply to Fairhope, even if the assertion were true. But the assertion is not true, as you will find if you will take a little pains to investigate the matter.

J. W. BRAAM.

Fairhope, Ala.

SOME SUGGESTED CHANGES.

Editor *Single Tax Review* :

There seems to be a great deal to be said on both sides of the Fairhope controversy, and both sets of disputants have some truth on their side. But it seems to us it should not be difficult for all parties to get together, if they will only hold fast to fundamental principles.

In the matter of voting in Fairhope, as elsewhere, the question would be very much simplified if it could be clearly kept in mind what things should be matters of majority rule and what should not. In all cases voting should be limited to subjects which are properly affairs of government, leaving all other matters to individual decision. In Fairhope the corporation has the undoubted right to say each year what the total rental value of the land of the colony is, but the decision, as to what part of this whole each individual should pay, should be left to an assessor, or board of assessors, elected by a vote of all the residents of the colony, with an appeal to the whole population in case any one thinks he is unjustly assessed. The use to which the funds should be applied should also be decided by