

Review, of late, to the suggestions of Fairhope experiments near New York and Philadelphia, seem to call for the closest of scrutiny into the *principles* going by the name of the Single Tax.

Do Single Taxers at large understand that the payment of a rent in lieu of all other *direct* taxes—whether that rent be excessive or not, and regardless of the disposition of that rent fund—constitutes *the* Single Tax as conceived by Henry George? Do they think it possible to have *the* Single Tax where there are *any indirect* taxes? Are there any Single Taxers of the Henry George brand who think that it would be possible for any *valuable* land under the Single Tax to remain untaxed? Do they think that the settler on “the margin of cultivation”—that is, on the one side of whom is population and on the other is vacant (and therefore valueless) land—would have any taxes to pay so long as the lack of demand for land to use was shown in the idle condition of the land adjoining—just beyond “the margin?”

Does any one believe that tenancy on Fairhope corporation land brings such great benefits as to make land just inside the imaginary line which separates the corporation land from the land of outsiders' worth a great many dollars per acre so long as the outsiders' land—on the other side of the imaginary line—is worth \$1.25, or less, per acre?

W. E. BROKAW,

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REPLY BY MR. GASTON.

I have no desire to engage in any controversy with Mr. Brokaw over myself or my wife's relations, and am so busy working for the Single Tax, as I understand it, that I have little time for argument with those who look at it differently.

If my work in connection with Fairhope, and the columns of the Fairhope *Courier*, are not satisfying evidence of my zeal for and understanding of Single Tax principles, I can rest quite content with my own approval.

As to my brothers-in-law—everyone who knows Fairhope knows of the important part they have played in its development. They are good enough Single Taxers and Fairhoppers to have invested every dollar they own here. It has always been, and is a matter of some pride and gratification to me, that I have been able to enlist so much support for Fairhope from my wife's relations. Petroleum V. Nasby was so patriotic in 1861 to '05 that he was “willing to sacrifice all his wife's relations,” and I was so much in earnest about Fairhope that I would have sacrificed all my wife's relations, and my own as well, upon its altar. I am glad, however, that it has in no sense proved a sacrifice to them.

Of the Single Taxers whom Mr. Brokaw mentions as having been here when he was, Springer, Schakel, Pollay, Ettel and Schakelbach, I know the whereabouts only of Schakel and Ettel, and am very glad to give their addresses, so that anyone who writes to them regarding those early days of Fairhope may do so. Henry C. C. Schakel may be reached at 1021 Union Street, Indianapolis, Ind. Fairhope has no better friend to-day than he. John W. Ettel is now at White Springs, Fla. The most cordial relations exist between him and myself to-day, in spite of the fact that I felt constrained to vote against him ten years ago.

"That issue of the *Courier* which J. H. Springer edited, and the type for which I set up," to which Mr. Brokaw refers, convinced many distant Single Taxers that the Springer-Brokaw party were on the wrong side from a Single Tax standpoint. Such an one was Prof. J. H. Loomis, then president of the Chicago Single Tax Club, now at Glen Ellyn, Ills., to whom Mr. Springer sent a copy, only to have it prove a boomerang.

Certainly Single Taxers will not understand that "the payment of a rent in lieu of other direct taxes—whether that rent be excessive or not and regardless of the disposition of that rent fund—'constitutes the Single Tax as conceived by Henry George.'" Those who consider the matter fairly, however, do see, that the collection of the rental value of land, the payment therefrom of state and county taxes on the land and on the improvements and personal property thereon, and the expenditure of the remainder for the local public benefit (which is the Fairhope plan), constitutes the nearest approach to the Single Tax possible under existing laws, which is all that is claimed for it. That anyone should have to pay rent for land in Fairhope, while similar land remains unleased, is one of the difficulties of attempting to apply the Single Tax under existing conditions, and must necessarily exist while the colony is striving to secure and hold land to provide for future population.

ERNEST B. GASTON.

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*WHAT ONE SINGLE TAX CONGRESSMAN CAN DO!

(For the Review.)

By HON. ROBERT BAKER.

What One Single Tax Congressman Can Do! The task set me by the editor of the REVIEW is about as difficult a task as one man could well set another. To perform it satisfactorily, *i.e.*, satisfactorily to the readers of this magazine, one must needs be endowed with a rare combination of qualities, *aye*, with the rarest of qualities, for the task requires the ability to set one's own acts forth in their proper perspective, free on the one hand from any excess or over-statement due to proximity of view, while on the other, avoiding an undue modesty which would ignore or gloss over matters of importance in which the chronicler played the principal part.

Conscious of my inability to steer such a course as will present all essential elements, while avoiding the appearance of egotism, I undertake the task solely because the editor of the REVIEW insists that my experience as a member of the 58th Congress is of interest to Single Taxers, and because of his further insistence that no one else has that intimate knowledge which is required to present some of the interesting incidents of my checkered career in the House of Representatives.

* This article from the pen of Congressman Robert Baker is written at the request of the editor of the REVIEW. It must be apparent to our friends everywhere that no Single Taxer in Congress has ever done as much as the energetic member from Brooklyn. If this has not always been done with perfect tact, it has at least been undertaken with swift appreciation of the importance of the work in hand, with sharp and ready wit, and with ever vigilant and fearless purpose. What has looked like self-advertising in Mr. Baker's methods has been in reality his most effective method of gaining the public ear. He has not been blind to dramatic effects, and he has drawn attention to useful examples of conduct in a Congressman—examples which are so much better than precepts.—THE EDITOR.