

Are there not enough Single Taxers in the world—and can they not exercise their ingenuity and their ability to write and speak, to illustrate and make simple things clear; can they not concentrate their efforts along a certain line to such an extent as to make ignorance of the working of the law of rent no longer excusable.

We have, for instance, been deluged with words of admonition and instruction from the present occupant of the White House, but could the closest examination of a printed volume containing them discover that there was such a phenomenon in existence as a natural law which absolutely deprives workers and users of capital from gaining any more than a prosperity demonstrably inadequate?

Let us find some way to demand from leaders, teachers and agitators for a juster distribution of wealth, that we be shown a condition which will afford full prosperity to those who are industrious at the poorest locations in use.

Either there is or there is not a natural law of economic rent. Either it does or does not seriously handicap all productive effort in valuable locations. It should be insisted by Single Taxers that unless the orthodox belief in the law of rent is to be denied and upset, or unless some other method than Single Tax be offered to produce results desired, no preacher of prosperity has any right to expect his utterances to have weight.

William Allen White, in the January *American Magazine*, says that democracy has been moving fast in the direction of social justice during the past ten years, and that we are getting into real shape for demanding that business be business. I know of no more business like story than the doctrine of economic rent, and of no more business like proposition than the Single Tax. How shall we make ourselves heard?

RECENT SOCIALISM.

(For *The Review*.)

By C. F. HUNT.

A reading of recent publications of C. H. Kerr & Co., Chicago, leads one to believe that that socialist writer who can furnish the best caricature of Henry George is the most zealous socialist.

In "Marxian Economics" Mr. Ernst Unterman tries to simplify Marx, and incidentally refute his own estimate of George. An illustration is wasted on Unterman. He is sure to take it literally, and by destroying the illustration thinks he destroys the thing illustrated. Roscher's primitive man who saved his fish products to turn into capital, and George's man who saved his fruit, are cited. "The fish and fruit would rot, and be useless," says Unterman, and George's "whole idea of capital in a nutshell" is overthrown.

We doubt if Marx authorized the definition of capital ascribed to him:

"Capital is not a mere thing. It is fundamentally an economic relationship between an exploiting and an exploited class. Without class rule, capital as an economic category has no existence. Land may be capital. Tools may be capital. Articles of consumption and raw material may be capital. But none of these things are capital unless they be means to rob the laborer of the product of his toil."

Tools and materials may be relationships and will disappear when classes are no more.

But perhaps when we learn the "dialectical method" then these things will be clear.

"We use the so-called inductive method. We proceed from concrete facts to abstract theories. Then we combine things dialectically."

Now we are started. The feudal system is gone entirely, and we are under capitalism.

"The most significant commodity on the capitalist market is the labor power of the wage worker, that is, the brain and muscle power of those who have NO OTHER MEANS OF EXISTENCE BUT THE SALE OF THAT POWER."

Is the dialectical method not searching enough to ask: Why has the worker no other means of existence?

In another book of the same series "Value, Price and Profit," Marx himself says: (p. 125), "The general tendency of capitalistic production is not to raise but to sink the average standard of wages. Such being the tendency of things in this system," etc. This tendency is made the starting point; no attempt, by induction or dialectics to account for the tendency. Henry George explained it, but they comprehend not. But Marx himself furnished the explanation. Should we ask Marx: "Would wages tend downward if men could easily get land?" he would refer us to what he himself says:

"In colonial countries the law of supply and demand favors the workingman. Hence the relatively high standard of wages in the United States. Capital may there try its utmost; it cannot prevent the labor market from being continuously emptied by the continuous conversion of wage laborers into independent, self-sustaining peasants. To mend this colonial state of things the British Government accepted for some time what is called the modern colonization theory, which consists in putting an artificially high price on colonial land, in order to prevent the too quick conversion of the wage laborers into independent peasants."

That was in 1865. Marx did not have Unterman, induction, and dialectics. In 1847 Marx' first demand in the Communist Manifesto was: "Abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes." On the whole Marx and George seem to agree entirely as to land. But in 1881, it is said that Marx, after reading Progress and Poverty, condemned it, and with it all he had said on land, according to the above and much more. One would think he envied George for systematizing what he had himself said of land and labor but failed to correlate.

Some socialists thrive on the difference they find, or invent, between George and Marx, but do not realize that they repudiate Marx when they scorn George. Among the latter of the series named is "Ten Blind Leaders of the Blind," by A. M. Lewis, who includes Henry George in the Ten, and truth, logic, fairness and economic laws are alike flouted, in order to win the applause of unthinking socialists. Disregarding the difference between his own idea of "capital" which includes all the wealth held by the privileged class, and all the monopolies, devices and devious methods used by them; and that of Henry George, who always meant by capital the product of labor used to aid labor, Mr. Lewis boldly says, without any proof whatever, that George was the champion of the whole predatory, privileged, monopolistic class.

He says: "As to the capitalist's effort to cut off the landlord's share of the plunder, a champion made his appearance; none other than the now renowned Henry George."

There is no record of any effort by the privileged class to cut off the landlord's share, or "turn his rent over to the State."

If Mr. Lewis knew aught of economics he would realize the effect on privilege of turning all rent over to the State. The only effect he can see, is that "no other tax would be levied and the capitalist could be relieved of all further payments." Any land monopolist will instruct Mr. Lewis that to turn all rent over to the state would be to destroy monopoly, therefore making land free to labor; then Karl Marx would teach him the further result of this: "Capital may try its utmost," etc.

In 1875 Marx wrote: "Monopoly of landed property is even the basis of monopoly of capital by the capitalists." And in *Capital*: "We have seen that the expropriation of the mass of the people from the soil forms the basis of the capitalist mode of production."

Yet now we learn that if we taxed away all rent, the privileged would retain all their grafts, and in addition be relieved of taxes also; that this was Mr. George's sole object in writing! What a hypocrite George was. He pretends to speak "To those who, seeing the vice and misery that spring from the unequal distribution of wealth and privilege, feel the possibility of a higher social State." And Mr. Lewis says in this same chapter (now begin to laugh): "Those who are attracted to George by his dissertations against poverty become socialists."

Surely Victor Berger is a good socialist; he says: "Henry George in *Progress and Poverty* has given us a most brilliant criticism of the present system—more brilliant in some respects than that of Karl Marx."

But Berger and a million others who have read George for 30 years are mistaken. This sample of imported British arrogance, who read for an hour or a day, says George worked solely for the "capitalist," incidentally making people weep for the poor so that they became socialists.

The worst falsehood is that George brought "all the unearned revenues of capital under the head of 'interest.'" All the methods which are objected to: watered stock, bonds, interest on public debts, the fruits of monopoly,

says George, "Are not really interest, but taxes levied on the produce of labor and capital." By interest George means only the increase that comes from using the products of labor styled capital, directly, to aid labor in production. This kind of capital, says George, is "but a form of labor," and when labor has land, the source of capital, labor will have capital and its advantages, or, if using capital of others, the law of supply and demand will make rewards equal; and in this he has the support of Karl Marx, who says, "Supply and demand equilibrate each other" when arguing that labor is the measure of value; as does George also. Strange that Marx could not see that capital must obey the same law, under equality, as gold and goods.

Mr. Lewis foolishly tries to prove George inconsistent in not including in "land" the forces of nature that improve wine, increase bees, and make cattle grow. The primary class in economics will tell him that only nature localized in sites will yield rent. A waterfall might command rent, but the wind will run a mill anywhere and cannot be fenced in and rented. As well include the principles of the lever, steam pressure, or electricity, in "land."

Mr. Lewis' ignorance of Henry George has been abundantly proved; it remains for him to prove his own ignorance of socialism. He says: "When George ran for Secretary of State the socialists made their support conditional declaring that the burning social question is not a land tax, but the abolition of all *private property* in the instruments of production."

In rejecting this Mr. George was a better socialist than were those fanatics. There is probably no platform containing such an absurdity. And Kautsky, the friend of Marx, in his *Social Revolution*, another of the Kerr series, page 164, he says: "It is easily possible that the number of small businesses may increase as the well-being of the mass increases." He gives a list of twelve businesses and says it may not be complete, which includes some 70,000 factories, and these and the small farms would not be disturbed by the "revolution." "The proletarian governmental power would have absolutely no inclination to take over such little businesses." (p. 159). "Its struggle is not directed against the little people that are themselves exploited, but against the great exploiters." (p. 162). The same can be said of Henry George, who struggled against monopoly of land, transportation, communication, and everything that can be monopolized; and sensible people will get together and discuss as to what private property shall be abolished, and not drop into abuse and falsehood.

Like Mr. Unterman, Mr. Lewis takes an illustration literally. If one were to say that two pugilists "fought like lions," he would spread the report that two lions were fighting. Stanley Jevons never "ascribed panics to spots on the sun," nor did Henry George ever derive the capitalist's income "from the ageing of wine and the swarming of bees," unless the capital were invested in wine and bees. Mr. Lewis has some vague idea of a metaphor: "Metaphorically speaking, feudalism may be described as a land society," he says, but we look in vain for a metaphor. He says feudalism was "finally overthrown" before the close of the eighteenth century. But the titled lords still remain,

with their landed possessions, and Mr. Lewis has them struggling with capitalists "during the greater part of the nineteenth century." They lost only the serfs. Their economic power lies in the land, and this has not been overthrown.

DIRECT LEGISLATION,

(For the Review.)

By JOHN Z. WHITE.

Important social changes result from social necessity, but the sort of change made is determined by the quality of men involved in the undertaking. Conditions in the United States just before the constitutional convention of 1787 made change necessary. The articles of confederation had proved to be inadequate. But had the men who sat in that convention as delegates been of different mental habit our constitution would be other than the tory document that it is.

In like manner to-day change is certain, but just what change will occur will depend upon the sort of men that will be instrumental in the work.

The first social need is peace, or defense from robbery. This being secured by a more or less virtuous and vigilant police power, the matter of a sufficient revenue is vital, as without it even the police power cannot be maintained.

Various revenue systems have been advocated and practiced. None thus far has proved satisfactory. In spite of their various names, all serious students will agree with Alexander Hamilton that we must tax either commerce or land. In truth we tax men only, but shall we tax them in proportion to the value of the land they hold or in proportion to the value of other holdings (that is, as Hamilton said, "commerce"). It was agreed by the constitutional convention that the revenue of the United States should be mostly drawn from commerce. We have pursued this method. The result is plain. The inevitable classes are here. The very rich—the very poor.

Our government frame work, like that of Britain, is calculated to secure the end achieved. Its chief feature is a separation of the people from the real powers of government. The electoral college was intended to stand between the people and the presidency. The senate and judicial power are still beyond the people's direction. The House was meant to represent the people, but no ultimate power was placed in its hands.

Our government is tory in structure, but there has been a continual pressure for more democratic methods. The electoral college has been reduced to a merely clerical function. The senate and even the supreme court have found it convenient to be moderate at times. The states have enlarged their constitutions in attempts to check the aggression of officials, until many of the documents have become little else than statutes.