

so frequently obstructive of the natural laws governing human association that the cause of this is clear.

The key we have so long sought is the repeal of obstructive laws. Let us use it to open the door to peace and brotherhood between the peoples of all nations and to health, plenty and happiness for all men. Then and then only can we call ourselves civilized.

Other action may be needed to achieve our goal, but to be effective it must follow the repeal of all laws which in any way interfere with the freedom of individuals of different nations to trade with one another on a basis of mutual satisfaction (laws which obstruct such trade are the root cause of war between nations); the repeal of all laws conferring special privileges upon individuals, groups or classes, thus abolishing war between them; the repeal of all laws for obtaining revenue by a tax upon anything save upon the right to the use of natural opportunities for the production of wealth, enjoyed by an individual to the exclusion of all others, thereby causing an equitable distribution of wealth, with the result that one who works shall retain the full product of his labor and that of no other.

If there be a panacea for social ills, it is freedom. It at least benefits all men be they capitalists or laborers.

The laws to be repealed are not beneficial to any class, upper, middle or lower. When men become capable of thought on the subject of political economy, as they will when taught it by others than the paid advocates of the beneficiaries of things as they are, the natural laws of human association and trade will become as manifest to them as the physical laws of gravity. Then, and then only, will men cease to make laws not in harmony with them. Until then we must forego the blessings of civilization and war and hate will still prevail and want and the fear of want will be the portion of an ever-increasing majority of men.

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## THE SINGLE TAX—A DEFINITION.

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The fundamental doctrine of Henry George, the equal right of all men to the use of the earth, did not originate with him; but his clear statement of a method by which it could be enforced, without increasing State machinery, and indeed with a great simplification of government, gave it a new form. This method he named the *Single Tax*. His doctrine may be condensed as follows: The land of every country belongs of right to all the people of that country. This right cannot be alienated by one generation, so as to affect the title of the next, any more than men can sell their yet unborn children for slaves. Private ownership of land has no more foundation in morality or reason than private ownership of air or sunlight. But the private occupancy and use of land are right and indispensable. Any attempt to divide land into equal shares is impossible and undesirable. Land should be, and

practically is now, divided for private use in parcels among those who will pay the highest price for each parcel. This price is now paid by some persons annually, and it is called *rent*. By applying the rent of land, exclusive of all improvements, to the equal benefit of the whole community, absolute justice would be done to all. As rent is always more than sufficient to defray all necessary expenses of government, those expenses should be met by a tax on rent alone, to be brought about by the gradual abolition of all other taxes. Landlords should be left in undisturbed possession and nominal ownership of the land, with a sufficient margin over the tax to induce them to collect their rents and pay the tax. They would thus be transferred into mere land agents. Obviously this would involve absolute free trade, since all taxes on imports, manufactures, successions, documents, personal property, buildings or improvements would disappear. Nothing made by man would be taxed at all. The right of private property in all things made by man would thus be absolute, for the owner of such things could not be divested of his property without full compensation, even under the pretence of taxation.—F. C. R. D.

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## BI-MONTHLY NEWS LETTER.

By THE EDITOR.

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There is little to report this bi-month. The defeat of the Single Tax in Colorado Springs by a large majority is to be regretted, though few anticipated victory. Later in this month—May—the Single Tax will be voted on in Denver, where John Z. White has made an active campaign and the local workers have labored gloriously.

In Houston the decision of Judge Read has made it incumbent on the tax officials of that city to enforce "constitutional taxation," and Commissioner Pastoriza and his supporters will see to it that the friends of the system of taxing everything in sight get "all that is coming to them." This kind of enforcement will be new to most of them, and they may be expected to wince under the infliction. In the meantime the friends of tax exemption will work for such changes in the fundamental law as will make for the early return to the system under which Houston has grown so wonderfully. For an account of this growth, such has not yet appeared elsewhere, our readers are referred to the article by Mr. Waters in this issue.

In the Oklahoma State Senate a bill has been introduced by Senator Clarence Davis providing for a Single Tax amendment to the constitution. It passed by a vote of 22 to 17. Senator Davis will now lead a movement to submit it to referendum.

Hon. W. S. U'Ren has drafted a new plan for submission to the voters of Oregon. It provides for the taxation of rent, and says: