

Let the *Sun* carry this thought a little further, and it will discover that there are but two sources of revenue, wealth and land values. Varied taxes upon different forms of wealth are attempts to tap the hogshead a number of times in the vain delusion that you can get out more than the contents.

**T**HIS question is asked by H. L. Mencken in the *Mail*. How does it happen that otherwise sane men believe in such balderdash as theosophy, the Single Tax, spiritualism and the initiative and referendum?

Perhaps, Mr. Mencken, because there is an element of truth in them. Did that ever occur to you? The **SINGLE TAX REVIEW** does not believe in theosophy nor spiritualism, nor unreservedly in the initiative and referendum. But it does not at all surprise us that perfectly sane minds see something in all of them. And because Mr. Mencken is merely flippant, he will doubtless never know that there is any truth in the world save the truth in which he believes—and maybe that's not true.

**G**OODBODY & CO., in their market letter for June 13, commenting on the *Bulletin* issued by the National City Bank, in which they advocate enlarged production for the quick payment of war debts, say:

"Only one step is lacking in this *Bulletin* article. It did not tell us what plan of taxation would free industry and commerce and, by providing work for all at the highest possible wages, would so stimulate labor that it would produce double what it now produces. If the tax on land values would not accomplish this result, why would it not do so? Why would not heavy taxes on idle lands, in the country or in the city, bring them into use and increase the production of goods? Why would not heavy taxation of our coal, ore and oil lands force them into the fullest possible use? Is there any other means of opening up production and of greatly increasing the supply of goods? In fact, is there any other possible way, than through the taxation of land values, of raising sufficient revenue to pay the war bills of the Allies in the next twenty years?"

## The New National Party

**W**E are in receipt of the following letter from Mr. Allen McCurdy, of the National Party:

MY DEAR MR. MILLER:

I am taking the liberty of forwarding to you some literature of the National Party concerning which I spoke to you on June 5th, at the Single Tax dinner. I wish you would read this literature with the idea firmly in mind that the greatest thing we liberals can do for every single concrete reform that has for its basis the advancing of human welfare is to organize into a political party all the liberal minded men and women in the country.

No political platform that can be phrased will meet with the universal approbation of every individual. Yet every liberal endeavor can succeed only as it is enforced by the organized strength of a party whose spirit and general inten-

tion is true to the principle which prefers human welfare to every other consideration. Farmers, exploited laborers, consumers who are struggling against the high cost of living—in fact, the bulk of our population must be assured of a political party's honesty in its endeavor to solve the manifold problems which arise in all these groups. Once this organized liberalism is created, every specific reform, such as Single Tax, Labor Legislation, will immediately gain a power which none could gain by going to the country with an isolated panacea for all human wrongs.

Whether we like it or not, a man votes against a thing which in his intelligence is the concrete obstacle which stands between himself and what he considers it is just for him to have. It would be better of course if every man's intelligence showed to him the fundamental cause lying beneath his superficial troubles; unfortunately most of us in one way or another are not fundamental enough in our thinking and act from motives that lie very near the surface.

To achieve results, to maintain movement of progress towards our ideals, it is necessary for us to see the folly of the people and yet not be led into contempt of the people, but to translate our progress into such terms as can be understood by the great masses of our fellow men who believe with us that there is a way out and are content to be led by those whose wisdom is large enough and whose faith in humanity is high enough to show them the next step.

Sincerely yours,

ALLEN MCCURDY.

We have the very highest respect for Mr. Allen McCurdy, the highly intelligent organizer of the new National Party, and do not doubt his sincerity. But his conception of a popular amalgamation of "liberals" into a political organization has its elements of humor. What is a liberal anyhow? The Socialist calls himself a liberal, and the Prohibitionist would resent the imputation of being a conservative or reactionary. A union of "liberals" would include persons of almost every persuasion, but a programme that would satisfy them all would be a literary curiosity.

And this programme of the National Party, an attempt to satisfy the Prohibitionists, Single Taxers, Socialists, *et al.*, is doubtless as good as anything that can be done along that line. But in its attempt to satisfy everybody it satisfies nobody.

It is nothing new that the National Party is trying to do. In 1878 an attempt was made to form a coalition party, and the name adopted was the same—the National Party. It was an aggregation of Labor Reformers and Greenbackers. The Populist Party, with less attempt to reconcile every conflicting difference, but nevertheless with enough of the heterogeneous to insure its early disappearance, was more successful, but was swallowed up by the Bryanized democracy of 1896.

It is true you can get enough planks in a party platform to include nearly everything everybody wants—the only limit being the amount of white paper to be had. But the

more you satisfy everybody for a time the less you satisfy anybody for long. The greater the diversity the less the unity, is an axiom to be borne in mind by the party platform makers.

The fact is, that, contrary to the belief held by some, parties succeed, in greater or less degree, as they are advocates of a single political or economic principle. Every election for the last hundred years has been the yea or nay of the people on a single question, slavery, tariff, free silver, or anti-imperialism. This makes the attitude of the Single Taxer who would test his principles politically so strong and so difficult of refutation.

The Single Tax Party is now in the field. It does not hope to obtain even State control, and will not go into the national field. But it hopes to influence the policy of the other parties. This it can do only in one way, that is by seeking the control of public opinion. When the other parties adopt the principle its work will be over.

## Real Estate Profiteering

IN the *New York American*, of May 16, appears an article under the title, "Why the Investor Should Buy," from the pen of Mr. Straus, of the real estate firm of S. W. Straus and Co.

"The first duty of the investor," says the writer, in a burst of patriotic fervor, "during this war is to place as large a portion of his funds as possible in Liberty Bonds. Our duty as patriotic citizens comes first and foremost."

Having thus exhausted his store of patriotism the writer comes down to business. "Real estate," he says, "is the one fundamental commodity. It is the last to be affected in times of disturbance. Real estate, furthermore, is always to be classed as the one constant necessity." Mr. Straus then tells us that a security based on real estate is founded in the "most elemental needs of the people." He goes on to say that owing to a slackening of new building construction caused by the war there is a constant upward tendency of rentals. "High-grade, well located properties are today showing a most satisfactory condition as regards income." Investments in real estate mortgage, or first mortgage bonds are called "*care-free securities*," for "such bonds based on New York real estate are tax-free."

That is, while war conditions are giving rentals an upward tendency investors are invited to put their money into these tax free securities. "Land is safe." As yet this government of ours has not shown any inclination to conscript the slacker lots. So this utterly shameless profiteering, with a little flag waving with a very little flag, is flaunted in the face of a nation that is urged to the limit of sacrifice and is responding nobly. Shall land be exempt from service at a time when all other interests are called upon to contribute and the business of the country is subjected to extraordinary burdens?

PEACE that is peace will mean that no nation maintaining a big military establishment shall be permitted to trade with other countries or send a ship to sea.—*Truthseeker*.

## Ex-President Taft on Problem of Production

EX-PRESIDENT TAFT, who has been incorporated into the Federal Labor Adjustment Board, is credited by the *New York American* with making the following declaration:

"In my opinion there is nothing so important in this country as production. The only way to save the country and to win the war is to produce. We cannot live without the producer. We cannot permit production to diminish or to cease. The producer must be made happy and effective by justice and kindness."

This last reference—to justice and kindness for the producer—seemed to indicate some perception of the economic and physical disabilities under which production in our country labors. But, as interpreted by Mr. Taft in the same interview, it refers merely to "harmonizing difficulties" between capital and labor, and to a general conference in the "American spirit."

Of course this is merely trifling with the grave problem of production. It is much to be regretted that Mr. Taft, who has taken such a conspicuous part in the nation's affairs and who now with great earnestness and energy is devoting himself to the solving of our vital problem of production, should fail to see the elemental factors of the problem. Were labor and capital brought to complete agreement and harmony, that would still leave unsolved the fundamental issue of access for both to land and natural opportunities, and likewise unremedied the injustice done to both by our whole system of taxation, which penalizes every attempt to turn to productive service the land of the country.

Any outside observer of our institutions, unacquainted with our real desire to promote production and thus to facilitate our country's victory in the war, would logically infer, from an examination of our fiscal machinery, that production was the very thing we wished to discourage and avoid. He would merely take our frenzied pleas for more and more production as exercises in fancy, interesting specimens of American humor. How could he think otherwise, when he sees the tremendous weight of our municipal, State and national taxation, amounting to billions annually, thrown against production and efficiency, and every facility and fiscal inducement offered for holding idle and out of use the very fountain and source of production, the land?

The "American spirit" that can tolerate such an immoral fiscal anomaly, weakening and endangering the very life of our nation, when her energies should rise to their maximum, is a spiritless, witless thing.

The times are serious enough to call for clear thinking and plain speaking on our fundamental economics. Trifling and subterfuges in such grave issues as our national production and efficiency will no longer do; they are veiled treason at the present moment.