

The Girard estate derives a large part of its revenues from coal lands in Schuylkill and Columbia Counties, Pennsylvania. In the year 1899 nearly 1,250,000 tons of anthracite coal were mined and shipped to market from each of the above counties as had been leased; royalties on which amounted to a little less than \$442,000. The highest royalty paid being 55 cents and the lowest 15 cents; the average for the entire marketed product being a little less than 42 cents per ton.

Most of the Girard leases expired in 1899 and were renewed for another period of 15 years at royalties ranging from 40 to 5 cents per ton the average for the year 1900 being nearly 29 cents per ton.

Higher royalties than the above may have been, or may now be paid, to other of the coal barons than the Girard estate. But it may fully be claimed, I think, that royalties throughout the anthracite region averaged for that year about the same as those paid to the Girard estate, viz. 42 cents, which on 60,000,000, the number of tons named by Mr. Baker (as the annual product), would yield \$17,500,000, about one-fifth of the smallest item named by him as "tribute" to the coal barons.

I am inclined to believe that Mr. Baker is correct in stating that at least \$1.50 of the price paid for a ton of anthracite coal at tide-water is "tribute." In this respect he is supported by the fact that since 1895, the price of anthracite has been advanced from \$3.12 to \$4.00. per ton (stove size.) Conceding therefore that 50 cents, instead of 42 cents per ton, the highest average royalty ever paid to the Girard Estate, is now taken in royalty by the anthracite coal barons, there remains \$1.00, or two-thirds of the "tribute" they receive to be accounted for.

The fact which was brought to light in the course of the investigation of the Coal Trust affairs before the Inter-state Commerce Commission, that, \$1.00 per ton was charged for hauling a ton of anthracite from the mines to tide-water, New York, about double the charge for hauling a ton of bituminous coal a similar distance, tends to sustain Mr. Baker's charge in this regard.

The coal barons collect "tribute" through special privileges. Tribute thus collected represents the untaxed value of these special privileges, viz: The monopoly of the anthracite coal deposits, and the monopoly of transportation, that is the railroads.

The anthracite coal problem therefore, is not simple but complex. In order to solve it, not only must the rental value of the anthracite coal deposit be appropriated for public use, but also, such public control of the railroads as will obtain uniform rates, and prevent exorbitant freight charges, must be established.

The grounds upon which Mr. Baker bases his arguments for Federal Taxation, as the solution of the anthracite coal problem, proves to be unstable, in fact, a veritable

quicksand. There are sound reasons for not adopting this course. Should the United States appropriate by taxation the rental value of the anthracite coal deposits, the people of Pennsylvania would be deprived without due compensation of a valuable source of public revenue which justly belongs to them; that is, without giving them an equivalent; to do which is to exact "tribute."

JOHN FILMER.

"WHAT'S IN A NAME."

To the Single Tax Review:

Single Taxers are proud of their name, as they may well be; for to them it means a principle, a policy, almost a religion, for the uplifting of humanity and the reign of justice on earth. In the short space of twenty-five years it has penetrated from San Francisco to every part of the United States, and from the United States to every nook and corner of the earth, carrying its message of hope. It has stimulated man with a new ideal, and nations with a new purpose. It has changed the direction of legislative thought. Often enough it has been said, and true enough it is, that no great reform has accomplished so much in so short a time.

But admitting all this, is it not true that it is the idea, not the name, that has accomplished so much? Is it not true that the name has been a hindrance, not a help, to the cause? Is it not true that every Single Taxer, when challenged for the faith that is in him must waste much valuable time in explaining what the Single Tax is not before he is permitted to state what it is? And is it not true that every opponent of the Single Tax opposes it on false assumptions of what it is? Finally, is it not true that the misunderstandings and misconceptions are all or nearly all due to the name "Single Tax?" when in fact and in truth it is not a tax at all. The major part of every Single Tax discussion is made up of denials of alleged beliefs and purpose of which Single Taxers are absolutely guiltless. It is aggravating to be constantly told that you believe thus and so, and you want this and that, that no Single Taxer ever believed or wanted. Intelligent and even scholarly men are filled with crude misconceptions of the Single Tax.

Even Professor Seligman objects to the Single Tax on the ground that no "Single Tax" is expedient. He shows historically that various kinds of "Single Taxes" have been advocated, thus classing this with a Single Tax upon expense, or houses, or windows, or incomes, or capital; and says: "The Single Tax of Henry George is thus simply the last of many similar schemes that have been proposed." Evidently he derives a theory of what the Single Tax is from its name.

We might for simplicity impose all our taxes on some one thing, such as houses or horses or human beings, or as some one has suggested, upon salt; and it seems to be as such a tax that the professor sees it—a mere question of expediency. The real meaning of the "Single Tax of Henry George" has apparently never dawned upon the professor. The most discouraging feature of it all is that such men are so cock sure and dead certain that they know it all, and they will continue to talk and write about it as if they did. Even Francis A. Walker was so sure he knew what the Single Tax meant that he once accused Henry George of not knowing.

This illustrates what we constantly encounter in discussing the Single Tax, and it recurs to me time and again that it is due to the name. People cannot be blamed for thinking of the Single Tax as a tax when we call it a tax. Now, in fact, it is not a tax.

The fundamental theory of our faith is that the value of land (exclusive of any improvement upon it) is created by the community and not by the individual owner. Where the population is sparse, scattered, nomadic and unprogressive, land has little or no exchange value. As population multiplies, gathers into comparatively dense bodies, and become progressive and enterprising, land, independent of any improvements made upon it, or labor expended upon it, acquires a high exchange value. We look upon this as a value created by the community, and therefore belonging to the community. This value is greatest where population is most dense and progressive. This value is generally named ground rent. The term ground rent has a very definite and well known meaning. Our most elementary purpose is to recognize that ground rent is created by society, that it belongs of right to society, and that society shall take it for social purposes—to defray the expenses of organized society. It is not a tax. It takes from no man what is rightfully his. It takes from him nothing that he has created, earned nor saved. It leaves him every penny of his earnings and savings.

Now I propose that we call ourselves, not Single Taxers, not any kind of taxers; we oppose all taxes as unnecessary and burdensome. I propose that we call ourselves "Ground Renters." I propose that we call our party, if we ever have or need one, the "Ground Rent" Party. I propose that we call our periodicals "The Ground Rent Review," "The National Ground Renter," "The Ground Rent Advocate," and so on. In short, I suggest the substitution of the words "Ground Rent" for the words "Single Tax" generally. I shall admit that the name is not as sweet, pleasant, nor euphonious; it does not fall as pleasantly on the ear. It has not the delightful associations of twenty-five years of history. It may be even rude and uncouth. But it sounds rough, and strong and truthful. It

will be pregnant with meaning that cannot be misunderstood.

Under this new name, when you cross swords with an opponent of your views, either in private converse or public debate, you need not spend valuable time in explaining what you do not believe, and denying arguments which no "ground-renter" ever made. We can admit to Professor Seligman that we are in agreement with him, and also oppose a Single Tax, and further that we oppose any kind of a tax. The word "tax" is eliminated entirely. It can be stated clearly and briefly that ground rent is a value created by the community and not by the land owner; that it belongs, therefore, of right to the community; that if taken by the community for public purposes it will be ample to defray all proper public charges; that we propose to abolish all taxes as unnecessary and unjust, except such licenses as are levied primarily for regulation and not for revenue.

The procedure to collect ground rent into the public treasury is a matter of expediency. The present forms for levying and collecting taxes may be sufficient, or there may be a better way. All we affirm is that the present taxing machinery is available at the start.

This subject is expressly timely now, when "ground-renters" are divided as to expediency of independent political action. I have doubted the wisdom of a Single Tax party. I suspect that I have been unconsciously afraid of the name. It will require so much explaining, so much time and patience to educate the people to grasp its true significance. But with the sturdy and significant name "Ground Rent Party," I think my objections would disappear. Although a busy man, I think I should find time to stop for a curbstone argument. It would be over in three minutes. "Why, my dear sir, we do not propose to tax you on your stock of goods, nor factory, nor machinery; build as large a store or as fine a house as you can afford, it will be free from taxes. We not only propose to tax you less than your party does, but to stop taxing you altogether. Ground rent, you know, is a public fund; created by the public. We promise to limit ourselves to that. You are not rich enough to afford not to join our party. No man is."

JOHN HARRINGTON.

Oshkosh, Wis.

THE SINGLE TAX COLONY at Fairhope, Ala., has been for six years successfully applying the Single Tax, by the "local option" of its members. It has a delightful location on the eastern shore of Mobile Bay, with daily steamer to the city of Mobile, and offers land for homes, farms, business or manufactures, free of any purchase price and subject only to a rental charge based on the "location value"; out of which taxes are paid on land, improvements and personal property, and ALL the expenses expended for the common benefit.

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