

Methinks that is a good saying to remember when some of us become unduly excited over mere practical fiscal reforms and forget the bigger inspirational side of our Doctrine . . . the right of the individual to himself and the full fruits of his labor.

But we can all look with interest towards Denmark, a country where not only Single Taxers but also some other people seem to have a full measure of energy and commonsense.

—GRACE ISABEL COLBRON.

Ours is a Nice World, Ours Is

THERE was a time, there must have been a time, when life on this planet did not express itself in the definite, apparently separate or individualized forms that come under our observation today.

"The Earth was without form or void." "The spirit moved upon the face of the waters," says the ancient Hebrew poet, with probably some approximation to fact. The poet cannot be any guide to matters of detail, and the familiar account of the appearance of Man, as well as other sentient living things, would not be of much importance except that a certain theory of the genesis and destiny of the planet and all forms of life has been founded upon it—a theory which has retarded rather than helped man on the road of progress.

No reference to the conflict between the poet, the theory founded upon the poetry, and the man of science, is necessary. Forms of life did appear, and persist with certain modifications to this day. The point intended to be stressed is that conditions must have been favorable to the production of life and equally so as to the maintenance of life. That seems to be self-evident, and with this self-evident truth in view the assertion can be made with all confidence that

OURS IS A NICE WORLD—OURS IS

It is the world we live on—for a brief period, it is true, but during that time mankind is obliged to draw all its sustenance from it. It can safely be said that life on it is desirable, and the conditions, if due regard is paid to the natural law which brought it into existence and must continue to operate, not too difficult.

Why then do the mass of mankind complain so loudly, and in our view erroneously, that Nature is hostile, not friendly? That their environment is inimical to the well-being of animate things? How does it come about that life is said to be a struggle or a fight in which the fittest are most likely to survive? What has intervened between the self-evident beneficence of Nature and the disposition and ability of mankind to profit by it, as everybody knows clearly it might profit, in conformity with Nature's laws? Why, in other words, is it a matter of difficulty at all for the bulk of mankind to take full advantage of the beneficence of Nature, to provide themselves from the inex-

haustible store with the things desired to sustain life, and to live it with an understanding of what might be developed from it?

Why should millions be obliged to suffer hunger in a world which has only to be tickled to induce it to laugh a harvest of good things? Does mankind prefer to go short of food rather than perform its part of the obligation laid upon it by Nature? In other words, would mankind rather go hungry than work? The answer to that question ought not to be difficult.

Why should millions go naked or insufficiently protected against climatic discomforts in the face of an ever abundant supply of material out of which labor and ingenuity can, and does, easily make provision? Why should millions have to put up with inadequate shelter, with an inexhaustible supply of shelter-building material under foot and readily available? These are old, old questions and many have undertaken to answer them or to delay the answers to an inquiring mankind. No satisfactory answers are forthcoming from those to whom the questions might readily be addressed. Millions still need food, shelter and clothing to a much larger extent than they are able to supply themselves with.

What do such answers as have been attempted amount to? Look at them briefly.

There is the answer of the Church, which claims to be in a position to declare Nature's plan and will with reference to mankind. It says, in effect, "Ours is a nice world, ours is," but mankind is essentially and thoroughly bad, being born that way, and has departed from Nature's Law. Truly this is so, not, perhaps, as the words imply, through inherent wickedness, but through ignorance and imperfection.

If the Church would stick to that theory, with the slight amendment suggested, and really believed that the cause of the world's difficulties could be discovered, it might find it, and help to apply the solution. Unfortunately, the basic truth of imperfection is not only forgotten as soon as stated, but on the contrary, it is asserted definitely that "poverty," which is the main evil in our nice world of plenty, is an ordinance of the Creator designed by omnipotence to encourage fortitude in the many and charity in the few.

It would seem more in accordance with the facts of the case if it had been stated that the design was to encourage fortitude in all and charity in all, too. The explanation does not explain.

It is man's own fault that he allows the poverty problem to oppress him, and until this is realized it will continue to oppress him. When it is realized it will dawn upon him that man's faulty arrangements can be changed. In the meantime, the sun will continue to shine, the rain to fall, the seed to germinate, and seasons to come and go; and all the processes of Nature from the result of which man lives, will go on. Nature's arrangements will be "renewed every morning and repeated every evening." Surely the

solution is obvious, even to the uninspired. It is vain, as it always has been, to look to the Church for satisfactory replies to the questions asked. When pressing for replies the world is always told that things will be set right in the next world, and mankind is always exhorted to look for compensation there.

What answers do the politicians give to these same questions?

They do not answer them, being too busy manipulating "red herrings" to confuse the trail. They discuss parts of the questions, but always side-track the main issue and darken counsel by directing a flow of talk upon more or less unimportant or irrelevant details from an old and distant point of view; repeat old doctrines; order Commissions of Inquiry to look into this that or the other, in order to produce an impression that something is going to be done to find real answers to these riddles of life. From an old standpoint and on a wrong theory comes a flood of talk from politicians of all parties the world over, all apparently equally ignorant that the answers are simple, and all oblivious of the certainty of worse trouble and confusion if they are not found and applied.

"Bad trade causes unemployment" is an answer which has a very satisfying and remedial effect on the sufferers. What is the cause of bad trade? Do not expect the politicians to answer. They only deal with effects, not causes; with symptoms, not disease. Out of the babel come contrary cries. "It is too easy to produce wealth, but too hard to exchange or consume it. There is too much dispute among the wealth producers. Capital and Labor will not work together. Wages and the cost of production are too high. There is too much ca'nanny. Wages are too low. The hours of work are too long. There is too little organization of labor. There is too much organization of everybody. Too much government. Too little government. Too much population. Shortage of labor", etc., etc., ad infinitum.

Such are some of the parrot cries from our legislators and teachers. You pay your money to take your choice.

For the most part they can be described as they have been described by a rude writer of the truth, as so much "unadulterated d—— nonsense."

In some respects there seems to be a general agreement, viz., that the State is supreme. That the individual has no rights that the State need respect. Consequently the right of the individual to free and equal access to his livelihood is denied, and the right of the State to acquire all wealth produced is affirmed. All profess, and act on this purely socialistic principle, and whatever differences may seem to exist between political parties are differences of degree only in the application of this principle, a principle which puts itself athwart Nature's obvious intention in producing the individual. All agree that taxation is highly moral, instead of denouncing it as immoral. Some of the politicians contend that 50% of the rightful property

of the individual is enough to take for State purposes. Others, that all the wealth produced should be taken charge of by the State and divided mechanically so that everyone would receive not according to his contribution to the store of wealth, but according to his need.

Conservative politicians cry for stability and a chance to smoke up some good red herrings by commissions of inquiry into everything but the right thing; and so long as they can remain 50% or more Socialistic they prefer to avoid discussion of the poverty problem, and hold on to the special privilege of owning the earth.

What will disturb them? Nothing but a loud and clear demand from a majority of enlightened people, that the ownership of the earth shall be settled forthwith by an agreement that title to it is vested not in the few possessors of it, but in the whole people, not only of this, but of all future generations. And further, in order to make this effective, the rent of it shall be collected, and placed to the credit of the whole people. When this cry goes up, the politicians will heed—not before.

The Conservatives and the Liberals profess to be fighting Socialism, but since they act upon a clearly Socialistic principle, if there is any fight, it can be but a sham one. It is more likely that the army will dig itself in and endeavor to keep out of danger for a number of years yet to come.

What do our Liberal, Radical, semi-Socialistic and pure 100% Socialists answer to these questions?

"Oh yes, the land system, the rating and taxation system, needs attention."

Mr. Lloyd George says land monopoly "raids and pillages the community"—that is to say, is theft or robbery, confiscation by the few of the opportunities, the labor, the wealth of the many. "Let's burst the pot of land monopoly in which industry is root-bound." "Let's buy out the robbers, the raiders and pillagers, and let the robbery go on in another form. Perhaps we shall not notice it then, and it may be that there will be some profit over and above what the old robbers or their descendants will receive from us as interest on the goodwill of their business which we propose to acquire."

Is this the answer which will satisfy the people who at present by all consideration of both law and morals do own the land and should collect the rent? It is the answer making the nearest approach to truth, that the Liberals and Socialists—Progressives, they call themselves—have so far made. It has not yet occurred to them to demand simple justice, to call for a real equality of opportunity to life by the restoration to everyone of his ownership of himself and his store of life-sustaining material. To re-assert the Declaration of Independence on behalf of the people of England is not considered important. In fact, the simple truth and political action based upon it is looked upon by these clever befogged leaders of men as "too revolutionary," forsooth. While to bolster up specially privileged superior rights to life for the small minority, to

deny the right of the many to freedom to work in partnership with Nature and to enjoy both the work and the result without any "raiding or pillaging" on the part of the Government, is the practical politics of both the trusted and discredited leaders of all parties.

The C. L. P. has answered the question many times. Not until Land Monopoly is quietly but firmly and entirely abolished as a consequence of the people's demand that the rent of their countries be collected for their use and benefit will it be realized what is the truth, which the C. L. P. has endeavored to proclaim, viz., not only that

OURS IS A NICE WORLD, OURS IS,

but that it *is ours*, in the real sense of the word (although we are ignorantly or fraudulently deprived of the natural rights and advantages of life in it) whenever we acquire sense enough to make it so.

Who will help by joining in the demand for Justice? That is all that is needed. A little commonsense, which it would not hurt any of us to acquire, would soon make it clear that

OURS IS A NICE WORLD, OURS IS

London, England.

"X"

Ruth White Colton Talks to the Lions

MRS. RUTH WHITE COLTON spoke before the Lions Club at West New York last month.

She said in part: "Either we may continue the hit-or-miss, hodge-podge method of penalizing industry, agriculture and home-owners, through taxation, or we may, as is advocated by over five hundred of the leading manufacturers of this state, shift the burden from the back of industry and thrift onto the site value of land. How will such a change benefit the average man and woman? The answer is very simple.

"The less revenue that is collected from site-value, the higher is the selling-price of sites—factory sites, farm sites, home sites, and the higher is the selling price of all raw materials, such as lumber, coal, clay, etc., and the more difficult it is to get sites and materials for productive uses. High prices for sites and raw material increases the cost of production and decreases the demand for the products of industry and agriculture alike. This, of course, restricts production and restricted production means unemployment, industrial strikes and general social unrest.

"With site-values and building materials sky-high we are faced with the housing problem, which carries with it a tremendous social significance. Congested housing is responsible for more of disease and crime than we are yet generally aware, and our state institutions are filled with the victims of these conditions, for the cost of whose maintenance all of us are responsible. The sooner these facts are understood and recognized the sooner will labor and capital intelligently combine to fight this rising cost of sites and raw materials."

Our British Letter

WHY WAGES ARE LOW

"AN incident, reported from Colchester, Essex, in which unemployed men fought for work, provides yet another contradiction to those people who assert that the unemployed man has no desire for a job.

"Fifty men were required in connection with the laying of electric cables. It was hard toil, but some 200 men turned up to be taken on. The man in charge told them that the first 50 who got the tools would be put on the job, and immediately there was a wild rush for the implements. Fortunately, none was seriously hurt, but many received hard knocks. One man said to have had his coat ripped off by a pick, and others were badly bruised."—*Daily Herald*, London, May 9, 1925.

"James D. Graham of Montana, an acute observer of conditions in the Western States, writes that unemployment in this region 'has been on the increase for four years. Wages are going down and shop conditions are becoming poor.'... The Colorado coal fields present another situation that adds to the general distress. The Rockefeller company 'unions' in that State signed an agreement last month reducing wages twenty per cent. . . . If we turn to agriculture the economic prospects are just as black. There is no relief in sight, and the national administration has neither the knowledge nor the ability to handle the situation. The Woolworth stores that deal in the cheapest wares that workers buy are curtailing business in the Western States. They have reduced the wages of their girl employees to nine dollars a week, and the trade unions are fighting this policy with but little success."—*The New Leader*, New York, April 18, 1925.

These extracts from the Labor press of Britain and America expose the utter futility of "organization" alone as a means to prevent the wages of workers in civilized countries from being forced continually lower and lower. Lament is made by Mr. Graham that "the conditions are black and there is no relief in sight." But he makes no suggestion to help his readers out. The comment of the writer in *The New Leader* who quotes him is that "Unemployment is by no means confined to the Western States. It is general, but little is being said by the newspapers about it. *The New Leader* will try to get more data regarding this miserable by-product of capitalism." What the editor of the paper in question expects to be able to do with that extra data should he obtain it we do not know, but it is certain that one who only sees unemployment as a "miserable by-product of capitalism" is in the same hopeless condition as the national administration, and unlikely, therefore, to contribute anything to the solution of the problem.

ONLY CIVILIZED WORKERS WORRIED OVER WAGES

It never occurs to these publicists to enquire how it comes to pass that it is only in "civilized" countries that such conditions obtain. Here in Britain there has just died one of the greatest capitalists the Socialists and trade