

try and city, says the Houston plan of taxation is one of the city's biggest assets, and cites the fact as to the prosperity of Houston under the taxing plan and regrets that the legality of the Houston plan has been questioned in the courts.

ARE WE NOT BARBARIANS?

(*For the Review.*)

By A. J. MELVILLE

Have we not grown callous to the horrors of the European War? That we are prone to become so is evidenced by our indifference to those of an ever present war. The age-long war between the House of Want and the House of Have which in its noiseless, steady, grinding, relentless way is as awful and horrible as that now laying waste to some of the earth's fairest lands. It, as remorselessly, piles up its uncounted dead and maimed, brings ill health, poverty, fear, hate, starvation and broken hearts to the people of all lands, whether monarchies or republics. The cries of its suffering victims are unheard, though many are at our very doors or, if heard, we absolve ourselves of personal responsibility by resort to that comforting biblical assurance, so long the refuge of the self-satisfied and self-sanctified, "The poor ye have always with ye." That we have tried to pray away war is but a further evidence of our barbarism. We have inherited war and prayer from man in his lowest state. Civilized man will neither war nor pray.

The best among us have in all ages striven for civilization. It is a condition that fulfills the professed ideals of all men. But notwithstanding the wonderful advance in science and art of the last two hundred years, and despite the Church, education (so-called) and increased suffrage, our goal is still just beyond us; elusive as a will o' the wisp. Why?

Owing to an education which has failed to teach us to think, we are bound by a reverence for time-worn customs and precedent; we believe that our individual interests are best served by upholding the privileges of the class that controls our jobs or buys our goods. As this class is well satisfied with things as they are; we, the toady Tories, oppose all changes not favored by it. The flunkies of aristocracy uphold aristocracy that flunkydomy may flourish. The clerical and business forces of protected industries, land privilege, railroads and those businesses enjoying special concessions in no way differ from the flunkies. The toady Tories must be taught to think. They are the stumbling blocks in the path of progress.

Buckle, in his History of Civilization, shows that, while the enactment of some few fundamental laws have advanced us toward civilization, far greater advances have been secured by the repeal of laws. Man's laws are

so frequently obstructive of the natural laws governing human association that the cause of this is clear.

The key we have so long sought is the repeal of obstructive laws. Let us use it to open the door to peace and brotherhood between the peoples of all nations and to health, plenty and happiness for all men. Then and then only can we call ourselves civilized.

Other action may be needed to achieve our goal, but to be effective it must follow the repeal of all laws which in any way interfere with the freedom of individuals of different nations to trade with one another on a basis of mutual satisfaction (laws which obstruct such trade are the root cause of war between nations); the repeal of all laws conferring special privileges upon individuals, groups or classes, thus abolishing war between them; the repeal of all laws for obtaining revenue by a tax upon anything save upon the right to the use of natural opportunities for the production of wealth, enjoyed by an individual to the exclusion of all others, thereby causing an equitable distribution of wealth, with the result that one who works shall retain the full product of his labor and that of no other.

If there be a panacea for social ills, it is freedom. It at least benefits all men be they capitalists or laborers.

The laws to be repealed are not beneficial to any class, upper, middle or lower. When men become capable of thought on the subject of political economy, as they will when taught it by others than the paid advocates of the beneficiaries of things as they are, the natural laws of human association and trade will become as manifest to them as the physical laws of gravity. Then, and then only, will men cease to make laws not in harmony with them. Until then we must forego the blessings of civilization and war and hate will still prevail and want and the fear of want will be the portion of an ever-increasing majority of men.

THE SINGLE TAX—A DEFINITION.

The fundamental doctrine of Henry George, the equal right of all men to the use of the earth, did not originate with him; but his clear statement of a method by which it could be enforced, without increasing State machinery, and indeed with a great simplification of government, gave it a new form. This method he named the *Single Tax*. His doctrine may be condensed as follows: The land of every country belongs of right to all the people of that country. This right cannot be alienated by one generation, so as to affect the title of the next, any more than men can sell their yet unborn children for slaves. Private ownership of land has no more foundation in morality or reason than private ownership of air or sunlight. But the private occupancy and use of land are right and indispensable. Any attempt to divide land into equal shares is impossible and undesirable. Land should be, and