

COMMUNICATIONS.

THE MATTER OF A NAME.

Editor *Single Tax Review* :

I have read with interest the various opinions, "pro and con," offered by readers of the REVIEW, regarding the suggested change in the denomination of followers of Henry George from "Single Taxers" to "Georgians," and the philosophy to "Georgism." I may be mistaken, but am inclined to believe that no one would have opposed such a proposition more firmly than our departed leader himself.

The great advantage of the name "Single Tax" is that it indicates in itself the means to the reform we advocate. This desideratum should not lightly be discarded. Perhaps one point of weakness in the almost universally adopted appellation of Single Tax is that in some respects it is scarcely comprehensive enough. It has probably been the experience of most Single Taxers to be often met with the contention, especially from our Socialist friends, that the Single Tax would not be enough in itself to establish economic justice, but that, to some extent at any rate, Socialism or public ownership is necessary, as in the case of railroads, street-car lines, gas and water supplies, telegraph and telephone monopolies, etc. The responsive statement that the Single Taxer almost invariably stands for the public ownership of such franchises, is hastily and gladly argued into a virtual admission of the inadequacy of the Single Tax, and the need for Socialism.

It has occurred to me that the necessity thereby incurred of differentiating the limited socialism of the discriminative Single Taxer from the unlimited socialism of the non-discriminative Socialist might be to some extent avoided if our denomination indicated more clearly our position with regard to not only land monopoly but all natural monopolies, and that the more comprehensive title of "Anti-privilegists" (to coin a word) would, perhaps, adequately meet the deficiency. The Single Taxer usually stands for more than the Single Tax. As "Anti-privilegists" the denomination itself would express this and declare for the abolition of all privilege. Whether it would be expedient to sacrifice the title of Single Taxers which indicates the main method, for the more comprehensive appellation of Anti-privilegists, which would indicate the basic principle of the reform advocated, may or may not be a question worthy of consideration and discussion. But, in any case, I would suggest that the present name, which describes the method, be not discarded, unless it be for one clearly indicating the principle of the reform.

As the truth must finally prevail, the name of our honored leader can never be forgotten, and I am convinced it would

have been his wish that it should be commemorated spontaneously by the advancement of his teaching and its practical results, rather than by any pre-concerted linking of it with the denomination of the movement. As Mr. Morton so ably argues in your Winter number, all causes are strengthened by a name which indicates a principle rather than a personality.

W. A. HUNTER.

Oakland, Cal.

CHANGE OF NAME.

Editor *Single Tax Review* :

Whilst sailing across Mobile Bay to Fairhope I met a young Italian on the steamer who wondered at my wearing a button with the initials S. T. I explained that I was a Single Taxer. "Why," he asked, "are you taxed because you are single?" (No, I could have said, but I am single because I am taxed.)

This is one of the misunderstandings to which the name Single Tax gives rise. I think this name is the most unfortunate we could adopt. There is nothing in the Single Tax philosophy which I dislike except this unhappy name. It is utterly meaningless. What do we care for the Single Tax? If there were some other means of securing equal opportunities, not a farthing.

To me it has always been a puzzle why we adopted so unfortunate a name, whilst another, which expresses clearly, plainly and forcibly what our cause means, is so near at hand. "Free soil," that is the only name that will suit our cause. It expresses perfectly what it means. It is intelligible to everybody. It will link our movement better than anything else to its great forerunner, Free Trade.

I do not think that it would be well to name our movement after Henry George. Of course I give all due credit to our great teacher for the work he has done. But I fear it would give our movement a flavor of sectarianism like Marxism and other isms, if we were to name our movement after its advocate. Can we imagine the free trade movement known as Cobdenism or Smithism? It would sound like mockery.

In Switzerland our movement was started as the Free Soil Movement, and this name is still in use, though in late years the name "land reform," adopted by the German land reformers, has come into vogue. But land reform suggests to many people here a new kind of procedure of fertilizing the soil. It is inadequate unless supplemented in mind by the word tenure. Land tenure reform was the original name in Germany. But even the Germans, who are fond of long words and never use three where a dozen will do, have found it necessary to drop some syllables. To those who know, land reform means nationalizing the land. But we are not going to nationalize the

land; we are going to free the land, to make it accessible on the terms of equality to every member of the human family. Therefore we ought to have a name that is intelligible to everybody no matter of what creed or what language. It is not a matter of indifference, nor of slight importance, to give the right name to the right thing. We all feel that the word "Single Tax" fails to convey our true meaning. Of taxes nobody likes to hear. Taxes are a human, very human institution, that will perhaps pass away in a higher state of society. But the word freedom will always express the highest aspirations of the human mind. Can we choose a better name for our movement than one that connects it inseparably to the cause of freedom, justice and equality?

GUSTAVE BUSCHER,

Zurich, Switzerland.

A SWEEDISH WORKER VOTES FOR CHANGE OF NAME.

Editor *Single Tax Review* :

I wish to express the hope that the proposition made by Mr. James W. Bucklin to change the name of our movement and name it after its founder will meet general approval, and that the press devoted to the propagation of the cause will work to bring about the change. In this way it might get a common name all over the world. Some derivation of the name of George would probably in any language be found suitable to distinguish the movement and its adherents. In the Scandinavian languages "Georgism" and "Georgist" are words already adopted and recognized. In Denmark George's followers call themselves "Georgists" and the movement the Henry George movement or "Georgism." Here in Sweden they call themselves simply "land-reformers;" but others, who do not agree with George, call themselves so, too. Their opponents know, however, what they are, and speak and write about "Georgism in Sweden," and *promise to put a stop to it!* If the Single Taxers in America and England called themselves Georgists there is no doubt that George's followers in other countries would call themselves so, too.

SVANTE A. BACKSTROM.

Rudboda, Lidington, Sweden.

HOLD TO THE NAME.

Editor of *Single Tax Review* :

I approve of the name *Single Tax*. It is not to be supposed that all men are professors of political economy. When we say *tax* everybody understands what is meant—namely, the yearly amount each one pays in as his share of the public expenses. The first question asked any party—Free Soil, Free Silver, or what not—is, What do you want to do? What improvement do you

advocate? What change do you propose to make? Our answer is, the apportionment of taxes now is unfair. The amount should be determined by a different method of assessment, the result of which would be to change the relative proportion as now paid by different persons. This method would consist in placing land values only on the assessment roll and omitting all other valuations. With a proper definition of land values to include all that are essentially such, as rights and franchises, does any Single Taxer doubt that this one essential change would be sufficient, and that when it was maintained all other reforms would follow as matters of course?

J. H. WELLS.

New York.

A NAME SUGGESTED.

Editor of *Single Tax Review* :

The suggestions as to change of name of Quarterly I have noted in recent issue and desire to offer, for your consideration, the three following, in the order of preference: THE GEORGIAN EARTH-FOR-ALL REVIEW, THE GEORGIAN FREESOIL REVIEW, THE GEORGIAN PHYSIOCRATIC REVIEW. The idea of the first one comes to me from Ernest Crosby's Earth-For-All Calendar and the distinctive word in the others indicates the origin of the suggestion. If it be thought desirable to retain a fiscal suggestion in the name, THE GEORGIAN SINGLE TAX REVIEW might be considered an improvement upon the present title of the quarterly.

The University of Manitoba and the University of North Dakota debated the Single Tax question at Grand Forks last Thursday evening.

EDWARD P. TOTTEN.

Mayville, North Dakota.

THE MOVEMENT SMOULDERS IN WISCONSIN.

Editor of *Single Tax Review* :

The movement here is like a smouldering camp fire in the woods. Sometimes it seems out and then again a little smoke and the plenty of burnable material near by makes us think of the possibility that some time there may be a great conflagration. Here the Social Democrats are the great workers and perhaps because they are workers they are not unfriendly to the Single Tax movement.

JNO. D. DROFFERS, JR.

Milwaukee, Wis.

WANTS A WEEKLY PAPER.

Editor of *Single Tax Review* :

Is it possible that after twenty years of propaganda work there are not enough