

that I could possibly collect from my tenants. As I do not propose to put any more of my capital into houses is it not plain that I will refuse to pay tax on the unimproved land, and that it will be sold for taxes just as at present? No man can buy and hold it unimproved in the expectation of getting any return for his money invested. Who will buy it? Why the people who want it for homes and to raise garden stuff. They will be able to get possession by having money enough to pay the coming year's tax on the land, perhaps only six months tax in advance will be required to get a deed "to have and to hold" as long as grass grows and water runs, provided they pay the tax just as required at present. So the whole forty odd acres are sold for unpaid taxes and bought by people whose only object in buying would be to make homes and live there, and then we would have an instance where "The good effects of the system of land tenure are more conspicuously seen where the owner and occupier of the land are one and the same person."

CINCINNATI, OHIO. THOMAS HUNT.

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#### DID HENRY GEORGE CONTRADICT HIMSELF?

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EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

"The truth is . . . that private property in land is a bold, bare, enormous wrong, like that of chattel slavery."

"I do not propose . . . . to confiscate private property in land . . . . Let the individuals who now hold it still retain, if they want to, possession of what they are pleased to call *their* land. . . . Let them buy and sell and bequeath and devise it."

I submit, with all due deference, that these two questions as they stand are contradictory; or at least that they involve all the defects of such a deliverance as "chattel slavery is an enormous wrong, but I do not propose to abolish it. Let slave-holders still retain, if they want to, possession of the title deeds to their slaves."

Of course, we are all aware that Henry George, who wrote the two passages above quoted, *did* propose, by means of the

Single Tax, to correct the "enormous wrong" which, under the existing system, accompanies the private ownership of land, but that wrong is the private ownership, not of land, but of what is called "land value."

Mr. George fully recognizes that specific portions of land must be owned by specific individuals as a condition of civilized society; in the second of these quotations he announces his perfect willingness that those who are in possession of land should still retain it, or sell it, bequeath or devise it as they see fit—that is to say, exercise all the functions of ownership in connection with it. But these powers of ownership are to be restricted to the land itself. The real "enormous wrong" does not lodge here, it is in the extension of the right of ownership beyond the land to the land value. Let society take that for public revenue, and justice will be fully vindicated without the least disturbance to the private ownership of land.

No doubt Mr. George intended in his writings everywhere that by the expression private ownership of land, was to be understood ownership of land value. It is most unfortunate, I think, that he did not in every case use language which would unmistakably make this clear.

During the campaign in Oregon, the speakers who appeared against the Single Tax amendment depended chiefly upon the quotations they read from "Progress and Poverty," in which the abolition of "private property in land" was apparently taught. From this it was easy for them to deduce that the Single Tax doctrine was the State ownership and administration of land, or, as Charles H. Shields used to put it—"a return to the system of the common ownership of land that existed in the days of savagery."

Of course, private property in land is perfectly consistent with public ownership of land value, and it is the latter which the Single Tax system has in contemplation. Why, then, should Single Taxers complicate the idea of using terms carelessly? I could wish, indeed, that it were possible to banish altogether the misleading expression "land value." It infallibly conveys the idea of a value



which is attached to land, and this is an entirely erroneous view. The value which is really attached to land, that is, inherent in land, is the value of growth, or the value of convenience for the site of a house or other social use, and this does not come into the discussion at all. The value which the Single Tax proposes to take for the public treasury is not inherent in the land at all, nor is it really "attached" to the land in any true sense. It bears the same relation to the land that a shadow does. The shadow falls upon the land, but cannot be said to be "attached" to it. In the case in point, the value is the shadow which falls from population, indicating a growth or a diminution in numbers, and consequently an increase or reduction of the value of the opportunity for business, etc. The fact that the value follows the movements of population in every particular proves that it is attached to population, and the proposal that population should own it and use it for common purposes is one which will appeal to the reason of any thoughtful man. On the other hand, the fact that a man owns a piece of land does not necessarily entitle him to own a shadow which falls upon it, even though that shadow has a market value. That value belongs to the passer-by by whom the shadow is cast.

My contention is that our question has nothing whatever to do with the ownership of land; it is exclusively concerned with the ownership of the value which attaches to population, and which merely registers upon land the increase or decrease of the community, after the similitude of a shadow.

J. W. BENGOUGH.

TORONTO.

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#### NOT OUT OF THE PROPAGANDA STAGE.

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EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

I have just read your editorial in the Jan.-Feb. issue, page 69, on Politics versus Propaganda and want to say that my experience during the past year in this institution confirms your attitude. The Single Tax is to a vast number of intelli-

gent and serious citizens but a far-off, vague thing because it has not been brought to their attention, at least not in the right way. I had an experience the other day which is typical—attending a lecture by a "wise" Prof. on Socialism, a person sitting next to me made a remark after the lecture which gave me an occasion to mention the Single Tax. He became intensely interested and being of an inquiring mind in this field of thought he readily grasped the fundamental outline and expressed a desire to read *Progress and Poverty*, in which of course I encouraged him. But the point is, we are still in the propaganda stage and it is a great responsibility of present day Single Taxers to develop this feature along efficient lines. I am not going to find fault with recent political activities, as I would have to know more of the merits or demerits of them, but of this I am certain, there is vast amount of propaganda work ahead of us. Buckle's advice on page 69 of the *REVIEW* cannot be impressed too much.—University of Chicago. FRANK G. ADELMAN

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#### WICHITA, KANSAS.

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John Z. White spoke at the City Hall the evening of July 3rd on the prosperity of the cities of the Canadian Northwest, particularly as resulting from the application of the Single Tax. Although the attendance was small on account of the extremely hot weather a very good report was given in the *Wichita Eagle* of July 4th occupying two thirds of a column.

Mr. White's visit has had the effect of stimulating a fresh discussion of the important question. At noon of the same day after lunch at the Wichita Club, Mr. White spoke before a number of representative Wichita business men in the Club parlors on the same general lines and his address of something over a half an hour was listened to with very close attention by those present.

Wichita is one of those cities striving blindly to boost themselves by tugging hard at the city's boot straps. With great natural advantages, situated in the center of a most productive and highly cultivated