

to work. These pleaders contended their clients would be deprived of a "vested right" unless the workers were compelled to continue their usual production of wealth.

The controversy, which was waged long and bitterly by both workers and conspirators, was finally "adjusted" by the State awarding to the conspirators large tracts of public lands in lieu of their "vested right" to confiscate the major portion of the taxes, which, in their entirety, were now collected by the State.

With only the public needs to be met out of the people's production, there was now a great surplus of revenue, and the producers were soon relieved of more than half of their former taxes.

In a short time, however, as a result of the nation's prosperity, resulting from the low taxation, the population of the country increased, and demand became great for the use of the land, most of which was now "owned" by those to whom the State had "given" it as "compensation" for their former "vested rights."

As no more land could be produced and the entire supply was now "legally" in possession of the former conspirators, the large demand for its use enabled them to take an even greater part of the people's production, in the form of land rent, than they had ever received when they participated in the confiscation of public revenue.

This new form of privilege caused another outburst from the producers. They declared that the conspirators, now called GROUND LORDS, did not produce land; that the workers produced all the wealth; and that as the GROUND LORDS rendered no service in the production of wealth, they were not entitled to any part of it.

The GROUND LORDS, now grown powerful through their accumulated wealth, none of which they had rendered service for, with the aid of their friends, the barristers, and their allies, the politicians, however, were able to defeat the producers, who, it is recorded, are still compelled to give the major portion of their production to the GROUND LORDS for mere permission to work.

How easily, in these days of enlightenment, we would abolish such injustice through the governmental collection of ground rent and the abolition of all taxes.

Although not generally conceded at that time, everyone now agrees the earth is the birthright of all mankind, and that the rent value of it arises from the mere presence of population and its activities. It follows, therefore, THAT THE RENT OF LAND BELONGS TO THE PEOPLE, AND THAT THE FIRST DUTY OF GOVERNMENT IS TO COLLECT IT.

As population grows land values rise,
But privilege has a key!—and takes the prize!—HORATIO.

THE earth is man's inheritance from on high,
But some heirs, born too late, must rent or buy.—HORATIO.

The Farmers of Montana Waking Up

WE have received the programme of the Progressive Farmers of Montana. In its Declarations of Purposes it says:

"First. We believe that all community-made values belong to the community.

Land exists for the people—so we demand a system of land tenure that will eliminate landlordism and tenantry and will secure the land to the users thereof."

The Western Progressive Farmer is the official organ of this organization of farmers and is edited by Elihu Bowles at Prosser, Washington.

John Filmer is Ninety Years Old

TO Single Taxers outside of this immediate vicinity where he is a familiar and well-loved figure, the name of John Filmer is not so well known as it should be, though many of the older disciples of Henry George in other parts of the country will recall him as one of the editors of the *New Earth*, published in the '80's, a New Church Organ that preached our message and was a welcome visitor to Swedenborgian and Single Tax circles.

John Filmer is one of the keenest analytical minds in the movement. But he is also one of the most charming and gentle spirits who has endeared himself to hosts of friends in the city of Brooklyn where he has been active for so many years.

On the evening of January 12th John Filmer was ninety years old, well and hearty and mentally vigorous as ever. His birthday was fittingly celebrated by a gathering of about 35 of his closest friends at the home of Mrs. Thomas P. Beggs in Brooklyn, called together by Mrs. Cebelia L'Hommedieu and Miss Jennie Rogers. Among those present were Mr. Chas. O'Connor Hennessy, Mr. and Mrs. Aiken, Mr. Seaver, Mr. and Mrs. Mansur, Mr. Thomas Ryan, Mr. D. B. Van Vleck, Miss Miller, Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Swinney, Mr. McGuinness, Mr. Vernam and others. Speeches, recitations, music and cards enlivened the evening.

Mr. Aiken sang a parody of his own composing in honor of the guest:

"He's still but a boy, a mere nonogenarian,
Soon he'll grow up a big strong centenarian,
Then you'll do well to be careful and ware of him
Should you engage him in argument warm,"

and more of the same swinging rhythm sung in good voice and with extraordinary verve.

A generous luncheon was served in the dining room and it was 2 A.M. before this party to the greatly loved disciple of our cause broke up, each of those present carrying with him as a souvenir of the occasion a photograph of John Filmer with an appropriate sentiment inscribed by his unfaltering hand on the back of each.