

"Honestly concerned" they may be, but we credit too highly Mr. Gaston's intelligence to believe that *he* thinks there is anything fundamental or real about the principles of La Follette and his party. He knows better, and because the light has been given to him he is sinning against that light. Surely, there is a code of conduct in politics as well as in religion; surely there are canons of commonsense which should forbid a man aiding and abetting causes fundamentally at war with the beliefs he holds.

Mr. Gaston has been so brave a protagonist for principle, hazarding his personal fortunes in what twenty years ago was a project wholly in the experimental stage, that his argument as he presents it seems a little curious. There may be arguments against independent party action, as there are surely arguments in its favor, but Mr. Gaston has not indicated any of the former, and as for the latter, time and the early eclipse of the La Follette movement, will tell the story.

One thing more. We do not understand the advocates of party action as expecting success. The Single Tax movement is in the propaganda stage. Party action seems to them the best mode of propaganda. As Mr. Le Barron Goeller, noting the publicity he has gained for the cause since his nomination for Lieutenant governor, exclaims delightedly, "It is great advertising."

## How Would Henry George Vote?

**I**F Henry George were here today, and he is truly present in spirit and in the abiding fruits of his great mind and dauntless courage, how would he vote at the coming Presidential election? No one who knew him can believe for a moment that he would endorse the present incumbent, advanced by accident after a long service as handy man for Senator W. Murray Crane, of Massachusetts, representative of the privileged interests and public service corporations. Nor would he support the counsel of big business and the Standard Oil Co., running on a platform of meaningless generalities and weasel words that mean anything or nothing as you may choose. And most decidedly he would not favor Senator La Follette. Henry George once voted for Grover Cleveland because he mistakenly believed that the assault on the thieving protective tariff would lead to a general attack on all crooked taxation and special privileges. Later he supported W. J. Bryan, believing that that eminent mouther of phrases was in reality a democrat, who would work for the restoration of the rights of which the American people have been robbed by class legislation. His experiences with these false alarms would have convinced him that there is absolutely nothing in the candidates or platforms of the three parties today to merit a vote from anyone who hopes to see established through constitutional methods the reign of industrial peace and social justice.

Coolidge and Davis are not worthy a paragraph. They are both eminently respectable tools of monopoly and privilege, neither of whom will do anything to lighten the burdens of the producers who by the alchemy of unjust laws are robbed of the larger part of the value of their product. Nor is there any real hope from La Follette. Though his record for forty years is open, and free from any proved charge of corruption, he, nevertheless, has not been granted the vision to see the source of all the economic evils that afflict mankind, nor the first great and sufficient remedy for them. Like so many millions of other would-be reformers, he denounces monopoly and privilege, without specifying the greatest monopoly of all, the control of the land on which all mankind must live, and out of which all wealth is produced. It is not enough that he is honest and courageous as his friends contend. More is required of him who would lead this people out of the house of bondage and set them free. He must know the right way out, and there is no evidence that La Follette has caught sight of the great truth that the way out is through the repeal of all class legislation, and the freeing of the land to all who wish to work upon it, by taking for public purposes the full economic rent of all desirable portions of the earth. As John Stuart Mill well said. "When the object is to improve the permanent condition of the people, small means do not merely accomplish small ends, they really accomplish nothing." No real and lasting reform in existing monopoly conditions can be brought about by the forces aligned behind Senator La Follette. A vote for him even as a protest against the two old political parties, is a vote wasted.

## To Men and Women Who Write

**A**NYONE familiar with the books and magazine articles of thirty years ago will remember that a considerable percentage was devoted to the serious discussion of important social and economic problems. Following the publication and widespread circulation of Henry George's "Progress and Poverty" and "Social Problems" came various other books, such as "Looking Backward," in which an attempt was made to set forth plans for a better-ordered system of society that would abolish the strange inconsistency of vastly increased wealth production being accompanied by persistent poverty. There were magazines, such as *Arena*, devoted to the presentation of the blunders and defects of the existing social order, while other publications were opening their pages to writers who sought to mould public opinion so as to bring about the enactment of state and national legislation that would abolish monopoly and privilege, and establish harmony and justice in the industrial world. It was a period of optimism, when earnest men and women looked forward hopefully to the immediate

abolishment of the social injustice and discord that were everywhere apparent, even in what were regarded as the most highly civilized countries.

Today there is to be found in books or magazines little of this hopeful note. There is some grumbling and complaining, and much fault-finding with governments and institutions, but little or no constructive suggestion. When the editors of the successful magazines are approached with a suggestion of informing their readers as to the real causes of the evils of which the public complains, the stock reply is: "Oh, that's Single Tax. Nobody wants to hear about that now." Eminent publishers decline to consider a Mss. re-stating the fundamental truths of man's relationship to the land, or pointing out the chief reason for remedying industrial evils. The popular fiction of the day is largely devoted to variations upon the theme of sex, or sensational treatment of polite society as it exists among the privileged few. Nowhere is there to be found evidence that the writers have any realization of the great fundamental problems that confront mankind in all regions of the earth.

It may be expecting too much to hope that any considerable number of those whose trade is writing will take the trouble to study the fundamentals of the land question, and arrive at the only sound conclusion possible for a logical thinker. But at least it may be worth suggesting that if any of those who are feebly groping for light on the economic darkness that enshrouds the world will turn their attention to the writings of Henry George, they will find in them the key that unlocks the door to knowledge of the only way out of the morass of ignorance, poverty and social degradation. Here is the truth, and the way of enlightenment. The whole world groans and travails in helpless misery because of the basic violation of the natural law that man must have access to land, or he is not free. Here is a subject worthy of study, thought and serious application. Why do not those writers who want something important to write about take up the urgent issue of establishing a just system of land holding, that will free production, and insure an equitable distribution of wealth that will permanently abolish involuntary poverty and all the evils that flow from it?

**I**T is commonly supposed that land belongs to its owner in the same sense as money or a watch; this is not the theory of English law since Norman Conquest, nor has it been so in its full significance at any time. No absolute ownership of land is recognized by our law books, except in the Crown. All lands are supposed to be held immediately or mediately of the Crown, though no rent or services may be payable and no grant from the Crown on record.

—SIR FREDERICK POLLOCK, "ENGLISH LAND LAWS."

THOSE who are the loudest in denouncing "high taxes," are the leading advocates of numerous taxes.

## At The Birth of The Single Tax

[This article, written especially for LAND AND FREEDOM, is from the pen of the oldest Single Taxer now living, both in point of age and connection with the movement. His acquaintance with Henry George began in 1859. Young George was at this time connected with a San Francisco daily. Mr. Trapp relates that he was with Henry George when the first locomotive was landed on the Pacific coast. While the multitudes greeted the event with shouts of welcome, young George remarked, "This is the beginning of the poor man's troubles." "No wonder," remarks Mr. Trapp, "that they called him the prophet of San Francisco." His mind's eye saw ahead to the time when the railroads would bring to this empire of what was then low priced land the teeming populations of the East with resultant land speculation and intensification of the struggle for employment. He probably did not see it all at this time, but the light was coming to him, and already he had more than glimmerings of the great social problem which it was his destiny to solve.—EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM.]

**D**URING the Civil War the government of the United States felt the need of rapid transportation from the Atlantic to the Pacific oceans. Owing to the vast unoccupied territory between the centers of our civilization and the Pacific, and the two mountain ranges that must be crossed, the construction of a transcontinental railroad was looked upon as a hazardous undertaking. Many engineers regarded it as impracticable and many of our financiers eyed it askance.

But the government feeling the accomplishment of the road a necessity, offered a bonus of each alternate section of land embracing an area of ten miles on each side of the road. This generous offer induced two groups of capitalists to organize. They established two companies, one to undertake the task of a road to start west from Omaha, the other for a road working east from Sacramento, California. It is with the latter company that this article will chiefly concern itself.

Both companies worked with all possible dispatch. They met in Utah near the great Salt Lake and named the place Ogden. The Western group was headed by Leland Stanford, Mark Hopkins, Judge Crocker, Charles Crocker, Jr., and C. C. Colton.

When the road was finally completed the organization soon incurred the displeasure of the people of the Pacific coast because of high charges for both freight and passenger traffic, the inconveniences borne by the public, and the arrogance of the railroad officials.

But the climax came when they engineered through Congress the Low Land Bill. The injustice of this measure can only be understood when it is known that this company calling itself the Central Pacific Railroad Company caused a multitude of claims to be entered along the Right of Way,