

the property of landlords, or so called owners of the earth."

To be sure the use thus made of the word, "confiscate" was philosophically incorrect, which no one knew better than did Mr. George himself, nor does one have to read "Progress and Poverty" very far to discover that it was a major premise in the Single Tax philosophy that ground rents or site value by every right belonged to the people collectively, because of the fact that land or site values was caused by the presence of the people upon the land, coupled of course with their needs for the use of land; so that Mr. George was only guilty of a *lapsus lingui* that hardly needs our regrets.

But all such errors should be carefully avoided and the effort that is now being made among economic experts, especially Single Taxers, to establish a more correct and precise lexicography for economic purposes, is much needed and will prove most salutary.

The writer has what he deems an important change in the use of some several leading words in the economic lexicon, suggested by both the writings of Mr. George and Mr. Sherman's "National Taxation." This title is a misnomer in itself. We can properly speak of "natural wages" as the return of labor, under a free land regime—of "interest" as the natural return to capital, but from the very nature of the case, as Mr. Sherman puts it, if land or site values, is a national fund for purposes of revenue that such fund is the rightful property of the people collectively, it must follow, *afortiorasi*, that such fund is not in the nature of a tax, for taxes are essentially individual and must be laid upon some form of wealth which is the rightful property of the one against whom the levy is made. It could not be laid upon rent, (so called) as the value that attaches to the use of land is not rightfully the property of individuals, but it is a "rightful and proper revenue" and what seems to logically clinch the proposition is, that it also "automatically" (by nature, if you please) adjusts itself to the need for revenue as civilization tends upward and social needs increase—never more, never less than the full need of a growing State.

The word rent has been thrust upon us by those who, by conquest chiefly, have usurped the natural right of all men to the use of land for the maintenance of self and those dependent upon him, so forcibly put by Mr. Herbert Spencer, in his ninth chapter of "Social Statics," and we have blindly followed their dictum. I therefore submit that the return to land is not "Rent" but "Revenue," and should be so recognized.

The word "Rent" should become obsolete. The word tax may be retained and defined as "A penalty imposed by society for the prevention or abatement of nuisances." The slaughter of economic misnomer.

When the word revenue becomes recognized as the return for the use of land, or site value, the absurdity of allowing individuals to collect and appropriate it will be recognized by every economic tyro. Even our college professors and the faculty of our universities would be able to see the impropriety.

E. C. CLARK.

Syracuse, Nebr.

JUST PAYING FOR WHAT YOU GET.

Editor *Single Tax Review*:

A man in the car said to me yesterday, "What is the Single Tax?"

I said, "It is paying for what you get."

Seeing his puzzled expression, I ventured to illustrate.

"Suppose you go to the theatre; seats near the stage cost \$1.50, further back they cost only \$1.00, further back still only 50 cents and in the gallery only 25 cents. You pay your money, and what you pay determines the location. There's fairness in this arrangement because some locations are more valuable than others. You recognize the justice in it. Now in the larger theatre—the earth—Single Taxers would establish the same rule. Let those who occupy the choice locations pay for them. The only way to determine what privilege one enjoys from society and government is to ascertain the value of that land which he possesses to the exclusion of all others. The value of location is the value of association—they are

one and the same thing. The better the organized association called government the higher the value of location.

There is such a thing as social value, community value, if you will, and its opposite, individual value. The value given a hat, for example, is labor value. In a state of free trade exchange of hats for dollars will approximate nearly exactly to a fair exchange, or as President Roosevelt puts it, a "square deal." Social value expresses itself in land or location, and is made possible by the fact that organized government guarantees peaceable possession. So the thing to which such value attaches should be the one thing taxed. In other words, and in such a state of society, people will pay only for what they get.

J. SALMON.

Baltimore, Md.

SINGLE TAXERS STAND FOR FREEDOM OF THOUGHT.

Editor *Single Tax Review*:

Some time ago Joseph A. Labadie, of this city, an employe of the Detroit Water Board, was discharged because he was an "anarchist" and never hesitated to tell people the reason for his belief in a non-coercive state of society. Immediately the Single Taxers and others remonstrated against such action, holding that Mr. Labadie's economic opinions were sacred, so long as he was a good citizen, did his work well, and minded his own business. He had been an employe of the board for fourteen years, and his "anarchy" was of the kind sometimes called "philosophical" and sometimes "parlor." Moreover he is a property owner, living in his own house and owning another which he rents. One petition for his reinstatement was seven feet and an inch long, and consisted in names of printers only, as he is an honorary member of Typographical Union No. 18. Other petitions bore the names of men of standing and even of wealth. At another meeting of the Water Board, Mr. Labadie was reinstated, whereat the Single Taxers have rejoiced. It was a distinct victory for freedom of thought in public

servants, and mind-warped people only are sorry.

JUDSON GRENELL.

Detroit, Mich.

A CRITICISM.

Editor *Single Tax Review*:

An otherwise admirable article by E. I. S. H.* is spoiled by a slip of the pen, when the author gives what he (or she)? calls the full title of "A Single Tax on the selling value of land irrespective of any improvements." A volume—nay a library—of misunderstandings lies in the word "selling" interpolated before "value." The value of land, however it may be determined now, could not under Single Tax conditions be determined by sale. Even now (annual) rental (ground rent) is the real measure everywhere, and the legally recognized measure in many localities. In the early period of a Single Tax regime such would doubtless be the legal measure

I doubt the correctness of E. I. S. H.'s dictum that Single Tax is a good name for our movement. Mr. George doubted it and so expressed himself. It was the least misleading name, and perhaps still is—but we accept it, we do not "enthuse" over it. It keeps many away from us. Personally, when trying to gain converts, I reject the name. I say that ours is a *no tax* movement.

"Abolish taxes, take ground-rent." Thus, I conceive, is our doctrine best summarily stated.

SOLOMON SOLIS COHEN.

Philadelphia, Pa.

EVERYTHING WILL BE ALL RIGHT WHEN THE ECLIPTIC MAKES ITS SWING.

Editor *Single Tax Review*:

I was a firm believer in Henry George and his system of taxation. Have all his publications in my home in Fla., but to be perfectly frank with you, I will say that I have been in touch with Koreshan Universology for 8 years, and

*The Single Tax and the Georgian Philosophy. S. T. REVIEW, July-Aug., 1908.