

cludes, and our justification for demanding the full value of land is our denial of the right of private property in it.

"Every kind of property or wealth," says Mr. Martin, "contains land in some of the elemental forces heretofore mentioned, as air, heat, light, water, rock mineral, timber, etc." Yes, but it has ceased to be land when it becomes wealth in any form, and is separable from land for use by the individual or for purposes of taxation. "We can no more produce a fish, stone, rock or tree than we can produce an inch of land, and to maintain that labor applied to all gives ownership to one and not the other is both illogical and inconsistent," says Mr. Martin. But we really do produce a fish—produce is to "draw forth," not to create—and it is evident that Mr. Martin is thinking of creation and not of production. The fish is the result of the application of labor to land, which in this case includes, economically, a body of water, and this labor gives ownership to the fish and not to the sea. If Mr. Martin sees any difference between this illustration and a house built upon land, simply because they do not appear to him separable, it seems to us that he is confused by a difference of circumstance and not by any essential distinction of principle. And though he insists that private ownership of land and private ownership of a house are not separable, yet for purposes of taxation he would as a Single Taxer separate them.

It is all very interesting, but we insist that, after all, it is not important. If private property in land is an inequity, then the taking of the full rental value of land—or the rental value necessary to meet public expenses, the expense increasing till it meets the value—will do all that Mr. Wm. Lloyd Garrison wants done. But if private property in land is just, the taking of the full rental value will leave it no longer existent, and thus these two roads, though apparently branching out into two different directions, converge at the same destination.

Success to our brothers of Boston, and to all generous controversies that can be conducted with decent courtesy, and which are evidences of an undiminishing vitality!

Editor Single Tax Review.

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## MR. OGDEN'S CONFUSIONS.

I am a Single Taxer, but I do not approve of the methods of the recognized leaders of the Single Tax movement.

It is no pleasure for one to read their errors repeated over and over with endless insistence upon belief in self-contradictory propositions in their self-styled true political economy. The great error of Henry George in *Progress and Poverty* has led his blind followers into the ditch of ineffectiveness. That error was his omission of the factor of taxation in the distribution of wealth.

He found the remedy for the monopolization of land ownership in a Single Tax on land values, but he did not discover that the cause of land monopoly was a false system of taxation. By omitting this great factor he found that the cause of poverty was the holding of land in private ownership and so declared that private property in land is unjust. The Single Tax is great enough to cure the evil, but he did not notice that the absence of it was great enough to cause the evil. All of his reasoning against property in land is fallacious. He finds a distinction between

land and other things by asserting that land is not produced by labor and other things are; the error is seen when "land" is found throughout all his works as an unchangeable thing. He pictures the growth of a city from the wild land opened up by the first settler and follows the changes of population and the social conditions of the inhabitants, but of the land, he says, "in nothing changed since the first settler," etc.

In nothing changed! The wild land cut up into squares of city blocks, separated by paved streets covering sewers through which run the streams that once watered the forests, curbed and graded with subways and conduits, containing water mains, gas pipes, electric wires, and heating and steam for distribution to the blocks of land formed by the streets. Each block as much a work of man as is each brick formed out of clay that is dug from the earth. Each block as much an artificial work of labor as is the water distribution from the reservoir made by damming the river. Each block of city land as much a product of labor and capital as is the electricity gathered from the unseen depths of the universe and controlled by man for his uses. God made the land, He made the water, electricity, clay, stones, wood, iron, plants and animals and man himself.

The value of anything expressed in money is what we mean by value, and land value is that price that is given for a change of ownership of any land exactly as bricks, clay, stones, wood, iron, plants and animals, water, steam and electricity are valued and exchanged in private ownership. Mr. George asserted that no individual made land value, it is made by population, hence the justice of common ownership. He held that equal rights demand equal rights to land, hence, every man, woman and child, has an equal right to the general land value of any community.

He claimed to be an individualist and really meant to be, but his philosophy was inevitable communism.

He saw clearly that every man made his own personal property, that by exchanging his labor for the labor of others he produced every article he legally possessed, but he did not see that just as clearly as this is true so it is true that every man produces the land value he possesses unless wrongfully acquired. That under a just system of taxation when only that value that is occasioned by public effort in public improvements is taxed to pay for them, that every man would produce the value of the land owned by him and all the rental value over the tax paid would be his profit in the association of which he was a free member, that the men of greatest ability would demand best locations and would set the value by their individual demand and the man of least ability would demand the less desirable location and would just as certainly set the value of his holding; that the total land value made by public effort in government services would be about double the cost in taxes and the difference would be the profit of association, made by all, but not equally, and distributed to each according to his individual participation in the making of the whole. And so of country land, only in less degree the raw material out of which the sections formed by the roads are constructed, and so every man determines his part in the general values of all the land of any country by his individual demand.

To say that land value is made by population is a very insufficient statement. It is true, but must be qualified by the further statement, "organized" population.

A mob makes no land value, and neither does an army. But organized population, governments, do.

Population, that is numbers of people, is a term that Mr. George uses with far reaching effect, but illogically.

Population makes land value, so also does population make all other values, and consequently if because population makes land value therefore land should be held in common, so also for the same reason all things should be held in common. The socialists who call Mr. George a socialist are more logical than he. Population does make all values of all things, but by individual labor and demand, and just as every man makes the share of wealth that he demands, so he makes the share of land value that he demands.

Now, Mr. Editor, don't teach that the Single Tax should be adopted because land ownership is wrong. Teach the truth, that the Single Tax is the only just tax and that any other system makes land ownership a curse instead of the blessing it is intended to be.

Baltimore, Md.

WM. J. OGDEN.

### REPLY BY A. C. PLEYDELL.

Henry George did not "omit the factor of taxation in the distribution of wealth"; he did dismiss it as unimportant in comparison with land monopoly, "the robber who takes all that is left," and for the reason implied in that phrase, that to make any minor changes in taxation would inure chiefly to the benefit of land owners. (This question of taxation is thoroughly covered, however, in Mr. Shearman's "Natural Taxation.")

That Mr. George "did not discover that the cause of land monopoly was a false system of taxation" was undoubtedly because he knew that it was not the cause. The omission to apply a remedy cannot properly be charged with the causation of a disease. Land monopoly is due to social customs which permit private ownership of land and appropriation of rent; it has existed under many systems of taxation and where there were no "taxes" at all.

Mr. Ogden charges that all Mr. George's reasoning against property in land is fallacious, but in the illustration he then gives the error is his, and not Mr. George's. For when Mr. George refers "throughout all his works to land as an unchangeable thing" he is always using the word land, as he explains many times, in the sense of opportunity, location, site. And site being a dimension, does not change in quality; only the use made of it changes. Consider Mr. Ogden's illustration of the city block. To say that each "block," is a product of labor and capital is misleading. It is true that the streets, paving, pipes, are the work of man. But these only bound the "block," whose owner has probably contributed only a fraction to their cost. Right here on Manhattan island bounded by such paved streets which are the work of some men are areas of land owned by other men on which no work (except perhaps some timber cut for sale) has ever been done and to which enormous value has come by reason of the work done and paid for mainly by others on adjacent streets and land. Labor and capital have worked to the boundaries, but that site within the bounds "is in nothing changed" except that its owner can now obtain an enormous sum for allowing labor and capital to get upon it. And the principle underlying this matter of cutting up a city into blocks is the same, even though some blocks have been built upon at once.