

LVT VS. RENT

By E. P. MIDDLETON (Norfolk Island, Australia)

Most Georgists have overlooked the fact that taxation in George's day was a very different thing from that we know today, specifically in the form of Income Tax, which after all was not introduced in the United States until 1913 apart from a short and abortive essay during the Civil War.

I conclude that George saw the taxation method of collecting the Rent as a political expedient only, not to be taken as involving the basic principle of recovering what actually belonged to the public treasury.

It is most regrettable that Georgists have been sidetracked - and I admit my own guilt in the past in this respect - by this aberration of George's, his uncritical unwillingness to grasp at any method of collecting the rent (which in his serious non-political vein he referred to as the Surplus Product; see The Science of Political Economy, Book II, Ch. IV) that would prove acceptable in the political climate of the time.

With all due respect to Lawrence D. Clark (Winter GJ), I suggest that he think again as to what "land value" really is - the true gold in the vein? or the overburden which has to be removed before the real mining can begin?

Vic Saldji's exposing of the inconsistency in respect to LVT as a formula for recovering the rent is timely. The absence of a "quid pro quo" is conclusive.