

the exertion of labor in production is the only title to exclusive possession."

Again on the same page: "When non-producers can claim as rent a portion of the wealth created by producers, the right of the producers to the fruits of their labor is to that extent denied."

On page 401, he said: "Neither on the ground of equity or expediency is there anything to deter us from making land common property by confiscating rent."

On page 326, he said, in italics: "*We must make land common property.*"

On page 403, he says: "I do not propose either to purchase or to confiscate private property in land."

On the same page, again in italics, he said: "*It is not necessary to confiscate land; it is only necessary to confiscate rent.*"

In his preface to the fourth edition of *Progress and Poverty*, dated New York, 1880, Mr. George said: "What I have most endeavored to do is to establish general principles, trusting in my readers to carry further their application where this is needed." In the same, he said, "It has been impossible to treat with the fullness they deserve many of the questions raised."

Many quotations to like effect may be made, but as if to end the matter, he said, on page 403: "By leaving to land owners a percentage of rent which would probably be much less than the cost and loss involved in attempting to rent lands through State agency, and by making use of this existing machinery, we say, without shock or jar, assert the common right to land by taking rent for public uses."

And further on same page, he said, speaking of land owners: "Let them continue to call it *their* land."

Finally, page 404, he said: "In form, the ownership of land would remain just as now. * * For rent being taken by the State in taxes, land, no matter in whose name it stood, or in what parcels it was held, would be really common property."

These quotations seem to be a sufficient answer to the question asked. "In form the ownership of land would remain just as now." In essence landlordism would be a thing of the past, for the essence of landlordism is the legal power privately to appropriate rent.

Those who refuse to perceive the difference between form and essence, will not be able to defend Mr. George against the charge of flat contradiction—even more than one. He said repeatedly that he would take rent in taxation. He also said he would leave land owners a percentage of rent. He repeatedly declared private property in land to be unjust. He also said, "Let them continue to call it *their* land," and "In form the ownership of land would remain just as now."

If, however, we accept his work as an endeavor "to establish general principles," and also prove worthy of the trust he placed in his readers; that is, to perceive the valid-

ity of those principles and "to carry further their application where this is needed," we will have no difficulty in arriving at the conclusion that by the words "private property in land" Mr. George meant the legal power privately to appropriate rent. Also, that by the words "common property in land," he meant the public appropriation of rent.

The words "private property in land" have two meanings. One meaning is, the legal power privately to appropriate rent. The other meaning is, the legal power exclusively to possess land in perpetuity.

The first power is the essence of landlordism. It was attacked by all the force George possessed. The second power is landownership, and this George did not attack, but on the contrary said, if his plan were adopted, would "continue just as now."

Land ownership is the legal power exclusively to possess land in perpetuity. In the absence of a wise use of the power of taxation landlordism inevitably will be incidental to landownership.

An individual may possess land in perpetuity without resulting harm to any one; but the private appropriation of rent is surely accompanied by injustice.

The value of land has nothing to do with the validity of its title. If a man holds title to a parcel of land of no value, he is nevertheless a landowner.

In the sense that George used the words I believe in "common property in land" in what seems to me to be a technically accurate use of the words. I believe in private ownership of land. Ownership comes before rent appropriation. If the legal power exclusively to possess in perpetuity is landownership, George did not endeavor to abolish private property in land. If the legal power privately to appropriate rent is landlordism, George did attempt its overthrow—and his attempt is proving to be successful.

If, then, we alter the wording of the question in accordance with Mr. George's continually expressed thought, we may state its meaning thus: "If the private appropriation of land rent is just, then is our cause unjust."

JOHN Z. WHITE.

FROM JAMES W. BUCKLIN.

Editor *Single Tax Review*:

The interesting discussion of the question of "Private Property in Land" in the columns of the *Review* arises, I believe, not mainly from differences in principle, nor even from differences in policy, but from different uses or meanings of the term "Private Property in Land." Until the meaning of the words used are clearly defined and agreed upon, a continuance of the discussion may be productive of harm rather than of good.

A clear, definite meaning of the term "land" in both its legal and popular sense, is, at present, very difficult, owing to the use of the term "real estate." So long as land and improvements are classed together in legal and popular phrases, so long will it be difficult for the general public to get a clear meaning of the term "Private Property in Land." Single Taxers, however, ought not to be confused thereby.

So too, the words "Property in Land," as generally used, includes exclusive possession, or rather the right of exclusive possession, which right of possession may justly be either public or private.

Property in land may, and frequently does exist, however, entirely independent of the question of possession. One person may have the legal or equitable possession or right of possession, and an entirely different person may be the legal owner thereof. True the legal right of ownership and the right of possession are frequently, perhaps generally, vested in one and the same person, but they are nevertheless distinct and separate rights. It is perhaps owing to the fact that these two distinct and separate rights are generally vested together, that property in land is often carelessly assumed to mean either or both of these rights. To avoid confusion, however, in the discussion of questions of the rightfulness of private property in land, all questions of possession, or the right of possession, must be excluded, leaving at issue only the question of ownership or the right of ownership. What then does the term "Private Property in Land" mean? Not the right to own the improvements or the personal property on a piece of land, for such rights frequently belong to tenants or to other owners of personal property or improvements. Nor does property in land consist in possession or the right to the possession thereof, the right to the exclusive possession being frequently vested in tenants, employees and others. In such cases the tenant, employee or other person having the right of exclusive possession, would have both the equitable and legal right to exclude even the owner of the fee therefrom. No one denies the rightfulness of private possession.

I conclude, therefore, that "Private Property in Land," as the term is generally used, and as used by Henry George, does not involve the question of who owns the personal property or improvements thereon, nor a question of who has the possession or the right of possession thereof, but who owns the rent. *The essence of private property in land is in the ownership of the rent, all questions of possession being merely secondary.* When this fact of the real nature of private property in land is clearly realized, then many of the apparent differences of your correspondents are harmonized, or their inaccuracies made apparent.

If it be true that private property in land really consists in the private appropriation

of rent, and that no question of possession or the right of possession is involved, then all Single Taxers must admit, as Henry George alleged, that private property in land is unjust; for the rent of land is clearly a public, not a private creation.

A question of policy, however, remains. Now, as always, "honesty is the best policy." If private property in land is unjust, and private possession just, we should on proper occasion so declare. By denying the justice of private property in land I believe fundamental forces may be aroused. Still as the term "Private Property in Land" is so commonly misused, as above explained, our opponents and others who do not carefully discriminate, are liable to be misled. In denouncing private property in land we should therefore use proper discretion and explanation.

We need not hope, however, to avoid the bitter opposition of ignorance and greed by the politic use of terms. In Colorado, for illustration, we made the fight as a tax reform. The bitterness and strenuousness of the opposition to our Constitutional Amendment in that state, seemed utterly inexplicable to many of the Socialists and others, but to those who had considered the matter, nothing else was expected. Whether the Single Tax be urged as a tax reform, a labor reform or a land reform, it must meet and ultimately overcome, bitter opposition.

I am not one of those who believe our cause will be materially advanced by any one policy rather than another. It has been demonstrated that the public mind of the American people is not yet prepared to adopt any part of the strictly Single Tax programme except perhaps the municipal ownership of municipal utilities, and even on that question public opinion is not fixed or stable. Nor is it the Single Tax principle that owners of such franchises and rights of way are to be compensated therefor. The majority of the people want private property in land and other graft to continue, in the hopes that some day they may themselves participate in the spoils. When another great industrial depression shall spread over our land, when millions of men are idle and little children are hungry, then perhaps a majority of the people will realize that for them there can be no advantage in graft; that while the few can rob the many, the masses cannot successfully rob the few; that justice and not graft can alone solve the problem. Until that time comes, the work of education along democratic lines is the only real road of Single Tax progress. Different conditions will doubtless call for a vast variety of policies on sundry occasions and places. The occasion will generally develop the right policy. But the Georgian philosophy being the science of the natural laws governing all economic relations, it follows that no economic question can arise upon which light cannot be thrown by the well informed Georgian. In the present state of our organization, we must leave to

individual workers all questions of policy, except in so far as it misrepresents fundamental principles. For that reason I believe that Mayors Johnson and Dunn, Congressman Baker, Louis F. Post, the *Single Tax Review*, the leaders of the Fairhope Colony, C. B. Fillebrown, and many others are each and all pursuing the best policy under the circumstances. A Single Tax doer, not a Single Tax issuer, produces results. I always regret, however, to hear anyone, especially a Single Taxer, allege that private property in land is just, for I think such a declaration is simply a misuse of words.

JAMES W. BUCKLIN.

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DEATH OF HAMLIN RUSSELL.

The late Hamlin Russell was born in Philadelphia in 1852. During his varied career he has been employed in many capacities, but chiefly as a newspaper man. He was Railroad Editor of the *Cincinnati Inquirer* for three years; five years Railroad and Financial Editor of the *St. Louis Republican*, and for twelve years reporter and correspondent—at different times—on the *Philadelphia Inquirer*; Council Bluffs, Iowa *Nonpareil*; Minneapolis, Minnesota, *Tribune*; Grand Forks, North Dakota, *Plain Dealer*; El Paso, Texas, *Times*, and other Western papers. He was the only newspaper correspondent who accompanied General George Crook on his memorable campaign (1883) against the Apache Indians, Chief Geronimo and his band from Willcox, Arizona, to a remote point in the Sierra Madre Mountains in Mexico. The expedition consisted of ten officers, fifty cavalrymen and two hundred Apache Scouts.

Since 1896 he was in the employment of The Whitehead and Hoag Company, Newark, New Jersey, where his great executive ability and business resources were much appreciated and will long be missed.

For sometime before his death he suffered from a painful illness, which he battled with a fortitude that was heroic and characteristic.

By the death of Mr. Russell the Single Tax has lost one of its ablest and most devoted advocates. He was converted in St. Louis in 1884 and since that time has been a missionary of the Gospel of Henry George. In a letter to *National Single Taxer*, in 1897, he says: "I was all fight right from the start," and it can be truly said he was "all fight right to the end." Over twenty years of reading, study and investigation only deepened and strengthened his conviction.

He was a man of great individuality, of quick perception and gifted with a wonderful memory. He had traveled all over the States and seen life in a vast variety of phases. His reading was wide and deep. In character he was the soul of hospitality,

absolutely devoid of false pride and affectation and possessed of a sense of humor that was delightful. His conversation was instructive, racy and interesting. His Pastor, who knew him intimately for nine years truly said that "he had a genius for friendship."

J. KELLY.

DEATH OF CLARENCE A. MILLER.

The death of Clarence A. Miller, the well known attorney and Single Tax advocate, of Los Angeles, Cal., is felt as a grievous loss to the host of personal friends and also to those who knew of his worth as a public spirited citizen. His sterling integrity and his habit of doing what he believed to be right regardless of consequences stamped him as an unusual man.

From an acquaintance with Mr. Miller, extending over twelve years, I never ceased to be impressed by his love of justice, which nothing could swerve or alter. As an exponent of our principles it is doubtful if he had a superior. His public expositions of the Henry George doctrine always convinced any clouded hearer, though the latter might be slow in letting it be made public.

Another of our captains is gone. But we should redouble our efforts to hasten the day when justice as he plead for it through the Single Tax shall prevail throughout the country and the world.

RALPH HOYT.

DEATH OF JOB REED.

Job Reed who died last month at Lethbridge, Alberta, N. W. T., at the age of sixty-five, was born in Somersetshire, Eng. He was left an orphan at an early age, and was compelled to make his own way. He passed through the strenuous days of the Corn Laws, and observed with eager interest the campaign that ended in their repeal.

In spite of being compelled to make his own way, he studied much, and later taught school in England for several years and followed the profession of a tutor for a short time on his arrival in America.

In 1882 he went to Canada and made his home in Lethbridge, and settled down to the occupation of a farmer. It was not until 1897 that he read "Progress and Poverty" and became a Single Taxer, since which time he has been an ardent champion of the doctrine. His death removes another of the devoted disciples whose most eager hope was for the triumph of the movement to which the future civilization must look for its saving principle.

The Socialist says that the government boss would be better than the individual boss, regardless of the fact that the root of the evil consists in the necessity for working for any boss.

The Standard, Sydney, Aus.