

It will be pointed out, quite likely, that municipal free libraries and State-supported colleges must logically be condemned under the present argument; but this view is based on a misconception.

The voice of the self-governing people has spoken when public institutions are established: libraries and schools are here but a reflex of prevailing sentiment and desire; all is democratic, all is natural.

But in the case of the millionaire "benefactor" a powerful and seductive individuality, at variance with the world's true economy, warps the social structure. The evil is so ramified, so insidious, and may endure, with seeming naturalness, through such a long period of time, that the mind does not easily apprehend it.

After all is said, we will very properly continue to believe the homely prophecy that "all will come out right in the end."

But let optimism be tempered by the thought that social evolution is not a continuously natural and forward movement—that it involves retrogression; and that on account of certain great benefactions of today, proximate (not ultimate) posterity, if not we ourselves, must be robbed of the fullest measure of well being and content.

FRANK MUNRO.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

HENRY GEORGISM IN AUSTRALIA.

Sydney, N. S. W., Australia, Aug. 1.

It is commonly asserted by opponents of land values taxation that the advocates of this reform do not own land, and that they are seeking to promote a change in the incidence of taxation from purely selfish motives. Fortunately, I am in a position to be able to prove conclusively that there is nothing in such criticism.

At the same time I do not for one moment agree with the view that the landless have no interest in the land values of the country, and consequently no right to say whether they should be taxed or not. If all those who own no land in New South Wales left the country it would be a bad day for the landowners. It would reduce land values by about seventeen shillings in the pound. The owners of land in this state today are indebted to the landless for seventeen shillings in the pound of the value of the land they own. The right therefore of the landless to a voice in saying how the land shall be taxed is beyond question.

But in practice it is not really necessary.

The New South Wales local government act of 1906 gives the local taxpayers the right to demand a poll as to the incidence of local taxes, except the general rate, and loan rates under some conditions. So far there have been twenty polls.

But only land owners can demand a poll, and record their votes. See how careful Parliament was to deal tenderly with the interests of land owners. It gave them power to please themselves as to how they should be taxed. I must admit that I viewed this concession to the land owners with some misgiving. But it has proved groundless.

Here are all the available particulars about all the polls taken to date, all demanded and decided by the land owners themselves and in favor of land value taxation. They were taken in localities where conditions in many ways are widely different, but in each case the majority came to the same conclusion, viz., that their homes, shops, factories, farms, orchards and other improvements should be free from taxation:

	Against land values taxation.	For land values taxation.	Land values taxation. majority.
Alexandria	50	221	171
Waverley	333	413	80
Woollahra	171	371	100
Mosman	84	388	304
Randwick	248	322	74
Liverpool	20	169	149
Broken Hill.....	266	421	155
Wickham	39	222	183
Blayney	17	30	13
Blayney	10	21	11
East Maitland	84	88	4
East Maitland.....	72	84	12
Casino	23	101	78
Singleton	14	54	40
Singleton	16	52	36
Portland	7	98	91
Grafton	51	90	39
Wollongong	17	131	114
Uralla	6	37	31
Gilgandra	8	11	3
Totals	1,536	3,224	1,683

At those twenty land owners' polls there was more than a two to one majority in favor of rating upon unimproved values. It was simply a case of land users outvoting land speculators.

If we consider the matter for a moment it will be clear that such results are perfectly logical. The majority own land for use, not for pleasure or speculation. It was to them a case of financial gain. There was no sentiment about it at all. It was sound business. No doubt some saw that true principles and financial gain were running in double harness, while others merely did what it paid them to do.

The land is owned by a minority of the population (the proportion of land owners to landless being about one in eight); but it is a minority of that minority that really profits from the injustice of the private ownership of land values.

If we decided to make the interests on the cost of railways and tramways a charge upon the value of the land it would operate in exactly the same way. The same may be said of the substitution of land value taxation for customs duties. The whole single tax policy could be introduced with positive advantage to a large majority not only of the people as a whole, but even of the land owners themselves as a class.

As the people make land values they have a right to direct that such values shall be taken as public revenue, and expended in the interests of all. Ex-

perience here shows, however, that the land owners themselves, by a large majority, favor taxation of land values. The single tax is a land owner's policy as well as a people's policy where the majority of land owners are land users. The real opposition to it is confined to speculators, whose distinguishing characteristics are inordinate greed and laziness.

A. G. HUIE.

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ROOM FOR THE CHILDREN.

Etaples, France, Sept. 22.

Give us children, cries France, and sends their mothers from door to door searching any decent apartment in which she will be allowed to house her little ones.

Give us children, cries America; strong, healthy children, well born and well nurtured, that they may build us a mighty nation.

Then Capital proceeds to buy up all the vacant land and the children are crowded together in the tenement districts where the open spaces have long ago disappeared.

But they tell me that Chicago has magnificent plans for vistas of lake and prairie and river that shall intersperse the buildings of the future. Surely, then, some one has thought about the little children and their needs have not been overlooked. Among the men and women able to see and feel the needs of a new generation the children we have with us can not have escaped without provision being made for their immediate needs. For after all, if we neglect the present what can we hope for in the future?

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It is nearly two years since I wrote to The Public of the playgrounds for the Paris children in the beautiful garden of the Luxembourg (vol. x, p. 7), and on the unsodded boulevards of the city. For three summers now I have watched those same children spend their long vacation beside the sea. During the months of July and August they come in hundreds from the Paris gardens to the wide stretch of ocean sand, known as Paris Plage. The day that the lyceums and schools of the city close they begin to arrive, with mothers and nurses who remain, and with fathers and uncles who come and go, as is the way with the grown up men of the family. Pale and anemic many of them are at the beginning of the season, round and rosy, almost without exception are they now as it draws to a close.

Mornings, noons and nights I have watched them. Early as I may get down to the beach never have I been able to find it clear of children. Three boys whom we have known for three summers, seem literally to live on the beach. Digging in the sand, building wonderful walled cities with towers, moat and drawbridge, running, jumping, leaping, playing every game ever devised by the mind of man to be played in the great open spaces, fetching and carrying for mother and her guests, fine manly little fellows they are, and it is easy to prophesy for them a life of health and worthy endeavor.

Not far from their picturesque cabin is another whose inmates are strangers to us, but who have not the less excited our interest. Every morning the mother herself superintends the ocean bath. Each

child is in turn consigned to the arms of one of the stalwart Etaples fishermen, who wades far out from shore with him and instructs him in the art of swimming. When the mother thinks the lesson has lasted long enough she makes a sign, and back to shore come the pair of them, and the second is handed over while nurse puts a wrap around number one and hurries him to the cabin to be dressed. When the youngest has been a few minutes in the strong brown arms and then been held up to the silvery-haired grandmother for her kiss, he is borne up the bank in the arms of the Breton peasant. When the bath of the younger children has been superintended in this way the older ones with their mothers wade out along the shallows to meet the incoming tide, and soon it is a laughing battle with the surf, and rosy and dripping all trudge off to dress for luncheon.

In the afternoon gay crowds throng the beach, walking up and down or sitting in picturesque groups under the gaily colored tents and umbrellas. The children wade, build castles in the sand and fly kites, and September finds them doing all these things with even more eagerness and delight than they began in July.

And I? Yes, I, too, am doing sometimes one, sometimes another of these things, but always and forever my thoughts are far away with a host of children whom I know across the great ocean, in another land that is not less fair, and that is to countless thousands a land of promise.

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Do I understand the nostalgia of the emigrant? Perhaps I come a little nearer to it than before these years of expatriation. But it is not of this that I would speak.

I long with a great longing to bring into this atmosphere of laughter and of life, of freedom from care, many thousands of the burdened children of our great American cities, but most of all of the city where my work and life have been.

In imagination I see those pale-faced children of South Halsted street, as they throng the pavements on some stifling August day and I can see the change that two weeks beside the sea would make in them. I think regretfully of the ease with which they would absorb the nature lessons that some patient teacher must labor long to instill, and I know that could all of them have such a holiday as this no isolation for tuberculosis would be needed.

Then, in imagination I see the varied shores and the dimpled surface of our fair inland sea. Lake Michigan stretches away to the sands of Indiana and the forests of Michigan, and I say to myself, somewhere here should be the summer playground of the children who need these weeks in the great open spaces where nature has her reservoirs of air, of sunshine for all.

Lastly I remember that Chicago contains men and women of the broadest minds and the noblest generosity. Nothing is too great or too good for them to accomplish. The children must have their play grounds near at hand for every day, and farther away for special times and special needs. Nothing that makes for better citizens costs too much.

Let us, then, leave room for the children.

IDA FURSMAN.