

SOMETHING FOR NOTHING.

From "Common Sense," of Cleveland.

Fifty years ago John Corlett purchased two lots on Prospect avenue in Cleveland and built two houses on these lots from trees felled from a grove in the neighborhood.

These houses are standing today, surrounded on three sides by three 12-story buildings, and the old man lives in one of them.

The other day a banker went to him with an offer of \$4,000 a front foot for the property.

The old man refused the offer, but told the banker that he had originally paid \$18 a front foot.

Now, if everyone along Prospect avenue had done what John Corlett did, property would still be worth \$18 a front foot on that street.

When any of us go along the streets of these cities and see shacks and superannuated buildings along the principal streets of a business district we know that the holders of title are waiting for their neighbors to do just what this man did, and what the men did who improved around the property of John Corlett in Cleveland, making it valuable without contributing to it either in money or effort.

In other words, it is simply getting something for nothing.

In every professional gambling room where poker is played they have a slot in the center of the table large enough to admit a chip. This is for the "rake-off," or what you pay for the privilege of playing in the room.

Usually the tax against the participants in the game is about 10 per cent of the amount of the stakes.

Last winter four lake captains in Port Huron, Michigan, played all winter in a professional poker room,—the original four continued their play all winter without admitting an outsider.

When they took their boats out in the spring not one of the four had a cent.

Where had all their money gone?

It had gone down the hole in the center of the table.

The room-keeper had it,—winnings and all.

Now, under the present system of taxation, the land values, particularly in the congested districts of cities, are like the hole in the center of the tables in a poker room.

All the earnings of the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant and the transporting agents, and all the people who are employed by them, will finally disappear just like the money of the lake captains,—in the hole in the center of the table,—it will congeal into land value.

It is only a question of time.

The remedy is a gradual reduction of taxes on improvements and a gradual increase of taxes on lands until all taxes are upon lands and none

are upon any improvements which are the results of man's effort.

In this way the holders of lands will be forced to build upon them or sell to those who will improve them.

By forced improvements, high rents and congestion will be eliminated, together with all the social and physical diseases that are now the results of congestion, for those who produce, either with their heads or their hands, will get all they earn and those who do not produce will get nothing.

The capitalist will get an equitable return providing he invests in productive enterprises; for he will not add to the unearned wealth of his neighbor.

He will not be fined for enriching his neighbor.



THE DRAMA OF THE WINTER STARS

Annie L. Muzzey in Independent of Feb. 22.

O splendor of the crystal winter night,
When bold Orion stars the blazing sky,
Belted, and armed and poised for vallant fight,
He faces Taurus of the fiery eye.

Close on his track the brave Dog Sirius leaps,
The Unicorn vaults o'er the Milky Way,
And Procyon his faithful vigil keeps
Upon the fight that rages till the day.

The gentle Gemini with arms entwined
Smile softly at the sister Pleiades,
Whose "influences sweet," that none may bind,
Are infinite as the eternities.

Northward, young Perseus, flushed with victory,
Comes with the trophy of Medusa's head;
But rests not till his loyal sword sets free
Andromeda, chained to her rocky bed.

Eastward King Leo, rising in his wrath,
Bears up the sickle with its golden light,
To cleave a way on the Ecliptic path
To the fair Virgin of the summer night.

Pacing forever on his polar round,
The Great Bear watches the celestial play,
Unconscious that his plodding feet are bound
By an attraction that he must obey.

So we, firm-planted on our rolling star,
Heed not the subtle change of time and place.
Unmindful, while we gaze on worlds afar,
That we, with them, are wanderers in space.

But this we know: that tho' the heavens fall,
By Power Omnipotent our way is spanned;
That the Creative Love doth hold us all
Secure within the hollow of His hand.



I know of no such unquestionable ensign of a sovereign mind as that tenacity of purpose which through all changes of companions, or parties, or fortunes, changes never, bates no jot of heart or hope, but wearies out opposition and arrives at its port.—
Emerson.