

"Proputty, proputty, proputty,"—my wages
belong to me
Against either thief or State, and wages are
what you see
When you look at the things I own, house,
books, stable and cow,
I've earned them every one by the honest
sweat of my brow.

The Government, as you say, must live,
and must be fed,
And taxes, truly enough, are simply Gov-
ernment bread;
But why not feed on its own—the values
itself creates?
What I make belongs to *me*; what the State
makes is the State's.

The State, as such, doesn't work; it doesn't
make visible things;
But the Public exists as a fact, and that
fact infallibly brings
Into existence a fund—a value attaching to
land—
A natural source of supply by a wise Creator
planned.

"Proputty, proputty, proputty," that is
Property, too,
And it clearly belongs to the State, and
neither to me nor you;
So if the State must live, let it feed on its
own resource,
And leave our belongings to us—that's
clearly the honest course.

Ah! there's the snag, you see! Yes, cer-
tainly that's the rub;"
This logic's without a flaw, but 'twill raise
a precious hub-bub;
For our laws have given away what belongs
to the Government,
And allow the land-owning class to feed on
its bread—the rent.

And not without a great kick will these
rent-consumers quit;
Do you think they would rather work for
their fortunes? Not a bit!
They flourish their parchment deeds and
prate of "Property," too,
Tho' Property-in-Rent belongs to All, not
the few.

Now, having given away the natural rev-
enue spring,
The State turns to private rights and
pounces on everything,
Robbing by charges direct and charges
crooked, as well,
Every form of wealth you can see, taste,
feel or smell!

"Proputty, proputty, proputty," there's no
such thing to-day
That the State does not invade, despoil or
take away;
And land-rent, springing up by a heaven-
made, natural law,

Is not true property in private monopoly's
maw.

Well, what's to be done about it? Nothing
at all, say you,
'Twas a sad mistake, no doubt, but it's made
and it must go through.

No! render to Cæsar what's his, and to me
what belongs to me.

"Proputty, proputty, proputty,"—let us do
righteously!

J. W. BENGOUGH.

DEATH OF FREDERICK SHEFFIELD.

Frederick Sheffield of West Nyack, N. Y.,
who died in Brooklyn during the first week
of the new year, was known to but a limited
circle of Single Taxers. And even by that
circle his devotion to the cause and his ser-
vices, large indeed if measured by the ex-
tent of his means and the ceaseless demands
of an exacting business struggle that left
him few opportunities, were perhaps not
even suspected. Yet quietly and unassum-
ingly our departed brother made many a
convert. He stood for our principles where
they were despised, and with a courage
which asked for no other approval than that
of his own conscience, spoke out for the
truth when it meant the loss of his prestige
in church and society, and among his im-
mediate associates. He was a good friend
to the REVIEW, and for a long time the half
tone portraits that have appeared in these
pages were furnished by him without charge
—a contribution which when measured by
his opportunities of giving was one of no
small magnitude.

He was a man with a mind singularly
susceptible to the sight of human suffering,
and the message of Henry George, once
clearly comprehended, meant much to him,
for it was a revelation that not the injustice
of God but the maladjustments of men,
were the all sufficient reasons for involun-
tary poverty.

In his death the Single Tax movement
loses an earnest friend, and the world a
man of singular purity and elevation of
character.

THE FAIRHOPE CONTROVERSY.

We have received a number of letters
criticising Fairhope. Among these is one
from Mr. Norton in which he defends the
correctness of his assessment figures, and,
with the exception of a few admitted errors,
does so successfully. We have also a letter
from Mr. Ettel, once of Fairhope, now in
Florida, who, wishing Fairhope well, de-
plores some of its features. Mr. Cope writes
a criticism of the plan. From F. L. Brown
comes a spirited defence of Fairhope and its
management.

The REVIEW is also favored with a lengthy
communication from Mr. Gustave Buscher,
who is on a visit to this country from Switz-

erland, with the object of gathering material for a life of Henry George. Mr. Buscher is a keen and scholarly observer. We think that his wide experience, the fact that he is an earnest Single Taxer and in a sense our guest, will warrant the printing of this communication in our next number, giving in the same issue in which it appears the opportunity of reply by some qualified Fairhopeer.

The writers of other communications will appreciate the reasons why we refrain from publishing them. We have not been frightened out of our convictions before expressed regarding Fairhope by threats of withdrawal of subscriptions. But it must be apparent that to continue this discussion indefinitely is to thresh old straws. Developments may at any time arise that may alter this decision, but any further lengthened controversy at this time must be without good results. Constructive, not destructive controversy—controversy that will enable us to get others' points of view, and if possible to harmonize such views for increased unity of effort, is what is chiefly required at this stage.

"The silence or apologetic attitude generally of church and educational leaders in the face of brazen crime committed by high toned criminals, immune from punishment, is not the least of the civic problems that face us. No feature of American life strikes the stranger so powerfully as the extraordinary indifference, partly cynicism and good nature, with which notorious frauds and notorious corruption in the sphere of politics are viewed by American public opinion."

These words of Frederick F. Ingram, whom all Single Taxers know, are quoted approvingly by the *Detroit Evening News*. But the most significant part of this address is its conclusion: "I have referred to the granting of special privileges as the cause of bad government. I mean by that the legislatures, national, state or municipal, giving to private corporations property or rights that call for the exercise of the power of eminent domain. This includes transportation privileges between cities and in cities, gas and electric lighting. A private corporation does not require a franchise or a charter to engage in any private business, any more than does an individual. If all public property was owned by the public and all public business done by the public through its chosen officials one great source of public corruption would end."

The anniversary of the birth of Henry George was celebrated in Melbourne, Victoria, by the production of a play, "The Professor in Wonderland," adapted from "The Story of My Dictatorship." Here is a suggestion for the American cousin to act upon. After twenty-five years of agitation there is yet no distinctive Single Tax drama.

COMMUNICATIONS.

TOLSTOY AND PRIVATE PROPERTY
IN LAND.

Editor *Single Tax Review* :

Tolstoy's recent letter to the *London Times* upon the subject, "A Great Iniquity," is the Russian philosopher's latest utterance upon the land question. In it is declared his belief that the greatest of all iniquities is the private ownership of land, together with his explicit endorsement of the Single Tax doctrine of Henry George.

The utterances of this world-famous man, heralded far and near, are likely to foster the misapprehension that the mutual aim of both Henry George and himself was the destruction of private property in land.

I, therefore, beg, with only a word or two of comment, to call critical attention to one of Tolstoy's statements, leaving it to the reader to make his own interpretation of its meaning.

Notwithstanding Tolstoy's unequivocal declaration that "the soil must be restored to the people" and his reiteration of "the wrong of private property in land," the conclusion that he would destroy the private ownership of land must be, it seems to me, a mistaken one, and out of harmony with both his text and context. Henry George specifically arraigned the institution of private property in land, *as it now exists*. He condemned that feature of land tenure which necessitates the invasion by taxation of the otherwise sacred right of private property in the products of labor in order that ground rent may continue to inure mainly to private benefit. Hence, it must be submitted that what Tolstoy had in mind was private property in land "as now existing." The length and breadth of George's proposed remedy, to which Tolstoy gives full endorsement was, in Mr. George's own words, "I do not propose * * * to confiscate private property in land" * * * but "to appropriate rent by taxation." (*Progress and Poverty*, Book VIII, Chap. 2). In the enjoyment of every other "right and privilege" of tenure, the right to "own, possess, buy, sell, devise and bequeath" excepting only the one privilege of the private appropriation of rent, Mr. George's specific declaration was that the landowner should be left undisturbed. The following paragraph is from Tolstoy's "A Great Iniquity":

"A member of the English Parliament, Labouchere, could publicly say, without meeting any refutation, that 'he was not such a visionary as Henry George; he did not propose to take the land from the landlords and rent it out again; what he was in favor of was putting a tax on land values.' That is, whilst attributing to George what he could not possibly have said, Labouchere by way of correcting these imaginary fan