

must take and thereby become legally enabled to collect tribute of wealth producers. But, as a land owner only, he produces nothing. He lives, by such tribute, solely upon the earnings of others.

Gambling for wealth, the product of labor and capital applied to land, merely transfers previously produced wealth from one foolish loser to a shrewd or accidental winner, each of whom, to be poker players, should be gentlemen well able to afford such losses. It morally affects both, but financially affects but one of them. It does not affect the total store of wealth, hinder the further production of wealth, reduce the net returns of labor and capital, nor add to the cost of living.

Gambling in land, the creation of God and the primary source of all wealth, transfers previously produced wealth from many producers, who, by reason of the present general superficial comprehension or lack of mental alertness as regards economics, have thus far been helpless to prevent it. In every community the losers are fully ninety per cent of the people.

Land speculation and idle-land holding absorbs from the general store of wealth without rendering any value in return; it tends to keep production of wealth to the minimum, and to cause its inequitable distribution; it paralyzes business; it holds wages and interest, the earnings of labor and capital, to the minimum; it adds tremendously and with utter needlessness to the cost of living; it is the fundamental cause of involuntary poverty, of disease, of war, and of the imagined need of socialism.

The sovereign remedy is to gradually abolish all taxes on industry, business and thrift, and in lieu thereof derive all public revenue from the rental value of land—the public earnings.—K. P. ALEXANDER.

MISS ETTA SCHAFFTEL of the University of Chicago, has been awarded the prize of \$1,000 as the first prize for the best essay on "The Taxation of Land Values" offered by Hart, Schaffner and Marx, well known merchant tailors of that city.

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF SINGLE TAXERS.

EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

You raise two interesting questions in your comment on Peter Witt's campaign for the Mayoralty of Cleveland—What should be the attitude of Single Taxers in politics? and what should be the attitude of other Single Taxers toward such persons? I think the same freedom for which we stand in all relations of life should govern us here.

Toward the Single Taxer who denies his faith for the sake of political preferment, there should be no consideration shown. But is not this an imaginary case? In thirty years I have not known of a pervert. Nor should consideration be shown for the Single Taxer who, when the Single Tax or any part of it, is not a campaign issue, seeks Single Tax votes on the ground that he is a Single Taxer. But of this case there are few if any examples.

We have not reached the stage where any one, not a Single Taxer, will claim to be such in order to win votes, we have to recognize that practically everywhere in the United States the Single Tax faith is a liability rather than an asset, and that wherever Single Taxers have been elected or appointed to office, it has been in spite of their faith and not in consequence of it.

If the ground be taken that Single Taxers must not support candidates or parties which do not make the Single Tax the sole plank of their platform, condemn ourselves to the same sterility, or even a greater sterility, than the Socialist party has done. Democracy, with all due respect to the believers in direct legislation, must be carried on by representative government. Representatives *should* be more than mere recording machines to register the will of their constituencies. They should strive to lead and inspire, but no matter how certain a representative may be of the correctness of his own position, unless he shall have convinced a majority of the intelligences or of the number of his own constituency that a certain policy is wise, he

should not use his office to impose it on the electors.

Now all experience of plebiscites indicates that not more than a moderate fraction of the people anywhere are yet convinced of the justice or wisdom of the Single Tax. The most that we can hope for is the promotion of measures which glance not too obviously in our direction.

For this purpose it is desirable to have as many Single Taxers in public places as possible, because even though the Single Tax itself be not an issue, it is impossible for such men to keep their light under a bushel, and steadily they leaven the sodden mass of official life. Then their conduct in office helps the movement. I think that the record of Single Taxers in office is one of which their bretheren may well be proud. People begin to say if the Single Tax cause can give us such good public servants, men who can perform their functions with intelligence, dignity and democratic spirit, it can't be such a wild dream as we have been told it is.

The public official who fulfills his official duties with a fine spirit is in a position to influence more of his fellow citizens than any man in the community, excepting perhaps the editor. A certain authority attaches to him and his utterances. When he really wants an audience he can get one. And thus he may gain a sufficient measure of public confidence to be able to get a respectful hearing for his ideas.

When an architect wants to get a contract for a building in competition with others, he does not work out his ground plan in detail. He knows that the committee would not understand it if he did. He makes a pretty water color picture to capture their imagination, and then he tries to gain their confidence by showing what he has done and that he is a man to be trusted. This was peculiarly what Henry George did; he kindled men's imagination with a description of what was possible under a just social order, and he impressed them with his own unselfishness.

Somewhere in the United States today there may be a man in public office, who

will deserve and attain the confidence of the people and perhaps through him will come as much of an instalment of our faith as this generation is ready for—some man who may do for the workers and jobless millions what Lincoln tried to do for the slave. And he will have the warning of Lincoln's failure to achieve economic justice for the slave, to help him steer his course. For we can see today how little all the agony and waste of the war was able to accomplish. It just stopped the colored man or woman from being put upon the auction block. The vote which it gave him has been taken from him save in districts where it can have no effect. His position grows steadily worse in many sections.

And so, sublime as was the courage and self-sacrifice of the Abolitionists, it failed to reckon with that tremendous power of inertia which requires ages of effort to overcome even slightly.—SINGLE TAXER.

REPLY.

What precedes is probably the best argument that can be made as a blanket plea in defence of the political activities of Single Taxers during the last few years in movements which were not avowedly for the furtherance of the cause in which we are enlisted. Its failure to meet the contentions we have advanced from time to time in the columns of the REVIEW respecting the often ill-advised support of political movements led by Single Taxers is all the more striking in that the letter emanates from one who, himself an office-holder, has by his unceasing and devoted labors for the cause, speaking and writing constantly, made his own case immune from animadversion even from the ill-natured.

Much of what the distinguished writer has to say belongs elsewhere and may be swept aside as "alliunde," as the lawyers say. In this class of argument is the statement that we should be governed in our attitude toward Single Taxers seeking office by the same freedom which serves us as guide in other relations of life. Included also in the argument that is "alliunde" is much that follows, the statement that he

"has not known a pervert in thirty years," and that "politically the Single Tax is a liability, not an asset." The last may serve as an excuse for the Single Taxer seeking to minimize his conviction in a political campaign, but how does it meet the contention that this is a sufficient reason why Single Taxers who believe their own issue to be of prime importance should treat his candidacy with entire indifference?

It is a condition, not a theory that confronts us. Let us deal with history in the concrete. There have been in this city and other cities dozens of political movements having no relation to the Single Tax, but engineered by Single Taxers. These movements are started whenever a Single Taxer is a candidate for office, whether judicial, legislative or administrative. It is assumed, (and it is this assumption with which we quarrel) that it will be to some advantage to the cause to have a Single Taxer in office. This assumption, the unsoundness of which could have been demonstrated *a priori*, has proven itself unsound in practice. We do not care to mention names. But now it was an Assemblyman, who elected as a Single Taxer and urged to do something for the Single Tax said that "the time was not ripe." Out of office the time was always ripe, but during his incumbency it maintained a perpetual greenness through many recurring seasons of seed-time and harvest. We had not gained an assemblyman, but had lost an advocate, and an able one. Then it was some judicial office, and Single Taxers made extraordinary efforts to land the nominee on the judicial bench. They made speeches for him and gave their pennies (Single Taxers have few coins of large denomination) for literature urging other Single Taxers to gird up their loins to get this man a judicial office. Then the haunts that knew him once knew him no more; he was silent for all the years that followed. The Borough of Brooklyn that lies over the river from Manhattan is to this day honeycombed with office-holders who "got there" during the political upheavals in which Single Taxers took

part with a touching faith that if they could land a lot of "our fellows" in office the cause would be advanced. We hear from them no more. Many of them have grown conservative. They neither give, nor write, nor speak; they are dumb. Yet we worked for them, and we neglected larger and more important duties to get them jobs, all with the idea that we were doing something for the cause. Of course, they have a right to do nothing now. We would give them "the same freedom that we ask shall govern us in other relations," but *cui bono*?

Shall we continue to repeat the farce? Already there are movements under way to do the same thing all over again. The policy proceeds in great part from a sentiment of personal loyalty, from the *esprit de corps*, and is natural and almost unescapable. But if persisted in it will make the Single Tax still more of a liability than an asset! And while it is true that a publicly avowed belief in the Single Tax is a liability it should be remembered that the support of the active, hustling groups of men and speakers, of a high order of intelligence, who usually constitute those who help to push the candidacies of some formerly recognized Single Taxer, are by no means a liability. And it is not in human nature that the candidate should be oblivious to this fact.

Our city is not alone. Cleveland, where the great Tom Johnson had an enormous following, can number some of these lukewarm office holders who were once the fiery exponents of our doctrine. They clutched at the trailing garments of a great leader and were "landed." Nor is our own country alone. A formerly distinguished Australian leader, now high in the councils of the government, is another of those who "just for a handful of silver," or rather an official emolument, left us. A pervert—no, not a pervert. None of these men have yet denied their master. And "we would give them the same freedom, that in other relations, etc." Yes, we would give them that. But why give them anything else—Our help to elevate them to

office where the Single Tax is not involved?

Do we thus condemn ourselves to the sterility of the Socialists? But are the Socialists sterile? Does the writer of this letter attempt to measure the influence that the Socialists as a militant body have exercised on current legislation? This legislation may not always have been wise, but that is another question. How much factory legislation, child labor laws, tenement regulation, municipal ownership, etc., can be traced as the indirect result of the demands of the Socialist party? Let our friend consider.

Nor is the illustration of the abolition cause a peculiarly fortunate one, even if they did "fail to reckon with the power of inertia." They went right up against the "power of inertia," with the result that an abolition sentiment was created that prepared the country for the Emancipation Proclamation of Lincoln, and made that task more easy for him. This is what Seward meant when he said to Emerson, "You make history and we profit by it."

Here is the summing up of the matter: The Single Tax is too big a cause to serve as any man's political kite. His candidacy should interest us only when the cause is involved. The Single Tax movement has been either too much or too little of an independent political movement, too much where it lent its sanction to a thousand candidacies, too little where it lost the opportunity to press its demands upon nominees at election time for some concession to the principle for which we contend. And its thousand candidacies to which it lent its sanction has given it a thousand little office holders who are, with some notable exceptions, of course, as little use to the cause as if they were dead and buried. Most of them are forgotten—EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW.

MR. E. C. CLARK, of Cleveland, N. Y., in a beautifully written letter in the *Oswego Daily Palladium*, administers some telling blows to the theory of corporal punishment, and incidentally takes a fling at Billy Sunday.

IS POLITICAL ECONOMY SCIENCE OR PURE FAKE?

EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

In the last issue of the REVIEW you have headed an editorial with the above suggestive question. You may not be aware that a few years ago a debate extending over some months was carried on in the pages of one of the heavier London magazines, by Dr. John Beattie Crozier and Mr. H. G. Wells, under substantially the same title, "Is a science of Sociology possible." The first named economist maintained that sociology is a real science and can be securely established on certain natural human instincts or tendencies, while Mr. Wells insisted that owing to the fact that man is still in the making and always developing new and unpredictable qualities, no uniformity in his reactions to stimuli can reasonably be expected, and that therefore the basis of a true science is wanting. Mr. Wells then went on to argue, as readers of his books can imagine he would, that all that the society re-constructor can do is to proceed by the empirical method of picturing to himself ideal states or utopias and then endeavouring to mould society after the pattern he has set for himself. It is needless to say that both these distinguished writers urged their cases ably, and had Dr. Crozier been not only the broad and liberal thinker that he is, but a Single Taxer in addition, his triumph in the debate would have been complete. Lacking as it did, however, the precipitating reagent which the Single Tax philosophy provides, his collection of so-called principles seemed to produce a muddled mixture which might well have evoked just the question asked by your article.

To me it has always seemed that the whole difficulty arises from a failure to realize what at bottom a science really is. We should constantly remind ourselves that we use language wrongly when we speak of a science of engineering or a science of government. A science is not a statement of what man can, would, or