

fraternity. The futility of all the past organized efforts to promote a better knowledge of elementary economics should show the folly of continuing to work along the same lines. Possibly the case is one where dreamers of wonderful things to do, "all to be done by wishing we could", will prefer to hug the delusion that they are really doing something to promote the cause in which they profess to believe.

—WHIDDEN GRAHAM

Fairhope Now Thirty-two Years Old

FAIRHOPE celebrated the thirty-second anniversary of its founding on the first of this year. Two hundred and fifty colonists and their friends sat down to an attractive menu, the Fairhope orchestra played, and the history of the colony was reviewed by several of the speakers.

Fairhope, as most of our readers know, is the Single Tax Colony on the shores of Mobile Bay. It is the nearest approximation to the Single Tax permitted to a colony under the present laws of Alabama, and it has had a long and interesting history. The past year has shown extraordinary activity in building and most of this as heretofore has been on Colony land.

The *Fairhope Courier*, which is an interesting paper published weekly and edited by E. B. Gaston, comments on this building activity:

"The Town Clerk's record of building permits issued shows a total of 62 of an estimated cost \$1000. or more, of which 50 were on Colony land. Of 33 new dwellings, 24 were on Colony land. Of 13 alterations and additions 10 were on Colony land. Of 13 commercial or industrial constructions all but one were on our land. Of a total valuation of improvements listed amounting to \$102,385, \$84,360 was on Colony land. Within a radius of less than 500 feet of where we are, there have been erected eight new business buildings, with a ninth, the new bank building now well under way; all on land of our Colony; and all of substantial, modern, fire-resisting construction. In all parts of town there has been residential construction, including some of the best yet erected.

All this increase in taxable values, will mean, of course, more taxes to be paid; but along with this development has come increased land value; which we will draw on to meet the taxes on the improvements, leaving the improvers scatheless. And our lessees, regardless of whether members of the corporation or not, have heartily joined in approving rentals which meet the need."

An interesting address was made at this anniversary dinner by our friend, John Emery McLean, who was a personal friend of Henry George and who is now a resident of Fairhope. This address is printed in full in the *Courier* and we cite the following paragraph:

"Henry George regarded both Altruism and Utopia as the vaguest sort of dreams. Though lacking the technical advantages of a systematic collegiate education, he confounded some of the world's ablest scholars. He was equally at home in challenging the Pope, in refuting Herbert

Spencer, in addressing audiences of negroes in the 'black belt' of Harlem, New York City, and in talking to street crowds of foreigners on the lower east side of the same metropolis, where several thousand human beings often exist within the confines of a single block. In that vast city six million people occupy an area less than one-eighth of one per cent. of the habitable land of the country which is increasing in population at the rate of 5,000 a day.

It may interest our readers to know that at a meeting of Colony lessees to receive report of a committee appointed by them on rent appraisalment, a vote to ask the Colony to change its policy by limiting the amount of taxes to be paid for any lessee to the amount of his rent, received the support of only the mover and seconder; the appraisalment of the Colony Council, carrying increases averaging nearly if not quite 25%, was approved by unanimous vote, and a motion offered by a non-member lessee thanking the Council for the consideration shown the lessees also received unanimous support.

This after 32 years is naturally gratifying; as is also the fact that after meeting all tax obligations the Colony will have a cash balance of several thousands at the close of the year.

Who Made the Natural Bridge?

ON a motor trip from San Francisco to New York last spring, the three of us, my husband, little son, and myself, found ourselves in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, on the direct route to the Natural Bridge and the famous Caverns.

I was delighted at the thought of seeing these natural wonders. The pictures in the geography books were the nearest I had ever come to seeing them before and now I would have the satisfaction of looking at realities instead of mere pictures.

We came to the Natural Bridge first. Signs by the highway told us of our approach, and we actually drove over the top of the bridge. But what could we see? The bridge is so huge—about 100 feet in width,—that with trees growing along the highway, all view of the jump-off to the valley 215 feet below is obstructed. So we crossed the bridge without knowing it and came down a short hill to a circular parking space. Signs informed us of a path leading up the canyon to a wonderful view of the Natural bridge. We parked and followed the path. It passed through a small toll house where each person, desiring to look at this seventh wonder of the world, had to pay \$1.10. This meant \$3.30 to our family and because of unexpected automobile trouble in North Carolina, costing us \$100.00, it was a sum which we couldn't afford. I was sorrowful.

I questioned the man in charge about the management, expecting to learn that it was a government reserve and that the money was used to build good roads or for some other public service. But no! I learned that a private

corporation owns the Natural Bridge and fences off the view (just as though they made it) from the eyes that love beauty. Then I was indignant!

Why should not I, a citizen of the United States, have a right to enjoy the beauty and wonder of the Natural Bridge of Virginia, without paying a dole into the pockets of some private individuals, who have no more right to it than I? When any group of men, made by their own labor, a "Natural" Bridge, then and then only, will I uncomplainingly pay for looking at it (if I can get the money to do so.) But if I had a million dollars in my pocket, I would not willingly pay one cent of it to any man or corporation for a chance to look at a bridge made by nature alone. By what right does any man claim the land or the wonders thereof as his own private property?

We had to drive away without seeing the bridge and I found my desire to see it smothered under the greater desire of wishing to help do away with such injustices.

The same situation existed in connection with the Caverns. Private corporations own each group of caverns and exploit the public for all it will stand. At the Luray Caverns, the admission is \$1.65 a person; I was discouraged and didn't inquire the charge at the others, but someone told me it was the same at all of them. The individual corporations have done some work in these caverns, such as excavating to open up new rooms, putting in electric lights, walks, and such things, but probably a charge of \$.50 per person would easily cover this, with a reasonable surplus for running expenses.

I had long been aware of the injustices lurking in the private ownership of land, but this particular aspect of the wrong I had never encountered before. It was as startling as though someone had fenced off Niagara Falls and had charged me admission to look at them. Security of improvements on land is just and necessary, but private ownership of the land itself is a rank injustice and is not necessary. How long shall we stand for an injustice which so vitally affects us all?

—MABELLE HATHAWAY BROOKES.

THE majority of men do not think; the majority of men have to expend so much energy in the struggle to make a living, that they do not have time to think. The majority of men accept as a matter of course whatever is. This is what makes the task of the social reformer so difficult, his path so hard. This is what brings to those who first raise their voices on behalf of a great truth the sneers of the powerful, and the curses of the rabble, ostracism and martyrdom, the robe of derision, and the crown of thorns.—HENRY GEORGE.

THY kingdom come! How can His kingdom come,
While children work in mines, with justice dumb?

—HORATIO.

The Single Tax in Australia

A STIMULATING GIFT

WITH the advent of the New Year a brief review of Single Tax activities during the past twelve months will not be out of place. These activities received a great stimulus in New South Wales through the generosity of a retired Government surveyor, the late R. S. Johnson, who offered the League £100 on condition that £400 more were contributed in equal and smaller sums. While sympathisers with the movement, stimulated by the example so generously set, were doing their utmost to obtain the required sum the donor himself passed away, but not before he was so satisfied with the response to his offer that he handed in his cheque. He was an ardent Single Taxer, and felt that he could not serve the cause better than by providing it with funds. How to make the best use of the money was very carefully considered, and it was finally decided to advertise for the services of an assistant secretary to help Mr. Huie in the great work he is carrying on, especially in pushing the circulation of the *Standard*, the organ of the movement in New South Wales, which Mr. Huie has so ably conducted for many years.

This turned out to be the best move made by the League for some time past. One of those who answered the advertisement was a comparatively young man named Walter Finch, a native of New South Wales, who has lived principally in Sydney (although he has visited the United States), and who has held various important positions in city firms. He soon showed that he was the right man for the position by the energy and zeal he infused into the work. He put the Sunday meetings in the Domain on a much better footing, he re-started the class for training speakers, which Mr. Hilman had ably conducted for several years, he took a leading part in the open air meetings in the suburbs, and he contributed some very good letters to the press. The Sydney press seldom, and the Sydney *Morning Herald* never, publishes anything with what they call a "Single Tax sting," but the *Herald* does occasionally let us join in the campaign against the protective tariff, which is the greatest obstacle everywhere to the Single Tax cause. The country press is much more sympathetic and we endeavor to keep it fairly well supplied.

IN THE SYDNEY DOMAIN

Sunday afternoon in the Sydney Domain is a well-known hotbed of Communists, anarchists, revivalists, and revolutionaries of every kind. An immense amount of froth effervesces there from noon till dewy eve, which eases the minds of the orators, and does on the whole less harm than if it were curbed and had to find a vent in some other way. For many years Mr. Huie held Single Tax meetings there on Sunday afternoons, he was very seldom assisted, his audiences were generally small, and so soon