

essence of land value.

Let a man make by his labor or purchase from the proceeds of his labor a house, a chair or any labor product. When the state, too, levies an annual tax upon that thing it is confiscation. It is taking and giving no service in return. Under present conditions, part of his labor is taken by taxes of things, and another part is extracted for the right to use the earth.

When governments are in their crude beginnings there is practically no land value. As they develop and become more complex land values grow apace. Here is a natural source of revenue. If it were taken, labor would be relieved from confiscatory taxes. As labor pays rent now (and by labor we mean all forms of productive effort) the economic body would pay once, not twice. Both state and mammon are paid now. The state alone has the right to collect land value.

Ownership of land value is not property, it is a legal privilege which entitles the beneficiary to get something for nothing from the toil of others. The economic whole is not a mechanism. It is a system governed by moral law. The earth is the storehouse of wealth. Labor is the wealth producer. Co-operation of mind and muscle enables greater production. When land value is collected by individuals, and the state levies taxes upon production there is interference with the natural order. Human suffering is inevitable.

"How strikingly the course of nature tells,
By its light heed of human suffering,
That it was fashioned for a happier world."

What is needed is a recognition of moral law, of our duties and responsibilities as human beings to respect life, liberty and happiness for all the sons of men. Mechanistic philosophy proves day by day that Mr. George is sound. The world has been moving backward and the need is to catch up with Mr. George's ideas of a moral order in the universe. Very largely through his remedy, so simple and yet so far reaching, the moral order will be permitted to function.

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