

discussed the work profitably together and realized, from the author's clear expositions, the economic principles involved in space ownership in a growing community.

There is a striking difference in the effect of this revelation on men of somewhat similar business experience and capacity. Mr. Janes was led to see more clearly a splendid business outlook and a means of contributing to the development of the city. In the boom that followed the sudden expansion of the city he became one of its leading real estate operators. Through the clear explanations of the "Prophet of San Francisco" he saw the waiting opportunities and improved them. The building now being demolished was one of many results of his enterprise, and the fact that the site is now a vastly more important franchise while the building is only an encumbrance shows how true was his guidance as to the future. The magnificent residence now occupied by Sir William Mackenzie is another result of wise estimates as to land futures.

In the same economic revelation Mr. W. A. Douglass saw the opening for a great and far-reaching reform. He saw an explanation of the strange phenomenon of want through too many hands being able and willing to produce. He saw the distinction between enterprises that produce and enterprises that impoverish, and the difference between value caused by abundance and value caused by scarcity. Between the parasitic life and the life that gives toil for toil and service for service he saw a clear distinction, and he also saw the folly of pursuing and taxing the improver of property. The possibility of profit inspiring the forestaller of space to crowd back the worker and perpetuate the slum became to him an evil to be eradicated. The enthusiasm of that day, when few would listen and many seemed to dread, continues with him, although his views are now encountered everywhere.

These dual courses inspired by the same influence make an interesting study. The theories absorbing the attention of Mr. Douglass are more enduring than the building erected by Mr. Janes.

—Toronto *Globe*.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PRIVATE PROPERTY IN LAND.

EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

J. W. Bengough, the valiant Single Taxer, is out of the picture to those of us who appreciate his great powers of exposition and illustration, when he is engaged in fighting "shadows."

I should like to know what reply he would make to the objector who could, I suspect, make him admit that *all* value is a reflection of population?

What justification can J. W. B. advance for taxing the full value of lemon groves while exempting the value of lemons?

Land is not property—this is basic—even though it offend the sensibilities of those who oppose us and will probably continue to do so, for any old reasons, that to them may seem effective. When opponents declare "land" property, it is to laugh. Its exclusive possession is pure privilege, granted by the State, and if the creator of that privilege decides to do as its grantees now do, collect all the privilege is worth, who can legitimately object?

BENJAMIN DOBLIN.

PROPERTY IN LAND. A NEW VIEW.

EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

In the last three issues of the REVIEW there is considerable discussion relating to what Henry George said or intended to say on the subject of property in land. There seems to be a difference of opinion among Single Taxers on this point. It seems to me that Mr. George made it clear that the *value* of land should be made common property.

He does not state it just this way, but he does say, "What I therefore propose—is to appropriate rent in taxation". "It is not necessary to confiscate land, it is only necessary to confiscate rent."

Now it will be observed that he does not propose to take some rent, but to take it all. If all rent is appropriated for public use does it not follow that the selling value or price will disappear? That the

power to appropriate for private use any value that accrues to land will be destroyed. If not how will such public appropriation abolish poverty?

With all due reverence, it seems to me the important question to discuss is not what Henry George said or intended to say but rather, what is the truth regarding land value?

Is the appropriation of that value for private use right or wrong?

If it is right, then the proposition to tax land values only or in greater degree than other values, is unjust and not worth consideration.

If it is wrong, then the power to appropriate such value for private use should be abolished. There is and can be, no middle ground.

There is one thing in which we will all agree and that is, that there is at present an improper distribution of wealth. That there is an enormous value created each year that concentrates in the hands of a few, in which the mass of people do not share, is not a disputed point.

For the last thirty years I have been trying to discover some other thing but land to which this undistributed value attaches, and after a careful analysis of the value of other things, I have failed.

To my mind, in order to correct improper distribution it is only necessary to locate the undistributed value and having located it, do the one thing necessary to correct it—prevent it from locating in that particular place.

In a world where the value of land was not a thing of barter and sale I cannot imagine a condition in which there could be an improper distribution.

If land, or rather, the *power to appropriate value* that accrues to land, could not be bought and sold, the only thing that could be bought and sold would be, in the last analysis, labor.

And if labor or service were the only thing that could be bought and sold, I would like to ask some one to rise and explain how anyone could get any value without rendering service.

Here is the issue, and in our discussions of the Single Tax philosophy we should remember that the one purpose of the

Single Tax is to abolish poverty, i. e., bring about a proper distribution of wealth. Before wealth can be distributed, value must be distributed, therefore the real question is not a land question but concerns only the undistributed value.

Let us proclaim from the house tops, "The undistributed value has been located. It is that portion of the total value that attaches to land, and is appropriated by the owners of land, who do not earn it, render no service for it and have no moral right to take it. We propose therefore to appropriate this value for public use, thereby solving the problem of distribution and incidentally the land and tax problem.

Indianapolis, Ind. J. H. SPRINGER.

BOOK REVIEWS.

OUR CITY CIVILIZATION.

The above is the title to a book lately issued from the press of the Williams & Wilkins Co., Baltimore, and written by Henry Rawie, 803 Lemcke Building, Indianapolis, Ind. The author asserts and ably demonstrates that "the modern world is facing the same problem by which older civilizations have been destroyed." "The same failure of accumulated wealth to minister to the happiness of the people."

He takes issue with the premise laid down by economic writers that "Labor is the cause of value," and asserts that the reverse is true, that is, that, "Value is the cause of labor." He says, "the old theory did not take into account values produced by the labor of the past, which values can be conveyed to us only by the prices of labor products selling above the cost, the cost price representing the cash paid to living labor by production and the price above cost coming from the credit added by past labor and depending upon distribution to get into circulation."

The author says, further: "The failure in present theories to solve the problems that distress us, comes from the failure to understand the part the labor of the past plays by the introduction of credit money."