

We are free traders. We believe that tariffs are a robbery of the people. We would do away with custom houses. Protection is a superstition. But when we succeed in converting a man or woman to the principles of Georgism, he or she, knowing now the source of wages, the natural law of rent, the individual and public rights in land, finds his or her protectionist beliefs slipping away insensibly. The surest way of making a free trader is to make a Single Taxer. Let not our Australian friends begin in the wrong way, for an inevitable dispersion of forces is certain to result with detrimental consequences to the movement, and inevitable minimizing of the real purpose of the crusade, as it has with us in the United States.

Mr. Meggy is doubtful of the success of Mr. Outhwaite's plan. For our part we think it more likely to succeed than that of the United Committee, much as we respect the ability and devotion of Messrs. Paul, Madsen and others. This question of the right of men to the land of their country comes first. It must be solved if civilization is to be saved. It cannot be solved by a tax of "a penny in the pound." It cannot be solved by giving it over to the politicians to be played with. It must be presented as a plan of social salvation, fully, completely and without apology. There can be no compromise. We must advocate the need of doing it at once in order that the whole social iniquity be levelled to the ground. This is good political tactics. To talk about attacking "the enemy in detail" while men are starving and civilization is trembling in the balance, is to palter with words. We are standing on a volcano.

—EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM.

## Systematic Assessment

WE have received from County Auditor John A. Zangerle a copy of the "Unit Value Land Maps" of Cleveland and suburbs for 1924. This publication issued for public information, shows on outline street maps the value per front foot for the land in each block used for tax assessment, this value being for ordinary inside lots assumed to be 100 feet deep. On each map is a "depth table" showing the percentage used when a lot varies from the 100 foot standard depth; and another table showing the addition made for corner lots. Photographs show various types of buildings and the square or cubic foot units used for assessment.

As a foreword to this unique and valuable publication Mr. Zangerle says:

"We favor the adoption of System and Standards to the end:

- "1. That PROPERTY be assessed—not individuals;
- "2. That uniformity be secured;
- "3. That any citizen may assess any property anywhere;" [i. e., may check up the work of the assessor.—Ed.]

"4. That graft may be prevented;

"5. That the Board of Revision may correct and adjust in harmony with the assessment;

"6. That errors be more easily detected."

Certainly these are desirable ends, and Cleveland is doing more to reach them than any other city within our knowledge. Mr. Zangerle is doing a great service not only to his city, but to the entire country, by his efficient administration, and his writings on this subject.

## H. G. Wells as Land Reformer

IN his quaint and passionate appeal, entitled "The Misery of Boots," H. G. Wells has written a sentence or two which approximates a near-vision of the fundamental cause of the social misery and disorder against which he is protesting. Take the following for instance:

"But this institution of Private Property in land and naturally produced things, these obstructive claims that prevent you using ground, or moving material, and that have to be bought out at exorbitant prices, stand in the way. All these owners hang like parasites upon your enterprise at its every stage."

After pointing out the obstruction placed by private ownership of natural opportunities against production and exchange of boots, he continues:

"I seem to see also a lot of little phantom land owners, cattle owners, house owners, owners of all sorts, swarming over their pinched and weary feet like leeches, taking much and giving nothing, and being the real cause of all such miseries."

"I will not pretend, he said further, to be impartial in this matter and to discuss as though I had an undecided mind, whether the world will be better if we could abolish private property in land and in many things of general utility; because I have no doubt left in the matter. I believe that private property in these things is no more necessary and unavoidable than private property in our fellow creatures, or private property in bridges and roads."

"Cling to the simple essential idea of Socialism, he declares toward the close of his appeal, which is the abolition of private property in any thing but what a man has earned or made. Do not complicate your cause with elaborations. And keep in your mind, if you can, some sort of talisman to bring you back to that essential gospel, out of the confusion and warring suggestions of every-day discussion."

Mr. Wells has undoubtedly sensed the fundamental cause of our economic disorders. He sees it however vaguely and confused, as the blind man, on the miraculous return of his vision, saw "Men as trees walking."

THERE is economic rent whether you are owner or user of the land. If you are owner, the rent would be equal to what you could obtain if the land were rented.

—HENRY GEORGE.