the Administration to be exceptional, but also that the Administration offers no reasons which, under international law, would justify it as an exception. But that is not the fact. The Administration does seek to justify, and it offers reasons that are plausible. What men like Mr. Adams should do is to expose the flimsiness of those reasons.

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The "avowed exception" is justified, according to the Administration, by the exceptional circumstances. As the argument runs, the obligations and rights of the United States with reference to Panama are different from those of any nation with reference to any other territory whatever; consequently, no precedent can be cited nor can this case make a precedent. It is absolutely exceptional; and not arbitrarily, but out of the peculiar circumstances.

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And what are the circumstances? Simply these. The United States are bound by treaty to preserve the peace along the Panama railroad. This peace was threatened by the seceders. If they had fought the general government of Colombia, the United States would have been obliged to interfere against them. But the general government of Colombia did not resist, and the seceding government has gained full control of Panama. This reverses the duty of the United States. If the Colombian government should now invade Panama, it would itself be the peace breaker; and against it the power of the United States government would have to be exerted in order to preserve freedom of traffic on the trans-Isthmian railway. Meanwhile, no government exists in Panama except the seceding government, and the United States has been obliged to recognize it in order to secure protection for Americans and their property. Of course this enables the United States to deal with willing Panama instead of reluctant Colombia, in the matter of the Isthmian canal; but that is only a fortunate incident. It might have been otherwise. Suppose Colombia had been willing and Panama reluctant; nevertheless the United States would have been obliged to recognize Panama in order to protect the railway.

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With any other Colombian territory that might have seceded we should have been bound by international law to withhold recognition until Colombia herself had agreed. But not so with Panama, where we are bound by treaty to protect the railway. This peculiar circumstance imposes upon us the necessity, not in defiance of international law but in harmony with it, of making an exception to international usage in the matter of recognizing the secession of Panama as an accomplished fact. The peace of the railroad is the point.

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What has Mr. Adams to say to that explanation which the Administration makes? Does it bring the "avowed exception" within the purview of international law? Is the case different from that of seceding South Carolina, because foreign nations had no railroad to protect in South Carolina and we have one to protect in seceding Panama? If so, would it make any difference if the Panama secession happens to have been organized under the inspiration and encouragement of the United States? Or would that fact also be only a fortunate incident? We trust that Mr. Adams will not continue to ignore the explanations of the Administration. He must not be allowed to evade its defense of this "avowed exception," namely, that it is exceptional in practice only, but entirely harmonious with international law in principle, under the circumstances—there being a railroad to protect.

When Henry George visited Great Britain as a lecturer for the second time, he spoke chiefly in support of the single tax programme, whereas he had emphasized on his first visit the doctrine of the abolition of land ownership. Supposing that these two ideas were essentially different, the British press congratulated Mr. George upon having receded from his former radical position! In fact he had not receded. All he had done was to emphasize method instead of principle, as the British editors would have known had they taken the pains to compare any of his speeches on his first visit with any of those on his second. A similar misunderstanding seems now to have influenced the press of New England, notably the leading papers of Boston.

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These papers have recently displayed great interest in a dispute between the president of the New England Single Tax league, Mr. C. B. Fillebrown, and some of his associates, as to the meaning of the single tax movement. Mr. Fillebrown takes the ground that the single tax movement does not contemplate the abolition of private property in land, but only the appropriation to public use of ground rent. This is really not a difference of principle but only a difference between principle and method.

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If all ground rent were taken for public use, private ownership of land would not exist. For ownership of anything implies ownership not only of the thing but of its increment of value. Consequently, to take the increment of value is to abolish ownership of the thing. But to abolish ownership of anything is by no means the same as abolishing possession of it and enjoyment of its use. Land could be possessed, used and enjoyed just as it is now, though the ground rent went not to the possessor and user but into the public treasury. Ownership would be abolished, but not possession and beneficial use. To argue that the taxation of ground rent is not inconsistent with ownership, because some ground rent is taxed now, has in it some dangerous possibilities. It might be applied as well to houses and

house rent, and thus amount to an assault upon the private ownership of houses. The essential idea of the single tax is that such things as building sites cannot be owned rightfully by anybody, and that such things as houses are owned rightfully by their producers or by persons deriving title from their producers. Merged in this idea is the further one that although such things as building sites cannot be rightfully owned, they can be held rightfully in perpetuity provided precautions are taken to prevent partiality. This is prevented if the holding of the sites by individuals is subject to the reserved right of the community to ground rent. For, under that reservation, whatever the holder of a superior location gained in position he would pay for in ground rent. It is upon this principle that the single tax would take the ground rent for public use and not tax house rent and the like at all.

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There are two ways of describing that purpose as to land. We may say that land ownership is wrong, and that tenure should be a mere title to perpetual possession, subject to the payment to the public of ground rent as a tax; or we may say that land ownership is right, provided it be under a reservation that the public may collect the ground rent as a tax. The difference is verbal only. There is no difference in principle or substance. Yet this verbal difference makes it desirable, no doubt, to vary the form of expression according to the prejudices of one's audience. For a single taxer to declare in favor of land ownership before an audience accustomed to regard land as God's gift to all men, would be folly. He could not possibly secure attention, after that, to an explanation of the single tax method of securing equality of rights to the enjoyment of this gift. It would be equal folly for him to demand the abolition of land ownership before an audience accustomed to regard land as legitimate private property. Before such an audience his wise course would be to defend land ownership, with the reservation of ground rent to public use. There would be no deviation in principle, and the variation in approach would be only an exhibition of horse sense.

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It is true enough that Henry George did not mean land value when he wrote against private property in land. He was singularly apt in expressing what he meant; and with him as with few others his expressions may be safely accepted as declaring his meaning. What he meant was that the institution of property in land, which treats property in land the same as property in other things, is wrong. Yet George clearly preferred individualism in land-occupancy to communism; and to secure that system he advocated a possessory title which should be as full, complete, and perfect as ownership—in every respect but one. Since ownership of anything implies ownership of its increment of value, he differentiated ownership of land from ownership of other things, by assigning the increment of its value to the public. Whether land tenure were called "ownership" or "possession" would have made no difference to him, so long as the ground rent was appropriated by the public in lieu of all other taxes.

Whenever President Roosevelt grows eloquent over the beauties of personal holiness, his enthusiasm recalls, for some reason or other, the story of the little girl who prayed: "O, Lord, make Martha Smith a good little girl, so that I may take her playthings away from her and she won't make any fuss about it."

Extremes meet when Hanna Republican papers and Grover Cleveland Democratic papers unite in abusing William J. Bryan. But they are like the extremes that meet when a dog puts his tail into his mouth. Both extremes belong to the same dog.

THE POTENTIAL CHECKMATE OF MONOPOLY.

The promise of social betterment lies in the disposition of the masses to do right. The fact that we so often do wrong is only a symptom of weakness, not of chronic disease. Given that we know what is right—know it entirely in all its aspects and interrelations with things—we will do it. The undisputed fact of human progress proves the dominant power of conscience; proves that we lean to the side of right.

The opponents of reform recognize and make use of this for the purpose of misleading society into wrong doing; for well they know that "as a man thinketh, so is he." The most heinous offenses against right principles have been perpetrated by sincere, prayerful men, who thought they were doing God service. But the disposition to do right remains, and, with the expansion of knowledge, society corrects its errors. In the light of this fact of history, how foolish to assume that the prevailing, in any field of experience, is to be the permanent.

We think our progress slow. True enough, it is slow. But why? Is it because men do not wish to do right? The psalmist exclaims: "I said, in my haste, all men are liars." So the seer, the reformer, in his impatience, makes sweeping charges against society that, in his sober moments, he knows to be unmerited. It is hard to stand upon the mountain tops, in full view of the promised land, and, beckoning society forward, realize at last that as for you, you must die where you stand!

The fact is that society changes slowly because it must be sure that it is right before departing from the customary. And it takes a long time to fire the beacon lights on all the hilltops; and a longer time still to learn to distinguish between these and the false lights kindled by the beneficiaries of prevailing conditions.

Because these latter know man's disposition to do the right thing, to be fair toward his fellowman, they never fail to denounce each newly discovered truth as false, and its practical application as involving that which is unfair.