

democrat and republican alike, and I am certain that single tax has become better known in Chicago since 1900 than during all the preceding years. Club meetings have been kept up as usual and a significant feature has been the fact that we are never so easy financially, as when carrying on campaigns. The general public has treated us remarkably well, and a large part of the assistance given us has come from new converts and persons who became friendly. It goes without saying that much more could have been done if the local single taxers had put up a united front, for the only serious obstacle has been the apathy or the sarcastic opposition of acknowledged single taxers. And therein I think lies the rub. As long as an appreciable proportion of the single taxers, will, because they cannot have their own way, act in such a manner over any question that does not involve our principle, results will naturally be small; for while the propaganda possibilities of a party movement are very great there must be something like unanimity if those possibilities are to be made the most of. As yet anything like unanimity along this line seems impossible to me, and I confess I have lost much of my former confidence in single taxers and possess a growing belief that comparatively few of them want the single tax badly enough to even deserve to get it.

If that is the case how can we expect the public to desire it? If the time of single tax is to come before events absolutely force it we have got to earn it. Single Taxers are numerous enough in Cook County, and probably in the United States to make a fairly creditable party, and if after a thoroughly representative conference at which, *for educational purposes*, a majority voted for a National Party, every single taxer would loyally do his part to carry on the campaigns exactly as though political victory was fully expected, great good would certainly follow regardless of the size of the vote. Our vote, as counted, has been small and all who looked upon the movement as political quickly dropped out of sight.

A large vote should not be looked for. The people cannot yet be trusted to vote right on a party ballot, but they have shown in many places that they can be trusted to vote about right on measures. Our propaganda (of all kinds is preparing them to vote YES, when, while voting their old straight party ticket a single tax proposition shall be submitted to them on a separate referendum ballot. To effectively propagate, we must reach the people, and I am now positive that through political action that can best be done, and that if a single tax national party, with that end in view, had been started in 1886 and continued to the present day the single tax would now be the burning issue between the two great par-

ties through one or the other of which in all probability it must ultimately come.

Very respectfully yours,

GEORGE C. MADISON,
698 Orchard St.,
Chicago, Ill.

New York, April 3, 1903.

Editor *Single Tax Review*:

In the Winter Number of the *Review*, Mr. Edward T. Weeks, of New Iberia, La., has advanced some very cogent and forceful reasons why the Single Taxers of the United States should organize into a political party. I, for one, consider all his points well taken, and some of them exceedingly so. Of course, Mr. Weeks' proposition will not be favorably received by those among us who aspire to be recognized as the "conservative element." Now, conservatism may be ever so honest, and sincere, and well-meaning, but it is after all only the tangible evidence of that timidity which inclines men to bear with the ills they have, than fly to others that they know not of. It may, therefore, justly be regarded as narrow-mindedness, for to be broad in one's views requires courage above all else. No great reformer was ever conservative in the sense that he was apprehensive of possible consequences. As all of human endeavor is relative in its nature there is nothing absolutely certain until proven so, and the man who never experiments is the man who never demonstrates anything.

Why should any single taxer balk at the engine of political action? If we had some little, petty, picayune issue to go before the people with—like one of those over which the two old parties are everlastingly splitting hairs—this aversion could be accounted for. But we have the grandest moral issue to back us and compel success that any political party ever had. The single tax proposition is the greatest of economic truths, and when once seen can never again be obscured. Truth of whatever kind will sooner or later force recognition and compel action. Evidently then our first duty as single taxers is to show those of our fellow-men who have not yet seen it, the truth as we see it. This can best be done by forming a national party because in that way we can reach the greatest number with the least effort.

How can we consistently ask men to join in a movement which is as devoid of unity of action as ours is? I, therefore, sincerely hope that a national convention will soon be held as proposed by Mr. Weeks and other single taxers. Sooner or later we must enter the field of active politics; why not sooner rather than later? It is all nonsense prating about the people not being ready for the single tax. They are. Just watch them. They are clutching at

every shadow of reform like drowning men at straws. How much more eager would they be if the real substance of the thing were put before them?

Respectfully,
F. H. BURYSON,
of the Seaman's Union,
37 South St.,
New York City.

BOOK REVIEWS.

(Owing to press of matter, reviews of John Graham Brooks' *Social Unrest*, from the pen of Mr. Bolton Hall, and *Benevolent Feudalism*, from the pen of the editor, are crowded out of this number. They will appear in the Summer Number.)

"TOWARD THE LIGHT."

Mr. Lewis H. Berens, co-author of "The Story of My Dictatorship," etc., has written another book "Toward the Light," (Swan, Sonnenschein & Co.) a collection of essays and studies in ethics and economics, joined and related into a complete logical work.

It deals with subjects about which his thoughts are neither illusive, elusive or delusive.

Single taxers, who are uncertain about various knotty points in political economy will find their perplexities stated and explained, in simple and lucid illustration and argument.

Mr. Berens is an avowed single taxer, in almost thorough agreement with Henry George, from whom he dissents, however on the question of "Interest," whether it is natural or by-product of distorted economic conditions. He contends that "Interest" springs from private appropriation of rent and legal privilege and will disappear along with their abolition.

Yet upon his own showing "Interest" will continue as a regulator for the economical production of "auxiliaries—tools" alternating between premium and discount, according as the supply is deficient or in excess of demand tending to an equilibrium (pages 160-161).

"Land" and "Labor" are the primary factors of production, supplemented in advanced conditions, by what Mr. Berens terms "Auxiliaries of production—Tools," a capital definition of "Capital," the change in terms, however, does not change the factors.

It goes merely as a matter of statement that these "auxiliaries" are neither one or the other factor—"land" or "labor"—they are both, consequently, to assign "wages" to "labor," "rent" to "land," excludes, (if distribution be limited to these terms, rent and wages) any definite term to the earnings of "auxiliaries."

"Auxiliaries—Tools" are termed capital

to differentiate it from "land" and "labor"; since it is therefore necessary to make a distinction in the terms of the factors, it is equally important that the *earnings* of the factors bear distinctive names.

Matter, and the forces of nature, comprehended in the term "Land" are not only active before and while labor is operating with them, but in some cases continues to produce increment even after they are changed, modified, separated, combined, etc. by labor, and converted into exchangeable "goods." The competition of various commodities, some of which continue to grow in value, while others remain stationary or depreciate gives rise to a value determined by the value of the depreciating commodity, analogous to the "No rent" land in the phenomena of "rent."

Rent attaches to a place, but after land has been disassociated from its fixed condition and directed on its way toward satisfying human needs, the unearned increment that before attached to *the place* will now be added to *the product*, a store of wheat will increase in value with the lowering of the margin of cultivation.

Advancing civilization will, if past experience is any criterion, make the production of a "good" an easier task; what now requires ten days' effort to produce, may in a week or a year be produced by nine days' work, during the same time that other "goods" are being produced with even a greater saving of labor, while concurrently some things will require no less exertion than before. This variation will, in deferred rewards of enjoyment, be naturally distributed by the play of competitive interest.

If I loan, for a year, the work of ten days, represented, for example, by a barrel of flour and at the expiration of the time when payment is to be made, a barrel of flour can be produced with nine days' work, should I, in justice, be paid the then value of a barrel of flour or the prevailing value of ten days' work?

I believe that interest is natural and necessary to average this advancing gain and distribute its advantages equitably.

This problem of whether interest is natural and therefore persistent, is not to be solved by legislation. Right conditions will bring its own settlement of the question, and Mr. Berens aptly sums up the situation in the conclusion to his chapter on "Interest." He says: "It is, therefore, not natural and equitable, but unnatural and unjust."

Many earnest Social Reformers may, however, still remain of the opposite opinion. It is, therefore, a matter of congratulation that differences of opinion on this somewhat abstract, if not merely academic, question cannot be any real cause of antagonism or separation between any who are seriously desirous of establishing justice, and of securing to mankind the fruits of jus-