

some mysterious way we have never yet been able to clearly explain, does it not logically follow that we will feel just as uncertain as to the proper disposition "the community" can make of the same? Henry George said: "Land in itself has no value. Value arises only from human labor. It is not until the ownership of land becomes equivalent to the ownership of laborers that any value attaches to it." The labor applied on the highways is stored as the advantages which "attach" to locations. Said Henry George: "When the ownership of land can command labor, or the products of labor, the transaction, though in form it may be an exchange, is in reality an appropriation." This power of appropriation—tribute compelling power—coming from ownership of the privilege of exclusive possession (for, as a matter of fact, the land itself cannot be owned), must be utterly wiped out before equal freedom can exist. This tribute compelling power constitutes "land values." But rent—which is an entirely different thing—consists solely of the labor stored in advantaged locations by maintenance of common ways; and if it was used exclusively to compensate that labor, the advantages of exclusive possession of locations would be equalized; the privileges of such possession would be BALANCED, and cease to be treated as property (because drained of that power which is "equivalent to the ownership of laborers") and no possible nucleus for a tribute compelling power would remain. Those who are too timid to face this question and thoroughly discuss it haven't enough of the spirit of Henry George in them to make any "impress on the rising generation" worth mentioning.

Freedom must be either *equal* or *unequal*. Is it the purpose of those who propose to make "a new start" on the tenth anniversary of the death of Henry George, to "mark the beginning of a new epoch in the struggle for freedom" by a *direct* movement for *equal* freedom? If so, there is but one way open for them, and that is through restoration of the equilibrium of equity by means of a Balanced land tenure. If they have any other purpose, it must inevitably lead to *unequal* freedom.

Henry George once said: "How men vote is something we need not much concern ourselves with." (And it's a pity we don't seem to think so too.) "The important thing is how they think. Now the chief agency in promoting thought is discussion." (Hence the importance of discussing the principles of equity.) "The advocates of a great principle should know no thought of compromise. They should proclaim it in its fulness, and point to its complete attainment as their goal." (This, at least, is what equitists are doing.) Do you suppose that if the professed followers of Henry George had acted in accordance with the above conceptions it would be possible today for

anyone to speak of "the apathy of a great majority of Single Taxers in recent years?"

Those who would prove themselves worthy to honor the anniversary of Henry George's death by an attempt to organize a new movement must show that they are at least as sincere and fearless as he was when he said: "I propose to beg no question, to shrink from no conclusion, but to follow truth wherever it may lead. Upon us is the responsibility of seeking the law, for in the very heart of our civilization today women faint and little children moan." (And that is doubly true today.) "But what the law may prove to be is not our affair. If the conclusions that we reach run counter to our prejudices, let us not flinch; if they challenge institutions that have long been deemed wise and natural, let us not turn back."

Those who can rise to this level will not hesitate to discard a label that all admit to be inadequate and enroll themselves under a name that is inspiring and needs no apology. To all such the equitists hold out "the glad hand."

WARREN EDWIN BROKAW.

Pasadena, Cal.

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REPLY BY A. C. PLEYDELL.

The first charge which Mr. Brokaw brings is that the Single Taxers are deficient in courage because they decline to affix to themselves the label of "equitist," or to pose as spectacular strivers for equal freedom.

Freedom has been sought for in many countries and for many centuries, and yet its most ardent advocates often have failed to agree as to what really constitutes freedom. Herbert Spencer first formulated a working definition, commonly known as the law of equal freedom, which serves to test social adjustments. And yet even those who accept Spencer's definition and law disagree sincerely in regard to its practical application. Henry George applied the doctrine of equal freedom to the use of the earth, and what is known as the Single Tax is the method which Henry George proposed as the one which under modern conditions would best insure equal freedom in the use of the earth. Those who believe with him that the first step is the public appropriation of rent can unite in their efforts to secure this result without surrendering their opinions in regard to other matters. What folly to claim for them and their cause a monopoly of desire for equal freedom, or to demand that before anyone shall work for that taking of rent known as the Single Tax, he shall be in complete accord upon all other questions with everyone else who is working toward that end.

That there are some who believe in the George plan merely as the solution of the

tax question, and who have become known as "Single Taxers, limited," is really a minor matter. Those who so believe do not usually label themselves Single Taxers, or assume leadership in the Single Tax movement.

The second charge which Mr. Brokaw brings is that Single Taxers are not agreed as to the cause of natural rent. But this is neither surprising nor vital. We know fairly well the cause and nature of the present abnormal rents, and that the application of the Single Tax will not merely diminish the abnormal portion but will, by the elimination of many present complex factors, simplify the problem of the proper expenditures of government.

The theory that normal rent will only equal the value of the labor expended in highway communication may be discussed peaceably, and even if it were shown to be true there is no need to drive out of the Single Tax ranks those who refuse to accept it. Whether or not the other expenditures of government are exactly reflected in the value of land, we all know that the people now demand the performance of many governmental functions, and that the process of educating them down to the minimum of governmental expenses is apt to be a long and tedious one.

It is twenty-five years since the publication of "Progress and Poverty," and yet to-day we are not all in agreement as to who pays the rent. It is no use calling each other names because we find it still harder to agree as to what element of the present day rent is an absolute reflection of governmental expenditures and how much is irrelative. If we stop all work for the Single Tax while we thrash out these questions, the women and children to whom Mr. Brokaw alludes will continue to moan and faint for many a long day. There is a golden mean between that "doing something practical," which consists of throwing a crowbar to a drowning man, and the refusal to do anything practical until all theoretical questions have been thrashed out to universal agreement.

A. C. PLEYDELL.

#### A GREAT MAGAZINE SPEAKS OUT.

*Government* is the name of a magazine launched in Boston some few months ago. It is a superb and artistic specimen of magazine building, and the clear, large type, fine paper and wide margins are a treat to the eye. The leading editorial in the May number of this latest and most impressive new comer into the field of periodicals treats of "Government and Revenue" in the following luminous terms:

"Notwithstanding the contentions of philosophical anarchists and extreme individualists some form of organized government is an absolute necessity of human

society. No condition of human society, however perfect, can be imagined in which organized government would not be necessary. If government were no longer necessary for the suppression of crime, if every individual were a sincere altruist, an established authority would still be required to decide on the thousand etceteras of streets, roads, railways, bridges, schools, inheritances and many other things which could not possibly be left to individual initiative and control.

It is equally clear and equally true that government requires public revenue. Society could not exist without government, and government could not exist without revenue. The matter of taxation is the most important question that can engage the attention of citizens; and, more vitally than any other question, it concerns their material and social conditions.

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Governments have long ago discovered how easy it is to plunder a nation by indirect taxation. The elder Pitt, when speaking in the House of Lords against the proposition to increase the income tax to seven pence in the pound, declared that it would produce a revolution. "But," he added, "you can get the money by an easier method. By the method of indirect taxation you can tax the last rag of a man's back, the last mouthful of food from his mouth, and he won't know what is injuring him, and he will grumble about hard times." It is this method of taxation on which governments chiefly depend for their resources, and it is this method which produces the inequalities and the injustice and the hardships which people see and feel but do not know how to remedy. It is in the interests of every manufacturer and merchant, of every capitalist and workman, to understand the natural laws which control the production and distribution of wealth. This knowledge alone can reveal to legislatures the true method of raising the national revenues. For nature has provided a proper revenue for governments as surely as it has provided proper sustenance for man.

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Consider to whom does interest belong. Undoubtedly it belongs to the man whose capital has assisted labor in production. Let him have it. To whom does wages belong? Undeniably it belongs to the man who by mental or physical effort produced the wealth. All the product naturally belongs to him. Adam Smith says the whole of the product of labor is the natural wages of labor. Not half of it, but the whole of it. But labor must pay interest for the use of capital if he employs it, and rent for occupation or opportunity. When those payments are made the whole of the remainder belongs to labor. And if we did not interfere, labor would get it. The manufacturer would