

of land, this being the only method by which a revenue sufficient to defray the public expense can be obtained without taxing products of labor.

Or (7) Since there can be no equal freedom to labor and to enjoy the products of labor while the land, from which everything is produced, is the private property of a few, and all others live and labor upon the earth only by the purchased permission of the owners of it; we demand that all public revenues be raised by a tax upon the value of land exclusive of its improvements; to the end that all may share equally in that value which attaches to land by reason of the increase of population and the advance of civilization.

Labor and all its products should be free from taxation. The rent of land (including the value of all franchises on land) is the natural and only proper source of public revenue. All revenue should, therefore, be collected from this source.

Or no taxes should be laid upon labor or anything made by labor. All taxes should be collected from the rent of land, including the annual value of railroad, telegraph, gas and other franchises, which give a right to exclusive possession or use of land.

Or labor and all its products should be free from taxation. All taxes should be collected from the rent of land, including the annual value of railroad, telegraph, gas and other franchises which give a right to exclusive possession or use of land.

SCIENTIFIC AGITATION.

(For the Review).

By BENJAMIN DOBLIN.

The promotion of a cause is subject to rules as definite as those governing the marketing of a commercial article. No prudent merchant would conduct a publicity campaign with haphazard methods, neither may the propagandist ignore the prevision and planning necessary to an effective appeal to the public mind and conscience.

The REVIEW might with benefit to the cause invite suggestions and discussion as to the most economical way to promote the Single Tax. To put the ball in play I lead off, because something even tentative will serve to draw criticism, out of which some genius in our ranks can prepare a satisfactory system that will lighten our future work and carry farther with whatever strength and means we can command.

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There are two primary distinctions to be observed: One the *propagation* of our philosophy, the other the *legislative steps* necessary to give effect to our philosophy.

While both may be carried on concurrently, they must be separately

developed. I suspect that such differences as we have had were due to our failure to keep clearly in mind the difference between education and legislation.

A Single Taxer who enlists for the war and struggles along, beaten, disappointed but undismayed, is usually a convert who studied Henry George's writings, notably *Progress and Poverty*. Anyone with the proper mental and moral equipment who reads *Progress and Poverty* understandingly, will become a Single Taxer "for keeps," usually ready to make sacrifices for his convictions. Necessarily these are exceptional characters. We must not expect to recruit them in great numbers. *Progress and Poverty* has made more good Single Taxers than any other agency, therefore I believe that the study of *Progress and Poverty* is the surest road to the Single Tax.

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Unrelated individual propaganda is too costly and intermittent to be effective. More solid results are to be gained by joint efforts, which include systematization, organization, competent mediums of intercommunication, reading circles, clubs, leagues, public meetings, addresses, debates, novels, paintings, illustrations, songs, poems, letter writing corps, stereopticons, moving pictures, plays, posters, pasters, newspaper and magazine advertising, talking-machine records, tracts, etc. etc. These various features should be carefully appraised and co-ordinated. The comparative value of each method will be more clearly appreciated where it has been fitted into a programme. Thus our deficiencies in any direction will be made good.

The National Committee might assume the work of preparation proportioning and systematizing, furnishing at a minimum charge such things as can be more cheaply produced in large quantities. All educational effort should be designed to induce the purchase and study of Henry George's writings.

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Without attempting to make an orderly arrangement of the many items of our educational programme, I shall try to indicate something in the nature of thorough system in the one detail of tracts.

Single Tax tracts should be prepared addressed to separate professions and crafts; for example, a physician's argument to physicians. These special group tracts should be invested with personality by the signatures and endorsements of as many notable members of the particular group addressed as it is possible to obtain. Wm. Lloyd Garrison's address to the students of Ann Arbor University would be an admirable tract for students in other educational institutions, especially if endorsed by some professors of Political Economy.

A group that has been circularized should be "followed up," until each person addressed had expressed an opinion for or against. Every tract should contain a bibliography of the Single Tax.

When in hand-to-hand work you encounter a hard, obtuse subject, drop him. Somebody, and many somebodies are sure to oppose or ignore us, even at the final day of success. Count your hard customer one of these, and turn your attention to more promising material. Don't put in more energy in mak-

ing a convert than there is a reasonable hope of getting back. While you are struggling to make a convert out of some poor, cross-grained material, two and probably more potential Single Taxers "sit in darkness" for lack of your attention.

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Don't give literature away for nothing—sell it or loan it. You may not dispose of as much printed matter, but what you do put in circulation will be read more seriously; besides your time and money will be economized. When you lend a tract, be sure to have your name and address on it, and remember to insist upon its return, so that your estimate of the tract's value will be impressed upon the borrower. He will then take time to read, while your influence is still alive, and maybe discuss with you the tract's argument when he returns it. Keep him interested. Suggest a course of reading, gradually leading to Progress and Poverty. Proceed with the consciousness that you are bestowing a favor. Remember you are putting some one in the way of a fuller and better life. Dave Harris used to say that the Single Tax is a liberal education. Don't depreciate your service; make it clear that the obligation is on the other side, as it is. You would feel that you were doing a kindness to your neighbor if you undertook to teach him a language or other accomplishment—Well, teaching him Single Tax is far more valuable.

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Reiteration is a powerful force, and can be employed to advantage. Would it not be desirable to prepare a large illustrated color poster of a landscape containing a concealed cat with the legend, "Can you see the cat that will lower rent and raise wages?" "Ask your book dealer."—and post a town until the people in that vicinity had subconsciously absorbed the motto? The book dealer would be encouraged to place Single Tax books on sale in a conspicuous place if advertising were stimulating interest. Then too, there would be a revivifying effect upon the apathetic Single Taxers, who would see that there was something doing.

We should get the publisher to issue paper covered editions of Henry George's book with a reduced copy of the poster in colors on the cover so that its display on the news stands would arrest the attention of the book buyers.

This project must be taken up with determination. Spasmodic effort will prove wasteful. The precise order of operations, and a fairly accurate estimate of cost for an efficient campaign over the territory to be covered, should be known in advance, and once started continued through initial discouragement to success. Starting with hardly any notice, accumulating public interest until the minds of the people have been reached, as they surely will be, if time is allowed for germination and growth. It is not only the buyers and readers of the books who would be influenced by such a campaign; it would create the atmosphere that predisposes public opinion in our direction, and gets their sympathy for our purpose, even if they do not understand our

economics; this will help greatly in winning the consideration of assertive people who want to represent public opinion.

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Our deficiency in system and clear objective is shown in the way we conduct lectures. One speaker at best can only produce a glimmering light which we permit to die for lack of further attention. All our lines of propaganda will repay more intensive cultivation. When interest is awakened it should be enlivened and quickened into activity by systematic continuous attention. If our work is properly done our ranks will show a steady accretion, giving us the financial and numerical strength to push on to more ambitious efforts. Instead of merely shooting in a direction we must aim at some definite object, and keep firing at our target until we score. Only hits count; the rest is but burnt ammunition.

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We do not utilize the strength we already have in the many dormant Single Taxers who are neither active nor supporting by financial aid those who are. Many have read Progress and Poverty, and have been convinced of the justice of its message, but are doing nothing to help realize the teachings they have accepted, because they do not know what to do. They are willing to help, and will help if afforded an opportunity prepared by somebody with more time or initiative.

In many communities there are a number of Single Taxers unknown to one another. They ought to be enrolled and brought together; then there is the lonely Single Taxer who fears that he is too weak to do much unaided; probably he never did any propaganda work, and does not know how to begin or proceed with what to him is unusual. From somewhere should be exerted the initial stimulus, sympathy and encouragement that will stir him into activity and keep him "on the job." Hunt out these waste products of our past educational work, induce them to assume a small measure of responsibility—something that even an over-diffident man, poor, of ordinary education, without financial or social importance, can do; and prod him into action. As he gains in experience, his confidence in his ability will grow, he will "get the habit," become a centre of activity carrying the matured plan of systematized propaganda into ever widening circles, even, as of old, despised fishermen evangelized the world.

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Connect small centres into convenient divisions, possibly county committees, supervised by a State Committee, leagued into a National Committee with a staff of organizers and circuit lecturers, the whole organization directed by an intelligent, energetic Executive Committee.

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Right now, I venture to say, we are numerous enough to mold public opinion, and direct its movements if we would go about it unitedly instead of each without relation to the work of the others attempting single-handed to

do the work in his individual way. The sum and substance of our whole educational campaign should be to induce people to read Henry George's writings, then, when they have been converted, to secure their help in inducing others to study his books. This, to my mind, is the goal in an educational campaign—all else is contributory.

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POLITICAL PROGRAMME.

Nowhere, I suppose, is there a seasoned Single Taxer who thinks that the Single Tax is going to be instituted by one complete enactment. The forces of privilege are too watchful, tactful and resourceful to permit it. Their control over public thought and action is so great, compact and flexible, so adroitly directed, that any frontal attack upon their position must end in failure and disaster. They must be assaulted in detail, turning their ambitions, schemes, selfishness and jealousies against themselves. Out of their distrust of each other and internal differences we must make our progress. This is the policy they themselves pursue in successfully retaining their graft against the ethical and humane forces that would establish a just social order. If we consolidate along the lines of our agreement, attack an existing irritating abuse with a proposition possessing human interest, we can defeat them in detail, advancing from one position to the next, preparing the way logically for the final supremacy of justice. Each advance strengthens our side and weakens theirs. We have, too, the advantage of truth, and are sure to succeed if we do not attempt too much at a time.

Conditions force us to use strategy in furthering our reform. We should aim to bring an economic principle into public view and acceptance through timely legislation. To the impulsive Single Taxer who would settle the whole social disorder by one grand spectacular enactment, this suggested advance by logical steps will be disheartening, but the method should not be blamed for his impatience. Let us who know that progress can be made more rapidly by persistent, consistent steps agree upon the order of our legislative demand, and concentrate our energies to winning our way to success by progressive enactment of the Single Tax.

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State Constitutions, laws, legal decisions, habits and conditions vary in different localities, notwithstanding that some changes are possible with existing conditions almost anywhere. For example, we can demand the enforcement of the tax laws which prescribe that property shall be assessed at its true value. This is a demand that any fair-minded taxpayer will agree is opportune. Where is the honest citizen who will not agree that a law should be enforced? Especially when non-enforcement leads to discriminating tax valuations that probably add to his tax burdens. Demand, then, a square deal, enforce the law, and to ensure its honest application insist that land must be separately assessed from improvements, and the tax lists published.

This mere administrative reform has been adopted in New York City, and, as a result, the old foolish objection to the Single Tax, that it was impractical because land value could not be distinguished from improvement value, is silenced. Once it required painstaking argument to combat this objection; at present no one even thinks of it as an objection.

With the tax laws enforced, the incidences of taxation are better apprehended by the student of the subject and by the ordinary citizen, who can then more readily see the baneful affects of taxing improvements, a phase of the subject that would otherwise never appeal to his practical mind. But more than this, it opens the way for the next step, and affords reasons and conditions that make it pertinent to demand that modest homes be exempt from taxation for a small fixed amount of improvement value, driving home the idea that a tax on improvements is responsible for high rents and bad housing conditions. This should appeal to members of local building and loan associations, and philanthropists. The rich are already exempt far more than the amount proposed, because the assessor cannot appraise improvements of great value as closely as he can the small home of the poorer citizen.

Here is your human interest. Exempting homes \$2,000. or \$3,000. on improvement value will stimulate the erection of exempt houses and their multiplication show an apparent increase of the tax rate levied upon apartments and other buildings. The owners of tenements would soon complain that the exemption of homes induced against them more active competition for tenants, that they had to pay a full value tax on their improvements with an increased tax rate due to exemption of their competitors. They must pay their own full share and seemingly a portion of their competitors'. Benefited house owners will now have more than a theoretical interest in taxation, will resist any attempt to reinstate taxation of their homes, and advance valid economic and sentimental reasons why the exemption of homesteads should continue. The easy remedy for the complained of disproportionate taxation of homes and tenements would be an amendment extending the exemption to *each family* for \$2,000. or \$3,000. of improvements value. This would suggest itself as a satisfactory compromise to the majority which can see related cause and effect, but are blind to any relation the least bit remote. After this exemption was adopted only highly valued private residences and commercial properties would be liable for the tax on improvements. Extending the exemption on improvements to include each family would reduce still more the total sum of taxables and increase the tax rate correspondingly. The conditions would then be ripe for the commercial interests, which are never inarticulate when their welfare is jeopardized, to protest against the increase burdens shouldered on to them. They would not be able to induce the benefited exempt house owners and tenants to abolish their advantage. In any conflict of self interest the majority will prevail against the complaining owners. We may reasonably expect at this juncture that the highly moral, cultured conservators of the general good will exert their influence and spend their money educating the

public to realize the iniquity of a tax on improvements. The Single Tax will begin to look mighty good to them.

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The Purdy plan of apportionment for State and County revenue is the Single Taxer's solution for the present dissatisfaction and confusion in State and County revenue systems. This plan has been universally endorsed by tax officials and experts, by leading commercial bodies, labor unions and other organizations. Its "talking points" are many and convincing. The Purdy plan is automatic, economical and certain in results, insures uniform accounting, and exposes tax evils to clear public view. It is far reaching in its unsuspected incidents, and affords Home Rule in local methods of taxation. More than all this, it is a system applicable to the smallest and to the largest political division. Federal revenue can be apportioned on the States by the same method the State apportions its revenue-needs upon the County and the County upon its minor divisions. The raising of Federal revenue by this system would displace the tariff and other indirect taxation. It would end centralization and corrupt government, imperialism, pension abuses, banking graft, etc.

Under the Purdy plan local governments could experiment with any method of taxation, and if it desired, raise all its revenue, Federal, State and local, by a tax on land values. Somewhere it would be adopted, and competition and example would demonstrate the advantages of the Single Tax and force it into wider and general use without waiting for the backward States to agree to a radical change in its tax system.

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Governments are not business ventures selling services for a profitable money price. They are supposedly organized to perform their necessary functions and collect the cost by taxation. This is not so clear a proposition to-day because we farm out many public functions for private gain, and engage in private ventures that of right should be left to individual enterprise. But under the Single Tax it will be seen that government activities are a charge upon the government's revenue. Wherever now government performs a service it is advisable for us to insist that it be a tax charge. For example, water rates ought to be abolished. We can declare that the value of public services are reflected in increased land value and this affords the only true measure of the worth of the service.

We should throw as much of the cost of government as possible upon the rates, for then the evils of unwise taxation on improvements are made palpable, compelling recognition and action on an irritating tax problem. As we succeed in rescuing class after class of taxables from destroying burdens, we force an increasing proportion upon land values, reducing the selling price of land, weakening the landed interests, politically, numerically and economically.

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After deciding upon the best order of projected reforms the detailed method of propaganda should be arranged, each step carefully calculated to insure our greatest efficiency.

Whether a worker calls himself Republican, Democrat, Socialist or reformer is immaterial—act with the name and party which at the time seems to offer the best chance for the success of the particular legislation in hand.

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Why should the Evil One have all the easy ways? I count it a merit in a man that he is ambitious to serve the public, and if he can encompass it, that the public shall compensate him for his work. It is better for the man—his continued usefulness—for his ideals, and for the public. Glory is not the only reward that should be expected; the public has no more right than the individual has to accept unrequited toil; even the church finds it best to pay workers in something besides glory. Let us urge Single Taxers to seek public office, and wherever possible help should be extended to elevate them to place and power.

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Unless we prepare a system of progressive propaganda I fear we shall continue to breed in and in, until finally our whole energy shall be consumed in philosophical hair-splitting contentions as to whether the Single Tax would take 99½% or 100 of economic rent for public use, or some of us feeling the compulsion for doing something really practical will dilute our enthusiasm for the Single Tax by advocacy of any old proposition labelled "Reform," while the landlord continues in undisturbed contentment to bag the whole situation.

Let us get together, eliminate waste motion and reduce friction as much as possible.

We have a skeleton organization in the National Committee. What is the essential next step to clothe it with vigorous efficiency? How shall we finance the National Committee?

I suggest that each State Committee Chairman appoint a live Single Taxer as sub-chairman for as many sections of his State as he can get to serve, and form all into a State Executive Committee with authority to organize townships and ward organizations with due-paying members, paying \$1.00 a year for each member to the National Committee. That they then plan such work for local bodies as will keep them interested. Exchange local speakers. Organize a letter-writing corp, and an enrollment committee. Make periodical reports to the National Committee. Institute circulating libraries of Henry George's books for local use. Promote reading circles in the homes of members. There are innumerable ways in which members may be attracted and usefully employed.

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The floor is open for discussion—Gentlemen—What is your pleasure?

It is a position not to be contradicted, that the earth, in its natural uncultivated state was, and ever would have continued to be, *the common property of the human race*.—THOMAS PAINE.