

HOW HERBERT BIGELOW WAS CONVERTED

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

The short note in your recent issue telling of the death of George Von Auer recalls the fact that to him the movement is indebted for Herbert S. Bigelow and, no doubt, for others. It was in 1897 that Von Auer, at that time a new comer in Cincinnati, discovered a young preacher more interested in discussing economic conditions than in holding his job. He promptly joined his church and took upon himself the task of straightening the kinks in Bigelow's arguments. That he made progress in this job is a fact, although the credit for the finishing touch in Bigelow's conversion belongs to James R. Brown. It was Von Auer also who rounded up the Single Taxers of Cincinnati into allying themselves with Bigelow's church and helping in wresting it from control of the reactionaries. The influence which that institution under Bigelow's guidance has had in both local and state affairs, and the help that it was to Tom L. Johnson, are matters of history. Let it be remembered that George Von Auer planted the seed from which this grew.

Baltimore, Md.

SAMUEL DANZIGER.

COMMENDATION FROM CANADA

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

If one wants to get the truth, unadulterated, it can be found in LAND AND FREEDOM. It looks as though in our Western Civilization, especially on this continent, as if, as Henry George so truly portrays in "Progress and Poverty," "the Pillars of the Republic are already tottering to their fall" and due to Land Monopoly we have "beggars on our streets and tramps on our roads," and in high places sit those who do not pay to civic virtue even the compliment of hypocrisy. I am pleased to see that your publication is still upholding the torchlight of freedom, and if the masses do not, through excess of poverty, become too debased and degraded to care what happens, the silver lining may yet appear out of the dark clouds which are trying to engulf us all. Toronto, Canada.

WM. R. WILLIAMS.

FINDS THE EDITOR NODDING

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Helmut Schulz, of Brooklyn High School, is to be congratulated on his prize-winning essay, "Economic Principles as Expounded by Henry George in "Progress and Poverty." It is encouraging, indeed to find a high school pupil with so keen an insight into economic principles, and the ability to express them so lucidly.

An apparent contradiction has crept into the last issue of LAND AND FREEDOM. At the conclusion of Mr. Schulz's essay there is a reference to New South Wales as a country in which Single Tax principles are being tried out, and the paragraph ends with the following statement: "Although only a young nation it boasts such wealth and general prosperity as bespeak the benefits of an equitable economic distribution."

The article "Australia in Extremis" on page 15 of the above issue gives an entirely different picture of conditions in New South Wales. It states, for example, that there are 30,000 unemployed in New South Wales alone. The situation is fully explained to those who care to read through the article carefully, but it is such apparent contradictions that our opponents are quick to take advantage of.

The writer has been much interested in the discussions on co-operation between Single Taxers and Socialists in political campaigns. Both groups having the same object, it does seem as if they could unite on some common interest, and the question has often come up in the past, but the inherently diametrically opposite viewpoints make such cooperation difficult.

For example, in his speech here in Milwaukee last Friday night Mr. Norman Thomas set forth as his remedies for social evils the following: public ownership of big business, unemployment insurance, public

employment exchanges, work on public projects to take up slack employment periods in industry, the five-day week and "heavier inheritance and income tax."

There is little encouragement for a Single Taxer in that statement and he would be hard put to it to defend the economic principles of such a candidate and still maintain his position as a follower of Henry George.

Milwaukee, Wisc.

K. L. HANSEN.

FROM A VETERAN WHOM WE HONOR

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

I want to thank you most sincerely for your kind notice of my 90th birthday.

With inspiration and strength to go on in my work in promoting the Georgan philosophy, my faithful wife can write my thoughts and my conclusions. I have received beautiful congratulations from Hon. Chas. O'Connor Hennessy, Mary Fels, Alice Thacher Post, Judge Blackman and every one of the clerks and officers of the Supreme Court in Brooklyn. I am rich in my faithful friends including yourself.

May the Creator of the universe bless you and every one of these named with long life and continued service. I am sincerely grateful.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

EBEN STILLMAN DOUBLEDAY.

SOME SORT OF UNITY SEEMS POSSIBLE

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

The progressive politico-economic movement in this country has reached a stage where it would seem to be a tactical error if Georgists stand aloof. The Socialists, under the leadership of such scholars as Thomas and Laidler, are becoming increasingly less doctrinaire. They are now meeting us Single Taxers half way by incorporating our ideas into a modified socialism. Henry George had no objections to socialistic reforms, but merely insisted that other reforms, by making the earth a more desirable habitation, enabled landlords to charge us correspondingly more for the privilege of enjoying the then more desirable habitation. Economic rents, lost to landlords, will be higher in a state where there are such things as the construction of public works to relieve business depression, public ownership of natural bounties and of public service industries, free trade, cooperatives, old age pensions, unemployment insurance, and freedom from the danger of industrial strife and of foreign war.

The adoption of these reforms, first, might perhaps place in relief, and show up the more plainly, the then exaggerated evil of landlordism, thus being educational, although needlessly expensive. But these reforms do not need to precede ours, because we may be able to have the cooperation of large groups which are willing, right now, to go along with us on the economic rent question if we will go along with them on their pet questions. "Labor" would appreciate more general support and would probably reciprocate. It would probably be more willing and able to change its brutal tactics when, and if, it saw that, by so doing, it would gain such additional support in its disheartening fight for a normal wage and even for the mere right to produce the necessities of life. Many reform movements would take heart and exert greater efforts, if there was a political party they could call their own, and if they had reasonable assurance that their votes would become effective in the not too remote future.

The League for Independent Political Action, now forming, advocates among other reforms, public ownership of coal mines and of the electric power industry, taxation of land values and free trade. A spokesman for the League says that there should be skimmed off through taxes on large incomes, inheritances and economic rent, those socially appropriable surpluses which are not necessary to carry on production, but which are, instead, merely tolls levied because of a monopolistic position. These words are as much Georgist as they are Socialist. If we Georgists have overestimated and other groups have underestimated the importance of our theory, they and we now have

a chance to learn as we go along together adopting one or another reform.

The Socialists will undoubtedly cooperate with the League but may retain their own identity and organization. In a national election, and in elections in smaller political subdivisions where there is little chance for a Socialist candidate, they will vote for the candidate of the new party. Likewise, the Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota might vote the new party ticket in a national election only, or it might identify itself with the new party. The new party would not try to duplicate the Farmer-Labor Party in Minnesota nor would it try to duplicate the Socialist Party in Milwaukee or Reading. Georgists, may retain their identity and organizations and carry on as always, but in addition would have the satisfaction of voting for a party pledged to free trade and taxation of land values.

Last, but not least, here is a chance for Single Taxers, and Socialists as well, to undo the public's suspicion of, and prejudice against, the single track mind. As Norman Thomas says, let us take the attitude of path-finders and not that of a Messiah.

The leadership of John Dewey should induce Georgists to join the League and do it now.

Chicago, Ill.

WALTER VERITY.

"UNEARNED INCREMENTS"

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

In regard to the recent discussion in your paper as to the desirability of working with the Socialists to attain common ends, I think such a course of action is highly desirable. As I understand the situation, Single Taxers and Socialists both desire that unearned increments in land values be appropriated by the public. The Single Taxers think this will cure most of the ills of society. The Socialists agree that it will cure many of such ills, but contend that there are other unearned increments that should be appropriated as well. As it is manifestly impossible to cure all the ills of society at one stroke, and whatever reforms are effected will have to be effected gradually and by piecemeal, it seems to me that the appropriation of the unearned increment of land will come first, as it is so much more easily effected and will not have the opposition that the whole programme of the Socialists will have. When that reform is achieved by the help of the Socialists, the Single Taxers will then use their judgment whether to go along with the Socialists in order to capture other unearned increments, or to rest content with their achievements and part company with the Socialists in their future operations. It is my belief that when that time comes, conditions will be so much improved and people will see the benefits of taking for the community what belongs to it that Single Taxers together with the Socialists will insist that all unearned increments of whatever nature go to those to whom they of right belong, but whether they do or not, let us work together as much and as long as we possibly can.

Seattle, Wash.

A. M. MOREY.

IS THERE A REAL DANGER HERE?

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Permit me to say a word anent the current discussion in your columns of the relations between Socialists and Single Taxers.

The Socialists would destroy private property rights in land as a first step toward destroying all private property rights; the Single Taxer would destroy private property rights in land as a first step toward conserving private property rights, recognizing that to extend private property rights to the inclusion of land is to deny true property rights, because equal right of access is thus denied to that from which all property must be produced.

The Methodist asked the Quaker for a contribution toward tearing down the Church steeple and replacing it with a higher one; the Quaker replied that Quakers did not believe in Church steeples, but that he would contribute \$5 toward demolishing the present one, hop-

ing that this first step would exhaust the fund available and that the Church would thus be left steepleless. The Bootlegger and the Dry both vote for Prohibition,—the first because he thinks it will bring him more profitable opportunities for selling liquor, the other because he believes the law will stop liquor dealing.

Can the Methodist and the Quaker, the Bootlegger and the Dry, be properly regarded as "cooperating," or is it merely incidental that for the time being they are just doing the same thing?

Truly, there is merit in the thought suggested by Mr. Geiger, that while the Methodist and the Quaker are together demolishing the old church steeple, one may convert the other as to the desirability or undesirability of replacing it with another,—but which will be which? It is obvious that a very large percentage of those who rank as "Single Taxers" are such chiefly from sentiment; they do not clearly comprehend economic principles, and would flop either way, with the crowd. Is there a real danger here?

Towaco, N. J.

GEORGE L. RUSBY.

MAJOR MILLER FOR SUPPORT OF NORMAN THOMAS

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

My experience of over forty years leads me to the belief that our progress will necessarily be very slow if we vote only for those who are completely and exclusively devoted to the Single Tax pure and simple.

While it is true enough that Socialism is, by its nature, contrary to the Single Tax, yet it seems to me that when a Socialist candidate such as Norman Thomas clearly endorses what would be an important step in our direction, we should support him.

All political platforms are more or less compromises, and it would be always our privilege if not our duty to state the grounds upon which our support is based and our reasons for not endorsing other planks in the candidate's platform.

There are no arch-angels available as candidates for public office and we must take them as we find them and make the best of them.

Lake Worth, Florida

FRED J. MILLER.

NEWS NOTES AND PERSONALS

JOHN A. ZANGERLE, assessor of Cuyahoga County, Ohio, asked by a Cleveland newspaper to reply to a Cleveland landowner who had complained of the assessment of his land for taxation, did so in detail, and his last paragraph must have been a shock to the real estate board:

"I note that the complainant urges that Euclid Avenue development is being delayed by high taxes on land value. This is news to me. I always had assumed that a high tax on land value stimulated improvement of the land, and that low taxes delayed its improvement. On the other hand, I always understood a corollary to be that a high tax on improvements delayed the improvements but that a low tax on the improvements stimulated their development."

IN Bengal, India, although land values have enormously increased, the government's revenue from landowners remains exactly the same as fixed by Lord Cornwallis a century and a quarter ago, and that's what the land speculators would like to do here.

PRAGUE does not give housing subsidies, but has exempted buildings from taxation until 1935, and the old city is building up rapidly, furnishing better shelter and much employment.

MANCHESTER, ENGLAND, to give employment to 450 idle men, paid \$885,000 for idle land, or \$1,300 per man.

WE have had frequent occasion to speak in terms of high praise of the excellence of our contemporary, *The Standard*, of Sydney, N. S. Wales. There is no Single Tax paper in the English speaking world that excels it in vigor, wit and clarity. Those political time-servers