

service corporations and the real estate speculators run the town.

I have helped to secure the passage of two municipal direct legislation measures by different legislatures, and each time Jeff Davis has killed them by not signing them within the twenty days required by the constitution.

We are to vote at the coming election on an amendment to the constitution providing for the issuance of bonds by counties and municipalities for public improvements, such as roads, sewers and sidewalks. Organized labor and the socialists are opposing the measure. One member of the Central Trades Council made a good Single Tax argument against it, without knowing it, in which he said that it was the workers who paid all the taxes and the property owners only handled the funds passing them on to the collector. If the amendment passed and the bonds were issued, the workingmen would have to foot the bill, the long time interest only making the burden more oppressive.

The Democrat nominee for governor, George W. Donahey, favors direct legislation, also a Tax commission to reform the tax system of the State. Single Taxers should send him some tax reform literature. His address is Conway, Ark.

Tax reform has recently been an issue in Texas, Governor Campbell standing for the taxation of property at one hundred percent of its value, which seems a very innocent thing, but is of great importance in equalizing the burdens of taxation. The man with \$100,000 worth of property has generally the advantage in evading his share of the burden over the man who owns his home worth \$1,000. The former saves the taxes on \$50,000, and the latter on only \$500 when the assessment is but fifty per cent of its true value.

ROBT. HERRICK.

Little Rock, Ark.

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#### AGREES WITH MR. BAGOT.

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*Editor Single Tax Review:*

I think you have done right in publishing the letter of Mr. Bagot about the situation in Great Britain. There is certainly some truth in it. Not that I would be-

little the work of our friends in the League for the T. L. V. But I am under the impression that we have very little to hope from the ordinary course of politics; that we need other means to promote our cause. The passive resistance which Mr. Bagot suggests would be excellent to bring our philosophy to the understanding of the common people. The man in the street will readily learn about the Single Tax when he reads that the Single Taxers are refusing to pay their taxes. It would not matter what comment would be made upon our behaviour. If all the leading dailies of New York were daily to denounce Single Tax as robbery, we would soon be in a much better position than we are today.

In Belgium are appearing two journals in French that have the nationalisation of land included in their programme. The one is *Societe Nouvelle*, an ably conducted literary monthly, published at Mons, Belgium, 11 Rue Chisaire, and the other is the *Revue du Socialisme Rationnel*, published at Bruxelles, Belgium, 52 rue des Eburons. This journal is the organ of the Colinsien school of economic science and a little tedious.

The other day I had a visit from Mr. Farnam, Professor at Yale University, and had a very interesting talk with him. If a Single Taxer should come over to Switzerland I will be glad to see him.

GUSTAVE BUSCHER.

Zurich, Switzerland.

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#### FOR A NEW TERMINOLOGY.

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*Editor Single Tax Review:*

In "Protection or Free Trade," Mr. George says that much confusion and misapprehension comes from the loose or inappropriate use of economic terms, while Mr. Thomas G. Sherman in his work entitled, "Natural Taxation," says that it was "most unfortunate that Mr. George in speaking of the appropriation of ground rent for purposes of revenue and thus liberating land to the equal unrestricted use of all, made use of the word 'confiscate,' which of course would imply that ground rent or site value was rightfully

the property of landlords, or so called owners of the earth."

To be sure the use thus made of the word, "confiscate" was philosophically incorrect, which no one knew better than did Mr. George himself, nor does one have to read "Progress and Poverty" very far to discover that it was a major premise in the Single Tax philosophy that ground rents or site value by every right belonged to the people collectively, because of the fact that land or site values was caused by the presence of the people upon the land, coupled of course with their needs for the use of land; so that Mr. George was only guilty of a *lapsus lingui* that hardly needs our regrets.

But all such errors should be carefully avoided and the effort that is now being made among economic experts, especially Single Taxers, to establish a more correct and precise lexicography for economic purposes, is much needed and will prove most salutary.

The writer has what he deems an important change in the use of some several leading words in the economic lexicon, suggested by both the writings of Mr. George and Mr. Sherman's "National Taxation." This title is a misnomer in itself. We can properly speak of "natural wages" as the return of labor, under a free land regime—of "interest" as the natural return to capital, but from the very nature of the case, as Mr. Sherman puts it, if land or site values, is a national fund for purposes of revenue that such fund is the rightful property of the people collectively, it must follow, *afortiori*, that such fund is not in the nature of a tax, for taxes are essentially individual and must be laid upon some form of wealth which is the rightful property of the one against whom the levy is made. It could not be laid upon rent, (so called) as the value that attaches to the use of land is not rightfully the property of individuals, but it is a "rightful and proper revenue" and what seems to logically clinch the proposition is, that it also "automatically" (by nature, if you please) adjusts itself to the need for revenue as civilization tends upward and social needs increase—never more, never less than the full need of a growing State.

The word rent has been thrust upon us by those who, by conquest chiefly, have usurped the natural right of all men to the use of land for the maintenance of self and those dependent upon him, so forcibly put by Mr. Herbert Spencer, in his ninth chapter of "Social Statics," and we have blindly followed their dictum. I therefore submit that the return to land is not "Rent" but "Revenue," and should be so recognized.

The word "Rent" should become obsolete. The word tax may be retained and defined as "A penalty imposed by society for the prevention or abatement of nuisances." The slaughter of economic misnomer.

When the word revenue becomes recognized as the return for the use of land, or site value, the absurdity of allowing individuals to collect and appropriate it will be recognized by every economic tyro. Even our college professors and the faculty of our universities would be able to see the impropriety.

E. C. CLARK.

Syracuse, Nebr.

## JUST PAYING FOR WHAT YOU GET.

Editor *Single Tax Review*:

A man in the car said to me yesterday, "What is the Single Tax?"

I said, "It is paying for what you get."

Seeing his puzzled expression, I ventured to illustrate.

"Suppose you go to the theatre; seats near the stage cost \$1.50, further back they cost only \$1.00, further back still only 50 cents and in the gallery only 25 cents. You pay your money, and what you pay determines the location. There's fairness in this arrangement because some locations are more valuable than others. You recognize the justice in it. Now in the larger theatre—the earth—Single Taxers would establish the same rule. Let those who occupy the choice locations pay for them. The only way to determine what privilege one enjoys from society and government is to ascertain the value of that land which he possesses to the exclusion of all others. The value of location is the value of association—they are