

"THOU shalt not steal.' It is theft, it is robbery that is producing poverty and disease and vice and crime among us. It is by virtue of laws that we uphold; and he who does not raise his voice against that crime is an accessory."—HENRY GEORGE.

A CITY with vision would start reform by learning and changing conditions that produce criminals. It would study the effects of improper and congested housing on the moral health of the next generation. It would make sure that every child within its boundaries had proper educational advantages.—*N. Y. World*

TO TAX OR NOT TO TAX

To tax or not to tax—that is the question.
 Let every one, therefore, weigh this suggestion—
 And one point let him clearly understand—
 All taxes shift, except the tax on land.
 The products of the factory and the field
 Must bear all charges, yet a profit yield:
 For otherwise production must suspend,
 Until Demand revives, and prices mend.
 The tax on Industry, then, is a fraud
 That robs consumers, and should be outlawed.
 But when you lay your taxes on the land,
 A different situation is at hand.
 For here Supply is fixed; let taxes press
 However hard, Earth's surface is not less.
 And when the taxes pinch, Demand must yield
 And force the speculator from the field.
 Whatever else is false, this Truth must stand,
 Taxes can never stimulate Demand.
 And he shall learn, whose zeal this light bedims,
 That markets govern prices and not whims.
 And thus this Single Tax, though strange to tell,
 Will lower living costs, and land as well;
 Will set Trade free, and Industry arouse,
 Absorb the unemployed, the homeless house.
 But where's the prophet whose prime eloquence
 Shall teach the people this plain common sense?

P. W. SCHWANDER.

BOOK NOTICES

Henry George's *Progress and Poverty* has been abridged to about one third of the original. The title page tells us that it is "authorized" by Anna George de Mille, to whom, aided by Louis Post, Stoughton Cooley, Frederick C. Howe and John Moody we are to credit the abridgement.

Before this work appeared we heard some disquieting rumors. It was openly boasted that the "high brow stuff," whatever that might mean, was to be omitted in the new edition. The gentleman making this statement evidently spoke without authorization. That much at least is demonstrated by the book itself.

For though we have not had the time to compare the abridgement with the original, page by page, such superficial comparison as we have been enabled to make has established the impression that there has been no attempt to minimize the fundamental tenets and that the most radical of Henry George's statements have been retained. Only in the footnotes has there been any attempt to "soften the blow." Read in connection with the words of Henry George himself, who had little stomach for artful verbal compromise, these footnotes will do no harm.

Harcourt, Brace, and Company, New York City, are the publishers, and the price of the work is \$1. —J. D. M.

AT LAST—A BOOK FOR THE FARMERS.

Herbert Quick has added to his great public services as a writer a book entitled "The Real Trouble With the Farmers." The price is \$2. and Bobbs-Merrill Company are the publishers.

We must here express our regret that a book—certainly the best book ever printed in America concerning itself with an analysis of the farmer's ills, his "real trouble" and the remedy, should not be placed on the market at a lower price. We are reassured, however, on this score by intimation from the publishers that a cheaper edition is contemplated. Surely with a book of this kind, destined for a large circulation among the class of the population to whom it is addressed, it is poor business policy not to put the book forth at the lowest possible cost to the purchaser. But Bobbs-Merrill Company know the publishing trade and can be trusted to look after it.

First of all we must commend the admirable English of this book. In short, crisp sentences Mr. Quick tells the story. It is the work of a farmer writing for farmers, by one who knows also how to convey his thoughts, a writer who has learned his great skill in the art of writing by a succession of very notable books, more than one of them arousing if not wholly confirming the anticipation that here at last was the "great American novel."

The opening chapter is entitled "Agriculture in its Agony." Here is a statement of the farmer's actual condition. Our author shows how little has been done to relieve it by farm loans, terminal grain markets, and the empty political victories of the Farm Bloc. He tells us that the farmer is coming to refer to these with contempt and even bitterness. He is passing through a period in which he is being gradually disillusioned. But he is as far as ever from realizing the solution.

It is not easy to quote and at the same time do justice to the work so packed with information as to real conditions. But from the first chapter we extract the following:

"Secretary Wallace is quoted in the *New York Times* as having said of the many farmers in fifteen corn and wheat producing states, on an average of over five per cent. had lost their farms through foreclosure or bankruptcy, while nearly four per cent. had turned their farms over to their creditors without legal process, making a total of about eight and five tenths per cent. *In addition more than fifteen per cent were in fact bankrupt, but were holding on through leniency of their creditors.* This makes a total of over twenty-three per cent. of the farmers in these fifteen of our richest states who are lost to farming except as tenants. In view of the fact that in many of these states it takes from eighteen months to three years for the creditor to get title through foreclosure proceedings, and of the quite natural horror which any good man feels as to including in these figures any which can by the exercise of hopefulness be excluded, it is safe to say that from a quarter to a third of these farmers have been ruined in the last few years."

It is not a pretty picture that our author paints for the discerning reader. Again we permit ourselves to quote:

"We need not think that this is anything new in history. It is as old as ancient Egypt and the Mesopotamian plain. Where the people who dwell on the land are condemned to unrequited toil it is merely a matter of years when the whole state will find its foundations sapped, and will fall in ruin. In a centralized state like ours, this destruction comes from the rushing of the dispossessed and unrequited to the cities. The farmers suffer first, then the small towns go down, then the larger cities decay, and the over-swollen centers of population, deprived of nourishment and with lost markets, fall into the hands of a mobocracy of impoverished and idle people, and the state passes away into something else. What else that will be under such conditions no one can say."

The farmer must remain subject to world competition. He is in competition and must remain so with the farmers in every part of the world. Monopoly is impossible. Hence the folly of all devices of price

raising by tariff or regulation. This is absolutely true of grain and cotton. We cannot combine to restrict competition. And if by combination we could create a condition of world scarcity we would only stimulate foreign production, and our last state would be worse than our first. Tariffs for the benefit of the farmers Mr. Quick calls "abysmal bunk." Mr. Quick devotes a chapter to "diversification" and shows this is not a panacea. Diversification while desirable cannot of itself make farming profitable. Another chapter is devoted to the Esch Cummins Act and its horizontal freight rates.

Under the title of Chapter XV., *The Vampire of the Farmer*, Mr. Quick advances the theory that through "the artificial control of prices by the trusts, monopolies and combinations the rent of town and city property gets into the cost of living." He thinks this proposition will be disputed by the economists in that it seems to question Ricardo's law of rent. This Mr. Quick denies. But he will not qualify. He says plainly: "When we come to land values—which is another term for what the economists call rent—we come to the vampire which is really the trouble with the farmers." He says this is invariably dodged by those proposing remedies to Congress or State Legislatures. This chapter will well repay reading. The very thing that farmers rejoice over is destroying them—rising land values.

Chapter XVI., *How the Vampire Sucks Blood*, and Chapter XVII., *Make Land Cheap Once More*, contain the gist of the problem that he has started out to solve, the real trouble with the farmers.

We wish this book were in the hands of every farmer in the country. If this could happen the social revolution would be much nearer. He has pushed this inquiry pitilessly to the heart of the problem. The remedy that he offers is the only one that can possibly save the farmers, and by saving the farmers, save the nation.

In the writing of this book the author has done the best bit of work along this line offered in our generation. We can scarcely say too much in gratitude.

And we close with Mr. Quick's closing words:

"If I were you, Mr. Conservative Citizen, I should carefully consider giving them what I believe to be their right to land, through this plan, which is conservative where good is to be conserved, and radical where wrong is to be uprooted, rather than to wait for a possible whirlwind. And the sky is clouding up." —J. D. M.

CORRESPONDENCE

STANDS WHERE LUKE NORTH STOOD.

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

I am greatly interested in your way of educating the public to see the importance of taking the full rental value of land for public uses in lieu of all taxes. Personally, I am a Socialist, but I stand where Luke North stood and am for the Single Tax.

Arden, Del.

WILLIAM CANBY FERRIS

THE CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

The power of land monopoly consists in what the people do not know about it. The conspiracy of silence is their only hope. Make them fight the light, which will show them up with a weak defense.

We have just had developed a case of a real estate man making \$8,000 margin on land bought and sold within five days to the adjoining Turlock Irrigation District. The Auditor filing the report covering this and other matters was unable to report the profit taken from taxpayers pockets on a lot of other land as the dealer bought it for "ten dollars and other valuable considerations," a system of recording for which there is absolutely no justification.

Modesto, Calif.

GEORGE CARTWRIGHT.

WHY THE SINGLE TAX CANNOT BE PASSED ON

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

The Single Tax cannot be passed on because it falls on land values, which takes away the advantage valuable land possesses over land of no value, equalizing the cost of production on all land.

A given amount of labor on valuable land, produces a greater amount of product than on land of no value. As a tax on the value of the land would take away the extra product, only an equal amount of product could be secured on valuable land, for the same labor, as on land of no value.

As an equal amount of product secured on valuable land, could sell for no more than that secured on land of no value, the tax could not be passed on in the price of commodities.

Since it would require the same labor to secure an equal amount of product on valuable land as it would on land of no value, the former would be no more desirable than the latter, and could command no more in rent or price.

Scammon, Kas.

JAS. P. FERN.

A SOUL INSPIRING PLATFORM

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

For the enclosed cheque, please send me for one year your valuable paper *LAND AND FREEDOM* beginning with the January-February number in which I have read and reread the soul-inspiring platform of the *only worth-while party* in this country today—the "Commonwealth Land Party." Since reading that platform I feel for the first time in my life that I belong to a party that stands for something, and I have been voting since 1888. I am proud to tell you that our good friend, Francis I. Mooney of Baltimore first brought to me the Gospel of Henry George, "America's greatest man" as Herbert Quick truly calls him.

Baltimore, Md.

F. J. M. KERNAN.

FROM AN OLD FRIEND

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

I am eighty-six this month. I learned that I was born land robber thirty years ago when I read Henry George on the Land Question. I had sold a farm underlaid with coal in Pennsylvania twenty years before. And I have worked to restore land rent to all ever since that time.

We used to sing seventy years ago, "Uncle Sam is rich enough to give us all a farm." He is rich enough now if we restore to all their own. Land rent is the only thing that belongs to all because all else belongs to individual labor.

Fayette City, Pa.

CALVIN B. POWER.

NEWS NOTES AND PERSONALS

THE Dearborn Independent (Henry Ford's paper) of March 22 contains a full page article, entitled *Has the Single Tax Theory Made Progress?* by Joseph Dana Miller, and is confined wholly to setting forth legislative steps in our direction here and abroad.

We acknowledge receipt of a small neatly printed pamphlet entitled *Brass Tacks Ballads*, by Edmund Vance Cooke. The opening poem, *Uncivilized*, is almost as well known as Sam Walter Foss's *Primeval Calf*, and is quite as good. All the verses contained in the little pamphlet are devoted to telling our story. Mr. Cooke has a deserved reputation as a poet and his notable lines to Tom L. Johnson's memory are inscribed on the Johnson monument in Cleveland. Mr. Cooke is one of the Ohio electors on the Commonwealth Land Party ticket.

A NEW subscriber to *LAND AND FREEDOM* is Thomas Marsden, of Portland, Maine, who is one of those who attended the Cooper Union Conference in 1890. Mr. Marsden in a recent letter to the editor of this