

effect when the bulk of revenue is drawn from this source, whether the part left in the hands of the present possessors be great or small. When this point is reached, it will be soon enough to decide whether the functions of government shall be enlarged and the remainder of these values taken to pay the expense.

The Single Tax is generally considered as a land tax, which explains much of the unreasoning opposition to the reform. For land, in the ordinary sense, as used for agriculture, or a place on which to build a home, includes so much that, according to the Single Tax theory, is not taxable, and is of so much less value than the aggregate which, under this plan, would be taxable, including wharfage, water-power, irrigation rights, values of franchise of public service and other corporations, that nine farmers and home-owners out of every ten will certainly be relieved of a large, possibly the greater, part of the tax with which they are now burdened.

The Single Tax is simplicity itself. It does equal and exact justice to all. It encourages production without hindering consumption. It relieves labor and capital alike of their present burdens. All civilized governments are in search of new sources of revenue to meet their growing demands. England and Germany are the latest to attempt fiscal experiments based upon the principles of this doctrine. When, even upon a small scale, its justice, its simplicity, its revenue-producing power, and its beneficial economic effects begin to be understood, there must follow, slowly perhaps, but none the less surely, its general adoption as the sole rule and method of taxation.

## SOCIALISTIC CONTRADICTIONS.

*(For the Review.)*

By C. F. HUNT.

In a pamphlet, "Single Tax vs. Socialism," Mr. A. M. Simons indicates his confidence that he has finally disposed of Henry George. His chief weapon is: To show the Contradictions in George's works. One may find so many contradictions in the literature of socialism, as to conclude that there must be some merit in them; but Mr. Simons condemns contradictions, so it will be fair to examine some of his own, as well as some found in other socialistic writings.

### I

Beginning with Karl Marx (Communist Manifesto): He demands:

1. Abolition of private property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes.

"Capital," vol. III p. 725: "Ground rent is that form in which property in land realizes itself economically, that is, produces value."

Page 743: "Ground rent is conditioned on the existence of private property in land.

"All ground rent is surplus value, the produce of surplus labor."

Page 756: "The surplus profit which arises from a waterfall is not due to capital, but to the harnessing of a natural power, which can be monopolized by capital. The surplus profit has been transformed into ground rent.

"This surplus profit would exist if private property did not prevail. Hence private property in land does not create that portion of value, but it merely enables the landowner to coax this surplus profit out of the pocket of the industrial capitalist.—p. 758.

First, rent can be taken as a public fund AFTER abolition of private property in land; then rent depends on private property in land; is produced by private property in land; then it is produced by a natural power, such as a waterfall; then ALL ground rent is the product of surplus labor.

## II.

A. M. Simons (p. 21 pamphlet). Neither does it help their case to point out that all these other things are made from land unless they can show that to make the tools needed for PRESENT society ALL THE LAND is needed at once. Unless this is so all the talk about a fundamental land monopoly is nonsense.

Thus they hold that it is the monopoly of land that causes the formation of all other monopolies, save those resting on special privilege, (such as franchises, patents, etc.) which could be abolished by abolishing those privileges. This position contains a PERFECT NEST OF ERRORS, and yet upon it rests the entire Single Tax.—p. 22.

Marx says (p. 723 vol. III): Monopoly of landed property remains the basis of the capitalist mode of production, just as do all other modes of production which rest on the exploitation of the masses in one form or another.

## III.

Allan L. Benson (Socialism Made Plain): The public ownership of capital is all there is to socialism. The man who tells you that socialism means either more or less than the conversion of private competing capital, into public, cooperative capital, is either ignorant or untruthful.—p. 45

A. M. Lewis (lecturer) censures those who "maintain that the socialist philosophy has nothing to do with religion but is an economic question only.—Dietzgen described these comrades as 'dangerous muddleheads.' He might have omitted the adjective. A brain of this order renders its possessor harmless."—(Evolution p. 5).

(Note: the last socialist convention voted that: The socialist movement is primarily an economic and political movement. It is not concerned with the institutions of marriage or religion."—Proceedings, p. 193. On page 201 we see that Lewis agreed to vote for this plank provided he be permitted to "argue socialism from the point of view of atheism," he assuming that the platform committee had power to grant this special dispensation).

## IV.

A. L. Benson (*Soc. Made Plain*, p. 49): For just so long as the law defends the claim of any man to the exclusive ownership of a foot of land or a pound of machinery, the land and machinery of the world will be held by a few, and the rest of the world will be compelled to give them most of their products.

Karl Kautsky, (*Social Revolution*, p. 166): The most manifold forms of property in the means of production, national, municipal and PRIVATE can exist beside each other in a socialistic society; the same manifold character of economic mechanism that exists today. (Note: The *Chicago Daily Socialist* says Kautsky is the leading living socialist).

## V.

A. M. Lewis: (*Ten Blind Leaders*, p. 30): Feudalism was no more immortal than any other social form; the seventeenth century saw signs of change; early in the eighteenth it was marked for destruction and before the close it was finally overthrown.

Victor Berger (leading American socialist) (*Milwaukee Soc. Dem. Herald*) Although capitalistic society has already passed its zenith, yet even at the present day FEUDALISM holds a very important place in modern society.

## VI.

A. M. Lewis, (*Daily Socialist*): The question as to whether the next form of society will be socialism or something else, is just as surely settled now, as to whether or not a certain egg will produce a chicken or a duck.

Wm. Morris and E. Belfort Bax (*Socialism, Its Growth and Outcome*, p. 217): After saying that history is made up of facts and imagination, "our picture of the past," they add:

"If this be the case with the past, of which we have some concrete data, still more strongly may it be said of the future, of which we have none, nothing but mere abstract deductions from historic evolution, the logical sequence of which may be interfered with at any point by elements whose force we have not duly appreciated."

Of Mr. Simons' contradictions, his very own, we find in *Single Tax vs. Socialism*, these gems:

## VII.

Page 10: "The Single Tax, having been created from the brain of one man—", etc. Everything in connection with the Single Tax comes from the writings of Henry George.—p. 11. It springs from the inner consciousness of a single man, and is the child of a single book.—p. 19

Page 20: The Single Taxers say that today industry is limited by the fact that the supply of land being a definite quantity and property rights being recognized in it, large quantities of land are owned and held by the owners simply to receive the increase which will accrue by the growth of society.

This they call the unearned increment, and advocate its absorption by society which created it. There can be no doubt of the correctness of this position, and it is as old as the hills AND IN NO WAY ORIGINAL WITH HENRY GEORGE.

## VIII.

Rent is simply the measure of the earning power of land.—p. 4.

Retail stores? You can get all the land you want for that purpose AT LESS THAN RENTAL VALUE.—p. 25.

## IX.

It (Socialism) maintains that this manner of production has been such as to render one class of society a ruling class of idlers, and the other a subject class of producers.—p. 4

In the present society the rule of the capitalist class and the consequent enslavement of laborers is secured by the actions of the laborers themselves. They continually vote into power their own oppressors.—p. 28

## X.

Land is of comparatively small importance as a controlling factor in industry.—p. 24.

They (machine owners) were able to overthrow those who owned the now less important factor, the land, and the landlord gave way to the capitalist as the ruling class. Competition among the capitalists ending in combination and monopoly, has divided society into two clearly defined classes, of capitalist and laborer.—p. 5.

[Query: What has become of the landlord?]

Later the machine became the dominant factor and its owners were able through its ownership to become the ruling class and to inaugurate our present form of society, or capitalism.—p. 21.

[Are machine owners the ruling class?]

There can be no degrees of absolute necessity. Today there are various features essential to civilized society. Among these is land, but no more so than the developed tool.—p. 20.

## XI.

Social changes never come through the spread of ideas.—p. 7. The socialist puts little dependence upon the spread of ideas.—p. 8.

The socialist holds that the ONLY REMEDY is to educate the subject class to a recognition of their condition and then for these to unite and seize the reins of social control.—p. 26

## XII.

Single Tax advocates entirely overlook the fact of class rule.—p. 7. He asks the capitalist government to destroy capitalism.—p. 7. He appeals to the upper and middle classes to commit suicide.—p. 9.

## XIII.

The socialist declares that labor is the only productive force under the control of man.—p. 13.

(Here we depend on Marx). In criticising a programme of Lassalle, Marx wrote:

"Labor is not the source of all wealth. Nature is as much a source of use values, and of such is material wealth composed, as is labor."

## XIV.

Without they could do so [duplicate a large packing plant] monopoly would remain untouched and the slavery of the workers remain unchanged.—p. 23. Another illustration—The Singer company were given land free. After a number of years the town sought to impose taxes upon the company. The company threatened to remove its plant. The frightened workmen and small tradesmen recognizing their ABSOLUTE DEPENDENCE upon the firm hastened to reconsider their action. Plenty of land would have been given rent free for another factory, but no one would take it.—p. 23.

[But what would happen if free land were offered the workmen? Marx answers in *Value, Price and Profit*, page 121, speaking of the United States in 1865, when there was plenty of land]:

"Capital may there try its utmost. It cannot prevent the labor market from being continually emptied by the conversion of wage laborers into INDEPENDENT, self-sustaining peasants."

An inspiration clutches me! With the skill of a genuine cryptogramist I observe that the first quantity in Mr. Simons' contradictions is generally found in the first part of his pamphlet; while the opposing element is seen to be in the latter part. It remains only to show that a day elapsed between the writing of the first statements and conflicting statements, to establish the harmony of the whole with socialistic philosophy. This is based on the authority of a prominent leader, A. M. Lewis, who says (*The Evolutionist*, Jan. p. 282):

"All truth is relative. The truth of yesterday is the lie of today, and the truth of today will be the lie of tomorrow."

This statement we are enabled to make the basis of another perfectly elegant contradiction; for the very first words of the same lecture are:

"All that is PERMANENT in the history of thought centers around the search for truth."

Thus, with the adepts, the truth becomes a lie in less than a day, even in one lecture. This destroys any suggestion that "day" in the first quotation means an era, or cycle.

In this lecture we read: "Release your grip on a stone in mid-air and you will get a verification of the theory of gravitation."

Today the stone will move toward the earth. Tomorrow it may fall upwards, or East or West, or any way, and the new art of dodging will divert our minds from our other troubles.

I find another, somewhat less stentorian contradiction in the same lecture:

"There is no disputing Haeckel's assertion that: 'The distinguished thinkers of classic antiquity were far superior to most modern scientists and philosophers in regard to judgment and reasoning, or all the subtler processes of thought.'"

On the next page this superiority is proved:

"Anaximenes, his (Thales') successor, held air to be the fundamental thing from which all things else have been derived. With REMARKABLE INGENUITY he argues: Air when it is dilated so as to be rarer, becomes fire, while winds, on the other hand are condensed air. Cloud is formed from air by 'felting' and this, still further condensed, becomes water. Water condensed still more turns to earth; and when condensed as much as it can be, to stones."

Edison ought to doff his hat to such "superiority."

The listening workingman might reflect: Just think what a fool thing the truth once was; but he would feel the revolution fairly seething within him after such a lecture.

The Single Tax was once a truth, according to socialists, for, as shown above, it was the first demand in Marx' Manifesto, and was a plank in the platform of 1904. In 1881, it had become to Marx: "The last ditch of capitalism;" and Mr. Simons now says (p. 20) "I shall show that it is a thing of no interest to the producers of wealth."

That is, a measure that will afford access to the source of wealth, is of no interest to the producers of wealth.

An interesting announcement is seen in this same January *Evolutionist*: "The GEORGE-LEWIS Debate. The debate will be much more valuable because the Garrick Lecturer has no sympathy with George's views, but considers them hopeless (sic) reactionary."

Why is this lack of sympathy a source of Value? Perhaps there is but one answer: Mr. Lewis is an Intellectual. Socialists divide themselves into Intellectuals and—the others. That the title is freely acknowledged is proved on page 195 of the convention "Proceedings:"

CAREY: (speaking on the "religion" plank): It was not the working class members that would have it there. It was the intellectuals—the literary men.

LEWIS, ILL: A point of personal privilege. The comrade pointed directly at me.

CAREY: Excuse me; I didn't mean you. It is unfortunate that when I sweep my finger round the hall some place in the inclusiveness of this space is occupied by Comrade Lewis.

It is easy to show that not one of the "contradictions" Mr. Simons finds in the writings of Henry George is really a contradiction.

Mr. Simons never understood what George meant by Capital and Interest, and understands nothing of economics. There is conflict between George's



definitions and those of Simons. Simons being oblivious to those differences, blames George for the confusion. He does not know that George says capital is "a form of labor" and interest "a form of wages."

Mr. Simons quotes George:

"The right of ownership that springs from labor excludes the possibility of any other right of ownership."—p. 334.

Then he tries to show that sanction of interest contradicts this;

"Now no one can claim that the income derived from ownership of money is the product of labor. The mere fact of ownership is all that gives rise to interest."

All the facts are against this statement. If I own money and bury it or put it in deposit vaults, I have the ownership complete, all that Mr. Simons says gives rise to interest; yet I get no interest. Money at present is gold, or orders for gold, and so long as gold satisfies wants it will have value; to get interest it must be exchanged for tools and materials, that is, exchanged for labor in forms that aid labor in further production.

On page 16 Mr. Simons tries to make George defend the income from bonds, which George said were "not wealth at all, but only the power of commanding wealth as others produce it."

If not wealth they cannot be capital; for George holds capital to be a subdivision of wealth; hence the returns cannot be true economic interest; but Simons thinks George decides that interest—"is a result of the power of commanding wealth as others produce it."

By omitting a final clause, Mr. Simons constructs a fine argument. He quotes George as saying: "Much of the profits which are confounded with interest are in reality due, not to the power of capital, but to the power of concentrated capital."

The sentence concludes: "acting on bad social adjustments." We all know George thought monopoly, or special privilege is the bad adjustment which gives capitalists power to exploit.

On page 18 is Mr. Simons' finest "contradiction." He says:

"Therefore the ownership of capital certainly cannot give the possessor any power over the laborer." Yet we hear him saying:

"To buy up the individual property rights would be merely to give the landlord in another form a claim of the same kind and amount that their possession of land now gives them."

"Just read that sentence over a few times, as incidentally it gives the whole Single Tax position away. I shall return to this later."

He does not return to this subject, which is unfortunate.

What George said is consistent with his claim that only labor gives title to the product. He objected to giving to landlords a vast sum, unearned, which they could exchange for the form of labor called capital, and reap the form of wages called interest. Mr. Simons did not see fit to quote what follows.

Let us see how George supports the above statement:

"The land would be purchased at prices calculated upon a lower than the ordinary rate of interest (for the prospective increase in land values makes the market price of land much greater than would be the price of anything else yielding the same present return) and interest upon the purchase money would be paid at the ordinary rate. Thus, not only all that the land yields them now would have to be paid to the landowners, but a considerably larger amount. It would be, virtually, the state taking a perpetual lease from the present landowners at a considerable advance in rent over what they now receive."

He then explains that there might be a future gain, if the rent of the land ever became a greater quantity than the amount paid to the former owners:

"Further speculative advance of rent would cease. But it would leave, for all the future, one class in possession of the enormous advantage over others which they now have. All that can be said of this plan is, that it might be better than nothing."—p. 359.

But, suppose we apply the Single Tax, and refuse to buy the land; how shall we restore to labor the vast capital now held by owners who did not earn it? George does not attempt this; and indeed it would be impossible to give every laborer what he has in the past created and voluntarily voted to give to the capitalist, as Mr. Simons has pointed out.

Here the Socialist claims superiority: he would confiscate capital and give it to the working class as a whole; and in doing so take from many the product of their labor if that product happens to be capital.

Allan L. Benson candidly recognizes this contradiction. He says: "Neither land nor machinery can be OWNED by any individual, without invading the rights of all other individuals. At first glance this may seem to be in violent conflict with the socialist contention that the creator of a thing is entitled to it, but socialism always puts the rights and the welfare of all men above the rights and welfare of any one man."

He says socialism would "guarantee to each individual the right to use as much land as he might need without paying anything to anybody for the privilege."

But he must work with public plows, horses and reapers, for to own these would be to invade the rights of all men. He must rent or borrow the tools, and this would make work for society's accountants.

Marx and George agree that land is neither wealth nor capital. But Benson says:

"Wealth invested in land is capital, since it is wealth used to produce more wealth."

If confiscation of capital were determined upon, socialists could not agree on what capital is. One says it is anything used to exploit; another, that it is a relationship between an exploited and exploiting class; another, wealth used to create more wealth. On the whole it would seem better to leave possessions as they are, only stopping the processes of unjust acquisition; and modern fortunes, being based on monopoly and privilege, must soon dissipate themselves.