

land-owner or the capitalist, or both, from getting so much. Now, as the land belongs by right to the community as a whole, and not to the individual, the value attaching to it, which is directly caused solely by the presence and needs of the community, should go to the community and not to the individual. To achieve this end all that is necessary, as Henry George points out in his chapter on "How equal rights to the land may be asserted and secured," is "to appropriate rent (i.e., economic rent) by taxation, and to abolish all taxation save that upon land values." As all land value belongs by right to the community, its appropriation by the State on behalf of the community would not be a tax in the true sense of the word, however much it might appear to be so. There is no blame attaching to the so-called land-owners for confiscating the economic rent. Whatever blame there is attaches to the people for allowing them to do so. Once this value is appropriated on behalf of the community, or commenced to be appropriated, for it can only be done gradually, there will be no need to bother about the surplus value, that bugbear of Karl Marx, which is supposed to be squeezed by the capitalist out of labor. The central feature of the new Political Economy is not surplus value but communal value, which, having been created by the community, should be appropriated on behalf of the community to meet the expenses incurred by the community. When this is done every one will be placed on an equal footing in regard to the land, access to it and to all natural resources will be easier and easier as the appropriation is increased, the avenues of employment will be enlarged, and the ability of the workers not only to produce what they consume but to consume what they produce will correspondingly increase. This is the science of the New Political Economy as taught by Henry George. It means the dawn of a new and brighter era for the workers all over the world, and it only waits their intelligent study and active co-operation to be carried into effect. To do so would mean a revolution, but a revolution by peaceable means, and without the shedding of a single drop of blood.

PERCY R. MEGGY.

"And idleness enforced saw idle land,
Leagues of unpeopled soil, the common earth,
Wall'd round with paper against God and man."

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

—Let Freedom ring! But not too loud or long—
Or some injunction judge will stop her song!

—The man who makes two blades of grass appear
Will pay more taxes than he paid last year.

—All men want freedom. How few understand
Freedom can never be without free land.

Land Owning—Its Use and Abuse: An Enquiry

Preliminary to the discussion of the existing system of land tenure and its consequences, let us consider the opinions of some eminent authorities.:

SIR WILLIAM BLACKSTONE: "Accurately and strictly speaking, there is no foundation in Nature or natural law why a set of words on parchment should convey the dominion of land.

Allodial (absolute) property no subject in England now has; it being a received and now undeniable principle in law that all lands in England are holden mediately or immediately of the King."

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE COLERIDGE: "These (our Land Laws) might be for the general advantage, and if they could be shown to be so, by all means they should be maintained; but if not, does any man with what he is pleased to call his mind deny that a state of law under which such mischief could exist, under which the country itself would exist, not for its people, but for a mere handful of them, ought to be instantly and absolutely set aside."

SIR FREDERICK POLLOCK, ON "ENGLISH LAND LAWS": "It 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 the 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."

WILLIAMS (REAL PROPERTY): "The first thing the student has to do, is to get rid of the idea of absolute ownership (of land). Such an idea is quite unknown to the English law. No man is in law the absolute owner of land.

All owners are merely tenants in the eye of the law."

MR. JUSTICE LONGFIELD: "Property in land differs in its origin from property in any commodity produced by human labor; the product of labor naturally belongs to the laborer who produced it, but the same argument does not apply to land, which is not produced by labor, but is the gift of the Creator of the world to mankind. Every argument used to give an ethical foundation for the exclusive right of property in land has a latent fallacy."

PROF. W. A. HUNTER, M.A., LL.B.: "The English landlord system, so far from having any moral basis, is founded upon a supercilious contempt of the only moral principle that can afford any justification for private property in land."

PROF. ZACIAIRE (the eminent German Jurist): "All the sufferings against which civilized nations have to struggle may be referred to the exclusive right of property in the soil as their source."

PROF. ALFRED MARSHALL (Principles of Economics): "All writers on economics are compelled to make a distinction between land and other things."

CARDINAL MANNING: "The Land Question means: hunger, thirst, nakedness, notice to quit, labor spent in vain, the toil of years seized upon, the breaking up of homes, the misery, sickness, deaths of parents, children, wives, the despair and wildness which spring up in the hearts of the poor when legal force, like a sharp harrow, goes over the most sensitive and vital right of mankind. All this is contained in the 'Land Question.'"

ALFRED RUSSELL WALLACE: "We permit absolute possession of the soil of our country with no legal rights of existence on the soil to the vast majority who do not possess it. A great land-owner may legally convert his whole property into a forest or hunting ground, and expel every human being who has hitherto lived upon it.

In a thickly populated country like England, where almost every acre has its owner and occupier, this is a power of legally destroying

his fellow creatures; and that such a power should exist and be exercised by individuals, in however small the degree, indicates that, as regards true social science, we are still in a state of barbarism."

HENRY GEORGE: "If one man can command the land upon which others must labor, he can appropriate the produce of their labor as the price of his permission to labor. The fundamental law of Nature that her enjoyment by man shall be consequent upon his exertions is thus violated. The one receives without producing, the others produce without receiving. The one is unjustly enriched; the others are robbed.

That people can be enslaved just as effectually by making property of their lands as by making property of their bodies is a truth that conquerors in all ages have recognized, and that, as society developed, the strong and unscrupulous who desired to live off the labors of others, have been prompt to see."

WILLIAM SAUNDERS: "Every month landlords kill more children than Herod destroyed in his lifetime; and yet 'they are all honorable men.' But this circumstance does not lessen the fearful consequences of the system of which they are the agents."

JOHN STUART MILL: "No man made the land; it is the original inheritance of the whole species. The land of every country belongs to the people of that country."

GLADSTONE: "I fully admit this: that if the time came when the British Nation found that the land should be naturalized, and it would be wise to do it, they have a perfect right to do it."

CARLYLE: "The notion of selling for certain bits of metal—the land of the World Creator, is a ridiculous impossibility.

The widow is gathering nettles for her children's dinner. A perfumed Seigneur, delicately lounging in the *Oeil de Boeuf*, hath an alchemy whereby he will extract the third nettle and call it 'rent.'

Properly speaking, the land belongs to these two: to the Almighty God, and to all His children of men that have ever worked well on it. No generation of men can or could, with never such solemnity and effort, sell land on any other principle. It is not the property of any one generation, we say, but that of all the generations that have worked on it, and of all the future ones that shall work on it."

JOHN RUSKIN: "Bodies of men, land, water, and air, are the principal of those things which are not, and which it is criminal to consider, as personal or exchangeable property."

The opinions here cited being true, it is clear that Land Monopoly is, and always has been, one of the main causes of the world's economic distress.

The minds of men today have solved great problems of every description; and yet, one of the greatest problems of them all, the most vital to human welfare, remains: the Land Question is still the "riddle of the Ages."

Despite the clear indictments by the great thinkers and writers of all ages, from Moses to Christ and down to the times we now live in, there still exists in full force, *private ownership of land*.

The minds of all men today are concentrated upon solving the problem of Peace and War. Nations are endeavoring to find a solution of that great curse that has for centuries destroyed them by periodically recurring wars.

War palpably disrupts each nation resorting to it and visibly occasions its destruction. Land Monopoly works more insidiously than War; few see and realize its evils. For centuries, freedom was non-existent. Men thought it could never be achieved. And yet body-slavery, except in certain benighted countries, has been abolished.

But another form of slavery—economic—has taken the place of body-slavery. Some ingenious men have

learned that their fellow men may be enslaved through private ownership of land, which belongs to the whole people. Land should never have been deeded away through the subtle schemes and plots of private land monopolists.

And yet, the war menace is being removed, though ever so slowly. It is passing. In time, it will disappear from among mankind.

After the War Evil has been conquered, the evils and injustices of private ownership of land must also be abolished. Today, men know many things which a few years back were profound mysteries—the X-Ray, Radio, Human Flight, the hitherto unknown Poles, are giving up their secrets; medical and physical science are achieving wonders. Despite the advances in science, our economic and political progress is at a standstill. Only a few daring minds, gifted with prescience, such as men like the late Henry George, and his precursors, have tackled this Land Problem.

Why is the great Land Question still an international World Problem? Why does war still exist? Why has Christ been mocked and denied? Human selfishness, the lust for Greed and Power, are the retarding forces blocking the way to progress and human freedom in these our times, as of old.

The great truths preached by the prophets throughout the ages are none the less true today even though human selfishness forbids them to be recognized. Greed for power is operating against human welfare. It says to Progress, "Thou shalt not pass." The Economic Verdun is unconquered.

The great authorities quoted at the beginning of this enquiry amply prove that the private ownership of land is wrong and against human welfare, just as it is wrong in these days to own the body of a human being and keep him as a slave. To monopolize the land on which men must live is but another form of monopolizing the air they must breathe. If our modern engineering wizards could erect enormous suction pumps and draw into them the air men must breathe, these engineering geniuses could command the lives of men. In order to breathe, we would all have to pay tribute to the suction crowd of air monopolists.

Land, the earth we live on, is the free gift of the Creator to men living in and on the world today. Yet all lands in all cities throughout the world today are privately owned. Land monopolists, not satisfied with ownership of all city lands, have extended their monopoly to all prairie and farm lands, all mines, all forests, even our inland rivers and waterways are privately monopolized and exploited. Our Falls and Sinclairs have become multi-millionaires through dishonestly misappropriating to their private use Public Property in Land. Our formerly vast Public Domain has been meanly stolen. The public has been betrayed and robbed, and is being daily so robbed and betrayed.

Land in our cities receives its great value because people must dwell in our cities to make their living. All who live in cities increase by their mere presence the value of the lands they dwell on. They make lands valuable and create what are technically called by economists "land values." Presence of population alone makes land "location valuable." Broadway at the corner of Wall Street has immense value because millions of people must work there daily and this special plot is very desirable for business purposes. A corner lot far removed from population would command no rent, exact no tribute, possess no "land value."

Far out in the country, far enough out to be only farm land, far from railroads, community centres, from population, no land values or site values exist. These values begin to arise solely through population. Farm lands are nothing but farm lands until population comes to turn farms into building lots by the presence of population.

If population creates the great land value in New York City, is there any reason why the great population of New York City should longer disinherit themselves and leave these great land values in the hands of private monopolists? The ancestors of these present-day monopolists happened to buy these lands for a few trinkets from Indians who neglected to work the lands even for their own crop-raising purposes. Is there any reason why a handful of ignorant savages with no lawful title should barter for a handful of beads a heritage which today brings into private hands—the heirs of this shameful trafficking—millions of dollars' worth of land value, rightly belonging to the population whose presence in New York City actually created those values? Why should this value go to the heirs of those who befooled the Indians with trinkets and indifferent rum?

It is clear that the presence of population has created and is creating these values in the lands they work on and they are really entitled to the revenues coming from the values they thus create.

In order to transfer these enormous sums of money from the private pockets into which they now unrightly go, into the pockets of the rightful owners—the creators of the land values—it is only necessary to tax these lands for the public benefit; taxing these lands in accordance with their location. The corner at Broadway and Wall Street would of course pay into the public treasury many times more than would be paid by some obscure plot in the Bronx. No titles need be disturbed to carry out this plan, the taxing authorities simply requiring that the public revenue should be paid to the public who owns that revenue. Private ownership has for centuries in the past already been many times over compensated by having possessed these lands all these years. The public is not asking for an accounting and restoration—an accounting of stewardship—which they might well do.

No present titles need be disturbed. It would only be necessary to tax the present bare site value of all lands, but not any of the improvements; simply taking for the public use the site value, as if no building were on the location. If all city lands were taxed thus, immense burdens would be lifted from the shoulders of the people, now groaning under economic pressure exerted by the owners of site, or land, values.

The removing of these great burdens from builders would be an immense boon to the building trade. It would do away overnight almost with the present unemployment in the building and allied trades.

RECAPITULATION

1. Unemployment is today one of the greatest of our world-problems: Unskilled as well as skilled labor would be emancipated by restoring to the people the lands of which they have been deprived.

If building lands, now held out of use, by private monopoly, are taxed so heavily that they would have to be put to productive use, the demand for cheap housing would be met, and the private and age-long monopoly of a great public source of revenue would be destroyed.

2. The present housing problem is intensified by land speculation. All lands at present held out of the market for purely speculative purposes should be forced upon the market by an adequate land tax. Opening these lands will enable builders to purchase lands and improve them. Overcrowding in our great cities would thus be done away with.

3. Land being made accessible to all, there would be no necessity for skilled workers to seek a living in other countries or districts far from their homes. Work would be provided for all willing and able to employ themselves.

4. In agricultural districts, whence laborers are being driven by necessity into already crowded cities, small holdings can be re-established by removing all taxes on improvements and buildings on purely farm or agricultural lands. Improvements on purely farm lands can be made without fear of taxation on such improvements. Farm land would not be taxed for its location value until it grew into city land by the coming of population. All purely farm land would be cheap and remain untaxed unless and until its value is enhanced by population; until it possessed municipal, or community, value.

5. By properly taxing all lands throughout the country, including coal, oil, and mineral deposits, it would be impossible for private owners of such lands to hold them against the public weal as is customary today. The public would thus receive the revenue—value now going into private possession. These lands belong to the public whose necessities create their value, and the public should be given whatever revenues they bring in. This could readily be achieved, without disturbing a single title, by proper and adequate taxation, placed on the value of such land, this value enhancing with the years and the increase of population.

Does anyone "with what he is pleased to call his mind" deny that public need, not private greed, creates these values? Public necessity demands the conservation of our forests, oil lands, coal deposits, mineral deposits, and it is the presence of population in our great cities that makes these natural resources necessary. Eliminate the demands of the great cities like Pittsburgh for coal and iron, to supply the great needs of our transportation facilities—again a public need—and industry would become non-existent. Public needs and demands create the value of our mines, oil wells, forests, and without this public demand there would be no necessity for such products. Our huge populations create these values, and the fact of a few miles of railroad transportation, or pipe lines, does not bar the public from their natural right to the use of these gifts of nature, belonging originally to the public lands, but filched by corrupt officialdom (not so "dumb" as to their own private interests). The chicanery and rascality of some men have deprived the public of their heritage in these lands. As population in our great cities and throughout the country creates these values, as they are really part of the Public Domain which should never have been alienated, it follows that these valuable lands (made valuable by population needs for the running of industry) should be taxed back into the public till, from which they have been meanly filched.

6. Proper adjustment of the land question would bring employee and employer into the position of "equal partners" and there would be unanimity of purpose in increasing and enhancing improvements; these improvements being free from taxation as improvements. These would be no taxes of any kind, except on the value of the bare land as occupying a special value owing to its advantageous location.

Under such conditions wages would advance to their true earning capacity. No man would work for inadequate wages if he could make more money employing himself. Such adjustment would do away with "industrial sweating," or the exploitation of one class of the population by the other, more advantageously located.

7. Great city lands, now possessed by private monopolists, should be taxed into community ownership. All land rents or site rents—due to location advantage—belong to the community of each city which has created these great site-values. The public revenue from all these site-values would be more than ample to meet municipal needs, and indeed create funds to be set aside for great public improvements.

8. Taxing the values of all lands possessing site or location value to the full extent of such community value would raise a fund large enough to do away with all other forms of taxation. Income taxes would be abolished; also excise and customs duties. There would be created each year an enormous surplus to be used for the public benefit.

9. No improvements would be penalized, as at present; factories, workshops, and all methods of production would be freed from present burdens; there would be no taxes on machinery or buildings, however costly or splendid they might be.

10. Persons possessing buildings and household property would be relieved of all forms of taxation except on their bare lands provided they possessed community value and could devote their revenues to improving their buildings without being taxed for any improvements.

11. No women or children would be compelled to work, as today, for the reason that all industrious men could easily support their families.

12. The public would not be asked to support charity societies, "Salvation" or otherwise, for the reason that the "soup kitchen" would not exist. Ample funds would be created to provide the aged and infirm with every comfort without requiring of them (in return for mere subsistence) degrading or penal work.

W. B. NORTHROP.

Death of W. B. Northrop

OUR old friend William B. Northrop, author of the foregoing article, which he designed to have printed in pamphlet form after its appearance in *LAND AND FREEDOM*, called at this office May 7th and showed us the manuscript. He said it was not in good shape for the printer and then carried it to a stenographer in an adjoining office to be typewritten. On Wednesday he came again and left the article newly typewritten in the shape in which it now appears. He left the office to dine with a friend, Henry W. Haviland, at 99 Water Street, and a few hours later was dead.

It is surprising that Mr. Northrop was so little known among Single Taxers, for he had written much for the cause. He was an active newspaper man after graduating from Georgetown University. He was born in San Francisco. He was connected with the *New York World*, the *New York Globe* and other newspapers. He went to London and there gathered material which Lloyd George used in his Budget fight against the House of Lords. The fact that Mr. Northrop was a Single Taxer gave him an eager zest in the collection of this material, which when presented to the House of Commons received world-wide attention.

When the public became interested in the speeches and letters of the late Mayor Gaynor, Mr. Northrop induced the Mayor to permit him to publish in book form selections from his most characteristic utterances, and at the request of the Mayor Mr. Northrop wrote the introduction to this publication. In addition to this work Mr. Northrop was the author of "Wealth and Want" and "With Pen and Camera," the former being a study of London poverty, and the latter an account of Mr. Northrop's trip around the world. During the War he was a member of the