

estimate that fifty per cent. of the ground rents of the country would defray the expenses of government, we would have left over every year one-half of these rentals with which to pay interest on the purchase price. Now the rent of land being four per cent. of its full market value, one-half of the rent would suffice to pay four per cent. on one-half of that value, which is the amount of debt supposed to be incurred. But two per cent. being a fair interest on Government bonds, the other two per cent. could be devoted to paying the principal, which it would do in fifty years.

Some of our friends believe that the ground rents under the Single Tax would increase enormously, in which case the principal could be paid so much sooner. And while I am not so sanguine on that score as many, there is one fund I am quite sure *would* increase enormously, namely, the wages fund. It is when we come to consider this phase of the question that the fiscal difficulties of compensation dissolve. The increase of wages under free opportunities is the corner stone of the Single Tax edifice. Henry George says it would be enormous, and Mr. Shearman reckons it conservatively at one hundred per cent. Let us suppose then that wages will be doubled. Sixteen million wage earners averaging one dollar a day each, which I should call a reasonable estimate for this country, give annually the sum of five billion dollars. This then is the increase over their present income which producers would receive in case wages were doubled by the Single Tax. Mr. Shearman estimates the land values of the entire country at some twenty-seven billions. Now, if we suppose that by a special tax levied in such a way as to fall on wages, fifty per cent. of this increase were taken by the State and devoted to paying the twenty-seven billions, it would not only pay two and one-half per cent. interest yearly, but in fifteen years would pay off the entire principal. Is it not evident from this that it would be greatly to our advantage to buy out the land owners, even at their own price. A sure fifty per cent. increase in wages at once, and the equally sure prospect of having them doubled fifteen years later.

It may be said that it would be pretty hard on the wage earners to take twenty-five per cent. of their hard earnings to support the landlords while they looked for another job, especially in view of the present custom of landlords allowing those whom they throw out of work to shift for themselves; and perhaps when the workers are actually confronted with the situation, they also will see it in this light and act accordingly. That, however, is their own affair. I simply point out that if they will insist upon paying for their own property this is the best and easiest way to do it.

NOTE.—Replies to Mr. Aitken's article by Edward D. Burleigh and Samuel Milliken which we designed printing in this number, are unavoidably crowded out. They will be published in our next issue.—THE EDITOR.



FAIRHOPE CRITICISED.

Editor *Single Tax Review*:

I have read with much interest Mr. T. F. Gaynor's article in the Autumn number of the REVIEW. He says, "The Fairhope colonists are the Pilgrim Fathers of the twentieth century as the practical representatives of the cause of economic liberty." Will you kindly allow me space in your columns to call the attention of your readers to a difference between the Plymouth pilgrims and those of Fairhope that is of vital importance.

The first act of the Plymouth pilgrims upon their arrival on these shores was the signing of that famous document known as the Compact. Two hundred

and eighty four years have elapsed since that memorable event; the little colony has grown to a mighty commonwealth. From a dependency of the greatest of monarchies, it has become a part of the greatest of republics; and yet through all these changes its people have maintained a pure democracy in local affairs. Once a year the people assemble in town-meeting and transact the entire legislative business for the ensuing year; its officers have but to carry out the instructions of the town.

The results of this system have been all that could be desired; they have always been above criticism; never has the suspicion of dishonesty invaded the administration of its local affairs, and had the same system been applied to the city and state governments of Massachusetts, Lawson's "Story of Amalgamated," so far as it applies to that state, would never have been written.

The Fairhope colony was confronted by different conditions; land had to be purchased and the colony unwisely adopted the membership plan to raise money. It was soon found however that a membership fee discouraged the acquisition of land just as much as landlordism, and it was found necessary to admit others than members to settlement. Since this time the lands of the association have been leased to all who have applied, and the membership fees have cut no figure whatever. Only two residents of Fairhope have become members in the last five years to pay money to the association.

Instead of retiring these memberships when it became apparent that their usefulness had passed, the system once adopted has been clung to most tenaciously, and its actual operation has shown the policy of the management of the association to have been to contract rather than expand its membership. To-day probably above ninety per cent. of its people are merely tenants and not members.

These are the people to whom the success of Fairhope is mostly due; the people who have cleared its lands and built its homes; who have made its land values and paid its rentals; the value of whose efforts it would be difficult to reckon in dollars and cents; and yet, because of the payment of one hundred dollars and a vote of acceptance by the executive council, less than forty people (nine of whom do not live on the colony land) hold absolute power and sway over the administration.

The arguments that are used to uphold this system are the same arguments that have been used in the ages that have passed to uphold every kind of tyranny; they are based on the assumption that the people must be governed; the fact is, some one wants to govern the people.

The Fairhope colony is a body of people who have neither voice nor representation in the management of their own affairs, A COLONY OF SERFS, and if their backs are not bared to the knout, their welfare and prosperity are in the hands of the representatives of a majority of an irresponsible and self perpetuating membership, and that membership is exactly the same thing which when having grown to larger and more dignified proportions is called an aristocracy.

What are the results of this system? The wharf which paid the association nearly a thousand dollars last year is in a condition to jeopardise the lives and limbs of its patrons. The water works consist of a windmill and tank from which the water is carried in buckets (when there is any) by those who still think that sometime the water will work and have not put in wells or cisterns of their own. Although the earnings of the boat have been the boast of its management, the investors have never received a dollar, nor has any report of its earnings ever been made to them.

Notwithstanding these things, every spare dollar was this year put into a local telephone, a house-to-house affair, which has few subscribers, is the ridicule of the village, and which was installed against the will of the people.

These things are the concomitants of a government OF the people and

not of a government BY the people. They are the fruits of a government by representatives.

Meanwhile the rentals are soaring, and the people are becoming alarmed; no detailed reports are ever made, only the gross totals are allowed to escape. Whether the Fairhope Association has a right to collect and disburse its rentals without responsibility to its tenants, or whether the peculiar circumstances of the case warrant the belief that the tenant is entitled to a financial report and some assurance that the rentals are really expended for his benefit, is a question that must sooner or later come before the courts of the State of Alabama for adjudication.

The piney woods colony is interesting only because it poses as the exponent of a great reform, not less interesting because it has shown what should not be done rather than what should be done. It is only a speck on the map of a great republic which is in itself an experiment. A republic that for more than a century and a quarter has "*Proclaimed* liberty throughout the land and to all the inhabitants thereof": But have we liberty? From every quarter comes the cry of "graft." The modern knight-errant armed with indictments goes forth to put the representatives of the people in jail, and if he succeeds we elect him to high office and congratulate ourselves that at last virtue has triumphed over vice. But the system remains unchanged.

The Single Tax people ask that the vast sums which represent the increment to our land values be turned into the public treasury; as these values are the creation of the public they ask only justice, but they promise much; they promise the kingdom of Heaven upon earth, the millenium. But is there any reason to-day to believe that we shall reap the full benefits of the single tax so long as the power to make laws is delegated by the people to an inferior body? Will not the lust for power and privilege dominate our legislatures when the lust of avarice shall have vanished?

Volanta, Ala., Forefather's Day, Dec. 21st, 1904.

PRESCOTT A. PARKER.



REPLY TO PRESCOTT A. PARKER.

Editor Single Tax Review:

I thank you for the opportunity to reply in the same issue to Mr. P. A. Parker's criticism of Fairhope—though regretting the necessity of any controversy with so good a Single Taxer as I know Mr. Parker to be.

Referring first to Mr. Parker's criticism of that feature of the colony plan which provides for the administration of colony affairs by members of the colony corporation, who must pay a given amount and be accepted as members; it is an absolutely necessary condition not only for the purpose of securing means to buy the land, which "had to be purchased," as he says, but to ensure the administration of that land on Single Tax principles. With Single Taxers out-numbered one hundred to one, as they generally are, to our sad knowledge, it is the simplest kind of a mathematical problem to demonstrate that if every one who came to Fairhope because he liked the location or the climate, or because he found land easier of access than elsewhere, were admitted to full participation in determining the policy of the colony or electing the officers to execute it, there would not be any Single Tax colony to criticise by the time another issue of the REVIEW was due.

Please bear in mind that Fairhope only claims to apply Single Tax and Democratic principles to as great an extent as is possible under existing con-