

not of a government BY the people. They are the fruits of a government by representatives.

Meanwhile the rentals are soaring, and the people are becoming alarmed; no detailed reports are ever made, only the gross totals are allowed to escape. Whether the Fairhope Association has a right to collect and disburse its rentals without responsibility to its tenants, or whether the peculiar circumstances of the case warrant the belief that the tenant is entitled to a financial report and some assurance that the rentals are really expended for his benefit, is a question that must sooner or later come before the courts of the State of Alabama for adjudication.

The piney woods colony is interesting only because it poses as the exponent of a great reform, not less interesting because it has shown what should not be done rather than what should be done. It is only a speck on the map of a great republic which is in itself an experiment. A republic that for more than a century and a quarter has "*Proclaimed* liberty throughout the land and to all the inhabitants thereof": But have we liberty? From every quarter comes the cry of "graft." The modern knight-errant armed with indictments goes forth to put the representatives of the people in jail, and if he succeeds we elect him to high office and congratulate ourselves that at last virtue has triumphed over vice. But the system remains unchanged.

The Single Tax people ask that the vast sums which represent the increment to our land values be turned into the public treasury; as these values are the creation of the public they ask only justice, but they promise much; they promise the kingdom of Heaven upon earth, the millenium. But is there any reason to-day to believe that we shall reap the full benefits of the single tax so long as the power to make laws is delegated by the people to an inferior body? Will not the lust for power and privilege dominate our legislatures when the lust of avarice shall have vanished?

Volanta, Ala., Forefather's Day, Dec. 21st, 1904.

PRESCOTT A. PARKER.



REPLY TO PRESCOTT A. PARKER.

Editor Single Tax Review:

I thank you for the opportunity to reply in the same issue to Mr. P. A. Parker's criticism of Fairhope—though regretting the necessity of any controversy with so good a Single Taxer as I know Mr. Parker to be.

Referring first to Mr. Parker's criticism of that feature of the colony plan which provides for the administration of colony affairs by members of the colony corporation, who must pay a given amount and be accepted as members; it is an absolutely necessary condition not only for the purpose of securing means to buy the land, which "had to be purchased," as he says, but to ensure the administration of that land on Single Tax principles. With Single Taxers out-numbered one hundred to one, as they generally are, to our sad knowledge, it is the simplest kind of a mathematical problem to demonstrate that if every one who came to Fairhope because he liked the location or the climate, or because he found land easier of access than elsewhere, were admitted to full participation in determining the policy of the colony or electing the officers to execute it, there would not be any Single Tax colony to criticise by the time another issue of the REVIEW was due.

Please bear in mind that Fairhope only claims to apply Single Tax and Democratic principles to as great an extent as is possible under existing con-

ditions. We believe that it is possible to go much further in that direction under the colony plan than in any other way now open, but it has its limitations, regrettable, but not to be ignored. One, as Mr. Parker has cited, is that it is necessary to buy land. Another is that it must be controlled by Single Taxers. Under the paid membership plan, we can and do say to Single Taxers, whether able to come and live with us or not: "Help us with funds with which to add more land to be administered under the Single Tax principle for the benefit of all who may ever reside upon it, and we will give you a voice in holding our colony to that policy."

Bear in mind, too, that our colony administration is not a government superimposed by force upon any one. Ours is a purely voluntary association organized for a specific purpose. We came to what then seemed an out-of-the-way corner of the world and secured a tract of land which was then practically valueless upon which to demonstrate the virtues of a well-defined policy. That policy has been steadfastly adhered to. No one has been invited to participate in it in any way, except he approved of it and every proper effort has been made to acquaint all comers with that policy. Any one who does approve of the policy is welcomed to full participation in the administration to-day on exactly the same terms as those who endured the hardships of pioneers. Those who do not approve the policy, have all the rest of the world to choose from.

Yet further: even if it were deemed advisable to commit hari-kari, by admitting non-single taxers to full voice in the administration, no one has ever shown a way by which it could justly be done. The money which has been paid in for membership fees has all been expended. During late years for land purposes only; during early years, necessarily for promotion and public improvements as well. It would manifestly be unjust to present members now to admit others without fee, without returning to them the amount they had paid. But the property of the corporation cannot be sold for the purpose; the revenues are pledged to be expended for the benefit of the rent payers, and certainly it would be idle to ask Single Taxers to put up money to refund to other Single Taxers money paid for property the benefits of which they were enjoying.

Fairhope Single Taxers do not want to "govern" anybody. They do want to administer the land which they and their Single Tax friends have furnished the money to release from private landlordism, upon Single Tax principles—for their mutual benefit, and that of any others who think it to their interest to take it at the terms upon which it is offered, and for the purpose of practically demonstrating to a world not caring for abstract theories the righteousness and beneficence of the Single Tax. They have done everything they could be expected to do, and more, when they say to non-members and non-Single-Taxers: "Take of our land if you wish it, agreeing to pay to our corporation an annually appraised rental which shall equalize the varying advantages of location and natural qualities and convert into the treasury of the corporation for the common benefit of the lessees all values attaching to such lands not due to the efforts of the lessees," and we will agree on our part that "no discrimination shall be made between members and non-members in rent appraisement, and that no part of the rent paid shall be appropriated as dividends to its (the corporation's) members or any other persons, but that all shall be administered as a trust fund for the carrying out of the principles and purposes of the corporation as expressed in its charter, and for the equal benefit of those residing upon its lands."

The loyalty of a claimed "Single Tax Colony" to Single Tax principles is readily conceded to be proper matter for discussion in a Single Tax journal. Matters of the administration of local colony affairs may, it seems to me, with

propriety and safety be left to the resident members, whose high average of intelligence is common subject of remark. No one at a distance could possibly be given information sufficient to enable him to judge accurately of local business matters. Yet I will note briefly Mr. Parker's criticisms along this line.

Fairhope wharf is at least twice—I think thrice—as well equipped for the care of business as any other wharf along the eastern shore of Mobile Bay. Doing a heavy traffic it is constantly needing repairs—and getting them. Of the \$1,237 of wharf earnings in 1904, \$581.95 were spent on its repair and betterment.

Our “water works” are not what are desired, but are the best in Baldwin County, and we hope will soon be improved.

The increase of business of the boat has been mentioned with pleasure, but about eighteen months ago the loyal people of Fairhope were contributing monthly to a fund to make up a deficit in operating expenses. It has not yet been deemed safe to take of the narrow margin to the good to declare a dividend. A full report will be published soon, and in the meantime any party at interest can have access to the accounts.

The local telephone system, which has cost \$557 to date, is a thoroughly well constructed and up-to-date one, through which, and its connections, by favorable contracts made by the Executive Council, Fairhoppers can telephone to every important point in Baldwin County—including Volanta—without charge, and to Mobile for a small fee. The question of putting it in was under discussion for years, and especially for four or five months before a dollar of expense was incurred, was discussed at almost every meeting of the Council and through the *Fairhope Courier*. The Council had no reason to doubt that it was generally approved by the people. Its severest critics are those who are interested in the telephone business on the usual basis.

The rents are “soaring” somewhat. For, be it remembered, Fairhope is a thriving community, increasing in business and population 25 to 40 per cent. a year. But, unlike the land values—perhaps “prices” would be a more accurate term in this case—at Volanta, they are expended for the benefit of the people of Fairhope, instead of the land speculative company which owns the Volanta town site.

The wharfinger reports regularly to the Council his weekly receipts, and the treasurer makes condensed monthly reports which are read in open meeting—all meetings are open meetings—spread upon the records and filed where they can be consulted at any time, as can the treasurer's books, by any one interested. Full annual statements giving totals received from the different sources and purposes for which expended, are regularly made at the annual meeting and published in the *Courier*.

The Colony may be called upon to meet in the courts some day the questions of the fairness of its rents and the proper expenditure of its revenues, and is supremely confident of its ability to maintain its position before any intelligent jury, though it may be taken for granted that it does not consider any jury of non-Single Taxers half as likely to deal justly with such matters as a majority of the resident members of the colony, who under its constitution and practice are the final authority on all colony matters.

Mr. Editor, it is a well defined principle of law, and ethics as well, that he who would hale his fellows before the bar of justice, or public opinion, must himself come with clean hands. Mr. Parker is now and has been for years, a member of the colony organization. It is not within my recollection that he has in good faith made use of his right and privilege vigorously to combat the alleged evils of which he now complains. His chief individual interest in this vicinity now is that of a promoter of a private railroad and town-site speculation, operating within a little more than a half mile of the boundary of

Fairhope, to the success of which the existence of Fairhope as a Single Tax colony is the greatest obstacle. I do not mean to charge that Mr. Parker is consciously actuated by motives of personal interest in seeking to discredit Fairhope in the minds of Single Taxers, but it is a remarkable man indeed whose actions are not consciously or unconsciously affected by his personal interests.

Very Sincerely Yours,

E. B. GASTON.

Fairhope, Ala., Jan. 10, 1905.



SINGLE TAXERS OF GERMANY IN CONFERENCE.

(For the Review.)

By GRACE ISABEL COLBRON.

The fourteenth annual convention of the German Land Reform League took place on October 15th and 16th 1904, in Darmstadt, the first time in the history of this German Single Tax party that a convention has been held outside of Berlin, where the League had its birth. It was a good move on the part of the committee to choose Darmstadt for the experiment, owing to the central position for South Germany of this friendly little city, and owing also to the fact that the Grand Duke of Hesse-Darmstadt has been for some years most favorably inclined towards the teachings for which the League stands. Then, also, the date chosen for the Convention immediately preceded the meeting of the Convention to consider the Housing problem, which was to assemble in Frankfurt-am-Main, an hour from Darmstadt. A number of men of prominence in the world of social thought were pledged to appear at Frankfurt, and it was no hardship to be at Darmstadt a day sooner, while members of the Land Reform League could the more easily attend both conventions. It had been decided that the spread of Single Tax theories had been so successful throughout Germany that it was worth the trying to meet elsewhere than in Berlin, to test the power of the League to bring people together without the attractions of the Imperial Capital.

Over two hundred delegates met at Darmstadt, and the Convention was opened by the Vice-President of the League, Mr. Carl Marfels, of Friedenau, near Berlin, an ardent and devoted Single Taxer of many years service. After greeting those present in the name of the League he proceeded to say:

"The task which the League of German Land Reformers has set itself is a most important, in fact a most fundamental one. The League recognizes that all our progress, all improvements, all advance of civilization has had for main effect the heaping up of incomes from property in land for a small minority, and it desires, through a proper taxation of the enormous sums drawn from land values every year to the harm of the workers, to turn these incomes to that source from which they spring, to the community. This great object covers and contains all endeavors for betterment of social conditions, which are so active nowadays in the form of the Housing Problem, sanitation, ethical education, and all of those efforts towards a solution of what we call the social problem." The speaker then proceeded to praise the active interest taken in social reform by the German Emperor and the Grand Duke of Hesse, whose little country had the best housing laws of any German State.

Messrs. Roth, of Stuttgart, and Heenrich, of Darmstadt, were elected Secretaries of the Convention, and the former read aloud the many letters and telegrams received from those who could not be present. Messages with sin-