

But the irrefutable general principle is the one outlined above. In so far as taxes are exacted of the owners of buildings as a class, they tend to increase house rents and house prices, and are borne by the tenant; but in so far as they are exacted of owners of building lots as a class, they tend to decrease land rents and land prices, and are borne by the owners. In the former case they are shifted to the ultimate consumer, and in the latter they cannot be shifted.

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Misapprehensions of Henry George.

Curious notions about Henry George's idea of taxing land values to the exclusion or exemption of industrial values, have been spread abroad. Among them is the idea that he contemplated no sales of land. This misapprehension evidently arises from the fact that in justification of taxing land values alone, he argued the injustice of land ownership. But he approved private possession. What he aimed at was to secure exclusive occupation of land for use to the individual using it, and its community-made value to the community. As for buying and selling, he contemplated this custom as continuing just as it does now. But what the seller would sell and the buyer buy, would be the improvements and the right of possession and use of the site. Any special value added to the site by social growth and not by the occupant would be taken in taxation. This is fully set forth in George's "Progress and Poverty."

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Another misapprehension of George is the notion that under his proposals persons who "use no land" would pay no taxes. Of course there are no persons who use no land, any more than there are persons who use no water or air. Under the Georgian taxation method, those who rented land, whether as tenants of buildings or denizens of hotels and boarding houses, would pay their taxes in their rent or their board money, and the public would get it from the so-called owner of the land. Under the present system most taxes are paid in that way, but unfairly; under George's system the distribution would be fair—simply in proportion to the desirability of the spot where they lived or did business. Let no rich man imagine that he would escape. Nor let him imagine that he would escape with a small land tax for his home or his office. The wealth of rich men who "do not own land," consists for the most part of paper titles to interests in land of enormous value—of stocks and bonds controlling railroad rights of way, con-

trolling mineral deposits, controlling city building sites, great stretches of farming land, immense water power, and so on. The land value tax would fall upon all those interests at their source.

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Sometimes this question arises: "The single tax would do away with an income tax, would it not, and should not the people who are the best able to stand the tax be the ones to pay the most?" It would, indeed, do away with that species of income tax which taxes men regardless of whether their ability to pay comes from their own earnings or from the earnings of others through some privilege conferred by law. But it would establish an income tax on firm moral and economic foundations. For it would tax no man on the income he earns, but would tax away the income which, through the social necessity of private ownership of land, comes to him unearned simply because he monopolizes land which others need.

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CO-OPERATION AND COMPETITION

Cooperation is another name for civilization. It is suggestive of mutuality of aid and interest. It means good will, fellowship, public and private health, and, through specialized industry, the largest possible production of wealth. It spells soap, sanitation, social peace, individual security. Without it, man has always been, is, and must remain a savage.

Competition, on the contrary, is suggestive of strife, stress, pressure and ill feeling.

The one is coming more and more into popular favor, the other is growing steadily in disrepute.

There is a substantial reason for this, as there is a reason for every thing else in the affairs of men. The reason that competition hurts the masses of men today is because opportunity is limited. It is penned up by legal enactments and institutions which narrow the field of effort, limit and hamper exchanges of wealth, and prevent production absolutely in a thousand directions.

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It is as natural for men to cooperate as to breathe, to eat or sleep.

Cooperation is founded upon the simple, universal and wide reaching social principle that men seek to gratify their desires with the least exertion. Give this social law full sway and social regeneration will inevitably result.

What is it which prevents man's following this law? What is it which everywhere cramps his