

July 4th, 1886, was at Schlamp's Park. Beer and refreshments were in charge of a committee and sold in the interest of the Assembly. The receipts, I think, were about \$1,100, netting a profit of over \$500. This and other moneys passed into the hands of Batchelor, our treasurer, who in April, 1887, when certain disbursements had been ordered, reporting "no funds," was investigated; when his accounts, too, were in a muddle. He was so little of a bookkeeper that his accounts were written with a dull lead pencil in an old copy book and on loose sheets. By patient search and charitable construction his shortage was ultimately reduced to \$350, which after a long time in two or three installments he paid. He was an open-hearted, generous, honest Englishman, by trade a painter, though at this juncture superintendent of the Burlington Wire Mattress Works. He told me that he had had very little schooling and indeed could not remember a time when he had not worked in a shop, painting for his father when he had to stand on a box placed beside a trestle. He was a ready talker, fond of speaking in the Assembly, always entertaining and fond of referring to the ancient Greeks, when, however, he was apt to use odd pronunciations, alluding, I remember, to Xerxes as Zerks, and to Lycurgus as Lysurgis. But in these matters his audience was not critical.

In August, 1877, I resigned my trusteeship. There was a good deal of responsibility connected with the office and besides personal affairs required my whole attention. The Rev. Dr. Johnson, Bennett, a carpenter, and Buri, a barber, were the new board elected, but they were reluctant to assume power, and it was October before I was finally released. Bennett, I remember, made an angry speech in which he charged me with joining the order for selfish ends, and in wanting the trusteeship only so long as I had an axe to grind. The enthusiasm aroused by the great R. R. strikes had caused the roll to be filled largely with very young men, uneducated and often very rude, boys, mostly chewing tobacco and disregarding the spittoons, who had joined merely for fun. I ceased to attend the Assembly with any regularity. The membership dropped away. The large hall was abandoned for a small third story room. The attendance fell to eight or ten, then to but two or three. Finally the charter was surrendered, and Assembly 3135 ceased to exist.

The Knights of Labor died out in Burlington. Of five Assemblies none remained. Nevertheless, in bringing Henry George to Burlington, and in distributing his address, we really did a greater work than we knew. For we sent it to the ends of the earth, where by others it is still being distributed. Not only in Burlington and its neighborhood, but in the whole country, we might say in the whole world, many men for the first time got to hear that private ownership of land is questioned, and that revenue systems might be immensely simplified by concentrating all taxes upon "Rent." The first step in a social revolution is to excite discontent, the next is to excite thought. In these first steps Assembly 3135 took a respectable part.



## FAIRHOPE.

### THE SINGLE TAX APPLIED.

UNIQUE EXPERIMENT IN SOUTHERN ALABAMA.

BY J. BELLANGE.

In 1894 a company of Single Taxers in Des Moines, Iowa, believing that the time was ripe for some sort of an experiment to test the principles of their belief, associated themselves together and organized the Fairhope Industrial Association. The name was chosen because as yet it was nothing but a "fair

hope," but a hope as they thought founded upon logical grounds. The difficulty was to be found in adjusting the enterprise to existing laws, and as in all states in the Union all forms of property are taxed it was found necessary, in order to put the burdens of government upon land values alone, to have recourse to a joint stock company, in order that the government of the proposed settlement might be administered on the proprietary rather than the political basis.

After considerable deliberation a plan was evolved and stock subscribed, only a few hundred dollars. A committee was sent out in the summer of 1894 to choose a location, and a site in Baldwin County, Alabama, was selected. The motives in determining the selection were, first, the beauty and healthfulness of the situation; second, the cheapness of the land, and third, the fact that while near good markets it was not in the line of any railroad that would dictate in any manner our form of development.

We chose the eastern shore of Mobile Bay, about sixteen miles from the city of Mobile by water. Another and probably the greatest factor in determining this location in the south was the absence of that commercial spirit which dominates everything in the north. These considerations seemed to permit us to give our community exactly the development which we desired, and our experience has justified our forethought. We have a beautiful location overlooking the bay on an elevated plateau something over 100 feet above high water. The beach is a fine one and a wooded strip of some 200 or 300 feet in width extends back to the bluffs which rise abruptly to thirty or forty feet and then slope back gradually to 120.

This bay affords us the most delightful bathing and fishing opportunities, as well as shipping facilities. The land back of our town site is unimproved, having been, since before the war, devoted to turpentine and lumber interests. It is now being settled quite rapidly with farmers from the north and west who are developing its agricultural resources with success. Fairhope has developed from a nucleus of three or four families to a settlement of something over three hundred, with stores, churches, hotel, sawmill and other primitive business enterprises. We have also a good school and a public library of over 2,000 volumes. We have a steamer which plies between Fairhope and Mobile daily, bringing our people in close touch with the Mobile market. The place is rapidly becoming popular as a winter resort for northern people, and many of the business men of Mobile bring over their families to spend the summer months with us.

In all respects, to a casual observer, our village would be considered a typical northern settlement of perhaps rather more than ordinary enterprise. The distinctive features consist in our administration of the land and public services. The land is held in the name of the association and is leased to the residents on ninety-nine year leases, which provide that the executive council of the association shall adjust the rents for the land annually, and that those rents shall be expended for the common interest of all the lessees by the payment of all taxes that are levied upon real estate and the improvements thereon, and refunding to the lessees all personal property taxes that the state and county require of them. After these taxes have been paid the remainder of the rentals are pledged to public improvements for the benefit of all the residents. This is enabling us to procure such services as the town from time to time needs in the way of better roads, water supply, systems of lighting or telephone facilities, or anything of that nature which the development of the community requires.

We already have a large windmill and tank which supplies free water, and which will be provided with distributing pipes in the near future. We have a landing, the pier some 1800 feet long, reaching out into the bay, where the water is twelve feet deep. The receipts from this wharf after paying the ser-

vices of a wharfinger amount to a considerable sum, which is placed in the common treasury. From this fund we have been able the last two years to greatly increase our warehouse room and facilities for handling freight, and it is expected the coming season to complete another warehouse which will again double our capacity.

The building of this wharf affords an illustration of a principle which we found very serviceable, but which has not been used as much in other localities as its merits deserve. Being without means the association had recourse to what is known as the Guernsey market house plan, and issued wharf certificates which provided that the bearer was entitled "to an equivalent in wharf uses or in cash from the earnings of said wharf; all of which earnings, over and above actual cost of maintenance," were pledged to the redemption of the certificate. These were issued for money, labor and material to the extent of something over \$1,200, and the wharf was thus completed. Since that time all the certificates have been redeemed and cancelled, and the wharf is now, as before stated, furnishing quite an income.

The same principle was used to an extent in providing water supply. In 1901 some friends of the cause furnished the funds to build a steamboat for the use of the colony, and with our own labor, our own material, largely, and even our own shipbuilders, we built a vessel eighty-five feet in length and seventeen beam, with ninety-three tons burden. This was equipped with a triple expansion engine, a pipe boiler and a screw propeller, and now makes daily trips to Mobile. The net earnings of the boat are pledged to the return of the cost of the boat to the donors.

We have some twelve hundred acres of land, consisting of the village site on the beach and the farm land in the rear. The original cost of the land was from \$1.25 to \$6.50 per acre. The association also holds very favorable options on nearly 3,000 acres more. These lands are rented to occupants at an annual rental of from twenty cents to about \$25 an acre, according to their location. The business lots in the centre of the village, of course, bring the highest rental; the nice resident lots fronting on the bay come next, then other village lots, and finally the farm lands in the rear. The poorest lands are those farthest away and of inferior quality. The effort is made to so adjust the rentals as to equalize the varying advantages of location and qualities of the different tracts. The improvements that are put upon the land in no way affect the rental charged, the theory being that each renter pays for the value of the exclusive use of the particular piece of property which he selects, and having thus compensated the whole community for the privilege of that exclusive use he is entitled to all that his thrift and energy may produce upon it. Moreover, it is the aim of the management to take the entire rental value of the land, so that there is no especial advantage in holding the land except for actual use. This entirely eliminates land speculation.

It must be borne in mind that these land rentals when collected are used for the public benefit only, so that each one receives in return in public services his share of the rent that all pay. Incidentally another benefit has arisen from our system. Since the title to the land is in the association the individual occupant cannot put a mortgage upon it while the constitution of the association forbids the contracting of any interest bearing debts. Thus we have a community that is free from the land speculator and the money lender, wherein there is provided a fund that bids fair to give the community all needed public utilities, so that its development along the most approved lines is assured without the disadvantage of bonds or mortgages.

In the government of the colony the most approved methods are used. Elections are by secret ballot, after the Australasian plan, and in all matters of administrative and public policy the members are guaranteed the full use of the

principle of the initiative and referendum. What is known as the "imperative mandate" is used, and any servant of the association whether elected or appointed may be removed by vote of the membership when called for by a petition of ten per cent. of the actual members. It is understood that any such removal is without prejudice to the party removed and that all officers and employees are simply the servants of the association and subject to its will in every particular. The interests of the officers are guarded by a provision in the by-laws which makes every incumbent a candidate for re-election unless he signifies his desire to be released. It is thought that this provision will exclude party politics from the management of the company.

After each assessment the public is invited to meet and discuss the schedule, when complaints are heard and duly considered. Then after further action by the counsel, if there is any dissatisfaction, the whole matter or any part thereof can be referred to the entire membership on the principle of referendum before stated. Last year the amount of the rentals collected was nearly three times the tax required by the state and county, thus giving the community a snug sum for local improvements.

People in the North no doubt will be interested to know how we meet the negro question. In fact, before we went there, we were somewhat concerned over that ourselves. In actual practice we never had to meet it. No negroes have ever applied for membership, nor do we expect they will. There is, however, considerable talk of establishing a negro settlement upon the same plan and it is being discussed by the colored people themselves. We have been exceedingly fortunate in avoiding the question, or in dealing with it in such a way as to arouse the prejudice of the Southern whites or the dislike of the colored people. In fact, our stores are exceedingly popular with both whites and blacks in all the surrounding neighborhood, and are rapidly drawing away the trade from the other villages along the bay shore.

I want to say that our hope that a location among the Southern people would be found more hospitable than in the North has been fully justified. Not only are they personally courteous and sociable, but they look upon our experiment with a great deal of approval and encouragement. Perhaps, I can tell of no incidents that will better illustrate this truth than the fact that the little delegation which we sent to the State Fair with a few Fairhope products was not only accorded very generous treatment in the way of premiums, but the management insisted upon paying their expenses, including railroad fare and hotel bills.

The soil is not like the best Northern soil, but like most of the Atlantic seaboard has to be strengthened with commercial or other fertilizer. Our people find that by scientific use of such means good crops can be grown to great advantage. Beginning with Irish potatoes, they furnish in succession in the same land; Irish and sweet potatoes and some forage crops, making about two and a half crops a year on an average. String beans are largely grown for the market; also water melon, sugar cane, cotton, strawberries and other fruits, and all kinds of vegetables.

As may be supposed we desire for settlers men of industrious and frugal habits. Those with a spirit of speculation and a desire to get something for nothing are not welcome. In fact the land speculators find it to their advantage to work at a distance from us rather than nearby. The result is that land immediately adjoining us and in the near vicinity can be obtained at a less price than lands farther away. Thus it is seen that our plan is not only illustrating the development of a community in which there is no land speculation, but it is destroying speculation about us.

I know of no better place for those who have fixed incomes upon which they wish to live at leisure than at Fairhope. I know of no place of similar



development where the intellectual life and social advantages are superior, and especially noticeable is the liberality of thought and tolerance of all shades of opinion that is found there. It is our belief that a system which exemplifies fair dealing and guarantees to each his equal chance with all others in an opportunity to live will also promote a disposition of liberal and tolerant public opinion.



## THE FUTURE OF FREE TRADE.

*(Expressly for the Review).*

BY THOMAS SCANLON.

Whatever may be the ultimate outcome of Mr. Chamberlain's fiscal proposals, the fact that they have been made and the reception they have met with, serves to throw a flood of light upon the existing international economic situation. It is admitted on all hands that the world we are living in at the beginning of the twentieth century is a very different one from the world that Cobden, fifty years ago, imagined it would be. Instead of seeing nations pursue their own best interests by the straight and simple path of free trade, thereby tending to a state of economic interdependence in which the world would wake up some fine morning to find itself inextricably and inevitably one solid nation, between the various parts of which, war was no longer possible, what is the spectacle to-day? We see a well marked tendency in the stronger states to become the nucleus of big empires, each one of which aims at being economically self-supporting, so far, at least, as articles of advanced manufacture are concerned. Freedom of trade within the political boundary of each nation and a tariff wall to keep out foreign goods—such is the idea which has dominated, in our generation, the commercial policy of the more powerful nations with the exceptions of Great Britain. Concurrently with the determination not to buy from any nation there has been an inconsistent desire to sell *every* nation, and when the demand for products has been starved out and the supply has accumulated, as is natural to expect under the circumstances, recourse has been had to the bullying method of opening up, by forcible means, exclusive markets in those parts of the world not hitherto appropriated by any civilized Power. Throughout all this process which has been carried on to such an extent that there now remains but little of the planet to be carved out. Great Britain has stood for freedom of trade, and in the main, continued to prosper. But it cannot be denied that other countries which have relied on opposite methods have prospered, or seemed to prosper, and that in certain important directions British trade has shown a falling off, where theirs has expanded. For several years it has been manifest from the tread of commercial events, that England's faith in the free trade doctrine would be put to a severe test.

It requires a firm faith to make a man stand by an economic doctrine the practical application of which brings ruin to his favorite industry. Of course a free trader should have no favorite industries. He should adopt a central, neutral standpoint and say, "I am here, not as the advocate of this trade or that; I am here to serve Demand in whatever shape she may require me; my duty is to watch her moods and anticipate her desires so far as I am able, the particular kind of service I have to perform is nothing to me, it is sufficient that she employs me and remunerates my services at the price I require."

But Demand, under present day conditions, is liable to be very fickle in her requirements, and when suddenly, without warning, she says to a veteran