

if he would place himself in economic harmony with his fellow man he must return to society a sum equivalent to the advantages and privileges that are socially conferred upon him. This is the law of economic adaptation which if conformed to leads onward and upward; this is the law that fixes the intensity, the height and duration of a civilization. This is the law the violation of which dwarfs the very nature of man and the observance of which would make of him what might truly be said to be the noblest work of God. This, in short, is justice.

Hyde Park, Boston, Mass.

ROBERT B. MARTIN.

REPLY BY THE EDITOR.

We print the above because it is the ablest presentation of Mr. C. B. Fillebrown's side of the controversy that has so far been elicited. It is known to our readers that our Boston friends are divided upon this point; that the agitation which Mr. Fillebrown has so ably and successfully conducted has expressly disowned any attempt to interfere with the institution of private property in land. It has refused to condemn it as inequitable, and has asserted—what of course cannot be denied—that all essential rights of the individual and of society are conserved by the taking of land values in taxation.

With this view Mr. William Lloyd Garrison, Mr. Lothrop and others take issue. The aim and purpose of the Single Tax is to destroy private property in land, which is the curse of civilization. Its purpose is to secure equal rights to land, the common heritage. Mr. Garrison holds that to conduct the agitation in terms that fail to deny the iniquity of private property in land is to minimize the strength of the forces that can ultimately be aligned in our support, and that it involves in its counsel of caution an unconscious deception unworthy of our cause.

With this view we confess ourself in sympathy, and this notwithstanding our high appreciation of Mr. Fillebrown, and of the wonderful work he has accomplished in the city of Boston, a work as important as any that has ever been done anywhere. Nor would we have him depart from his methods that have so signally and favorably influenced the public opinion and press of Boston. Its justification is its success.

It is one of the beauties of the Single Tax—like all great truths—that many roads lead to it. Mr. Thomas G. Shearman found it through the fiscal path, and Mr. George by another. And the important thing in a journey after all is not how men travel, but where they are going. And not all modes of conveyance approve themselves alike to all minds.

Mr. Martin has stated Mr. Fillebrown's position with all the skill that can be commanded. But he unconsciously falls into the phraseology that asserts the incontrovertibility of the Garrison position and denies his own. When he says if one man should, in accordance with Mr. Herbert Spencer's suggestion, own all the land, "we instantly strike an equation between his rights and our own when we demand that such a one shall return to society a sum equal to the advantages derived by the possession of our heritage," by the use of the word *our* he invalidates his position. For how comes it to be ours if land is private property, and by what right do we demand the full value of something that we assert as a private right? Ownership is inseparable from the enjoyment of all the value that it in-

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.

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