

called you in to give you a chance to save your property. What do you say?"

"How about locking the machines so they cannot be used and leaving them where they are until we can find a place to dispose of them in another city?" asked one of the mayor's visitors.

"I asked you whether you would take the machines out or have the police smash them."

"Do you mean that the police will haul a machine out of any place they find it whether it is in operation or not?"

"Exactly. I do not care whether the machine is being used. We cannot bother with that question. A policeman may not find it in use, but it will be used if it is left where it is. Will you take them out?"

"I'll take out all that I own," spoke up one.

"I'll do the same," said another. The other two made a like promise.

"All right," said the mayor. "You will take these slot machines out of all saloons and cigar stands and other places and store them somewhere so that it will not be possible for anyone to operate them. I expect that each of you will let me know just where he has placed his machines. Owners of other machines will receive the same chance that you have had—store their machines where they will be harmless or have the police take them and destroy them. None will escape and there will be no second chance."

"Whew!" exclaimed one of the slot machine owners as the four stepped into the hall. "What are you going to do?" turning to one of his companions.

"Dig a hole in the ground, I guess, and bury my moneymakers. I could stand it to have the police get a spasm once in awhile and smash a machine, but to put the whole lot out of business!"

"Do you think Johnson would do what he said?"

"I ain't going to think. I'm going to get my machines into a safe place."—Plaindealer of June 21.

FIRECRACKERS ON THE FOURTH ONLY.

"Firecrackers can be used on July 4, and then only," declared Mayor Johnson yesterday.

"Persons who use them at any other time will be arrested and fined as heavily as the law stipulates. The police department has orders for a

vigorous enforcement of the law in this regard. Recently many complaints have been made of a too frequent use of firecrackers, to the annoyance of residents."—Plaindealer of June 25.

THE SOVEREIGN REMEDY FOR SOCIAL DISORDER.

Henry George proposed the abolition of all taxes upon the products of labor and the concentration of all taxes for public revenue upon the value of land as the "simple yet sovereign remedy" for the evils which threaten the social stability of civilized peoples. Subsequently this plan came to be called the "single tax." Because of this proposal George was denounced as "the greatest preacher of unrighteousness the world has ever known," as a socialist, as a confiscator of property, as a destructive revolutionist, etc. But throughout the whole tirade of abuse the followers of George could easily detect the note of fear. Those who profited by unrighteous social institutions and the apologists for such institutions realized that a practical remedy for the wrongs of centuries had been found and that there was needed only determination on the part of the people to make it effective; hence the tirade.

George did not propose to invade titles to property of any kind. Socialists would overthrow the institution of private property; George would protect that institution with greater moral sanctions and no less legal power than can to-day be brought to its defense. Nor did he propose to change the laws of taxation hastily, but instead to enter upon a policy which should advance steadily to the full realization of the ideal condition proposed. With appreciable progress in this direction George believed owners of vacant land would sell their holdings at much less than present prices, thereby more freely opening the source of all wealth to labor and capital, the active agencies of material civilization. For, while the wealth we do produce is divided in a monstrously unfair manner, this fact is of trivial consequence in comparison with the enormous check upon production caused by the monopolization of land. Idle labor, wasting capital, unused land, is the condition that is everywhere presented.

Producers not driven into absolute idleness are forced to avoid the valuable vacant land that is abundant within the corporate limits of all our populous cities, and to use inferior localities as the only alternative to the

low wages to be had at such centers. To avoid these conditions many wholly cease producing and seek admission to the legal profession—already overcrowded—become physicians in a way; turn book agents or life insurance solicitors; work the shell game or the strong arm; practice any of the devious methods that human wit has invented to escape starvation wages on the one hand, and the sage brush of the west on the other, and all because our laws make it profitable to hold idle the only source from which wealth can be drawn—the land.

Is it not true that we live on the outer surface of a sphere called the earth? And if this be true, where can we get the material out of which to make our houses, our clothing, our food—in a word, our material necessities, comforts and luxuries—save from the planet itself? And how can we get all these things—called wealth—save by our own physical exertion? Does some one say we harness the forces of nature to do our bidding? True, but we cannot think a harness onto steam, nor fasten one onto an electric current by thought. We can think out the way to harness them, but cannot actually place the harness by thought alone; the physical exertion of men is necessary.

Wealth, then, is produced from land by labor. Part of the wealth when procured goes to those who have in any way contributed to its production. This portion or fund is called wages. The balance goes to the owners of the land on which the production took place. This portion or fund is called rent—sometimes ground rent.

At this point it may be said that there are other matters to be taken into consideration, as commissions, dividends, interest, royalties, and the like, and that therefore the classification rent and wages is not inclusive. Take, for instance, dividends on the stock of a railroad. The stock represents the road. The road is made up of ties, rails, cars, engines, etc., and a strip of land—continuous, maybe, across several states. That strip of land is valuable—more valuable than all the rest of the railroad property. Its portion of the dividend is rent; the balance is wages. Careful analysis will demonstrate the same truth in all lines, although in some lines the examination may be somewhat difficult to follow, because of the more or less intricate processes of production employed.

Into rent and wages, then, all wealth is primarily apportioned. Wages is earned. Rent is paid for the mere op-

portunity to produce. Land is that opportunity. Rent is not earned by those who now get it. The fact, however, that rent can be collected by those who own valuable land leads men to buy vacant land that seems likely to be in demand in the future and hold it against occupation and use by others, waiting for the rise in price contingent upon this anticipated increase in demand. If the bulk of rent (ground rent) were taken in taxation it is obvious that the incentive to speculation in land would be gone, and that under such conditions no sane man would buy land save to put it to use; and as there are not enough people to actually use to its legitimate capacity more than a small portion of the land, it follows that the source of supply from which all life draws its sustenance would forever remain open, offering to honest labor that share of wealth which is its equitable and natural reward.

There are matters which people can attend to in their collective capacity better than they can individually. Government is a necessity of civilized society. To exist government must have a revenue. To get a revenue we must tax one of the funds into which production is divided. Public revenue must be drawn from either rent or wages. There is nothing else in existence that can be taxed (unless, perhaps, the foreigner). To tax wages is to add to the cost of living; is to make men cheap. Not to tax wages is to leave to men the natural reward of their toil; is to make men dear. Not to tax rent (properly, land value) is to invite land speculation; is to make land dear. To tax land value is to destroy speculation in land; is to make land cheap. All production is primarily divided into rent and wages; if this be true, it follows that the higher one is the lower the other must be. A low-priced man is the necessary corollary of high-priced land.

The art of government of the strenuous sort is to so adjust taxes that they will fall on wages (for the benefit of laborers, of course), and to tax rent but little. This is the basis of monopoly. In the United States for every dollar of taxes collected from rent wages is held up for ten. In support of the federal government rent pays nothing. No landlord, as a landlord, pays one cent to support the United States government. All of the expense of river and harbor fakes, credit mobiler and whisky steals, star route holdups, embalmed beef, Cuban post office bookkeeping, disappearing guns, Carnegie armor plates, useless

navies, Philippine butcheries, Annapolis duds, West Point toughs and court jesters; the whole thing, root and branch, is saddled upon wages. It is a good thing—for the rent collectors.

Henry George moved to change the system. Many enthusiastically second his motion. And those who are strong of sight perceive the growth of his thought in the march of events. For in the often reiterated assertion that the evil of trusts is in the monopoly, not in the combination, the idea of Mr. George is expressed. In the widespread demand for municipal ownership of monopolies, but not for flour mills, etc., the distinction made by Mr. George is adhered to.

In short, three roads along which society may attempt to move present themselves to-day:

The first is further monopoly, privilege—imperialism.

The second is further regulation by the state of private industry, declining individual liberty—socialism.

Avoid these, and no matter what may be attempted, aid and comfort will be afforded the movement for which Henry George lived and for which he died, the single tax on land values—democracy.

The sphinx of fate sits at the parting of these roads and asks its question.—John Z. White, in the Chicago Record-Herald of May 19.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR.

A letter from Frederic Harrison in London Daily News of May 30.

My friends urge me to send you a letter about the "Return of Farm-Burning, S. Africa (Cd. 524)," but I doubt if you would print anything which could fully express my own feelings on studying it; and I know that this incident is merely part of a far larger whole. However, if your readers would care to understand something of "the panoplied hatred" with which my friends and I regard this very brutal episode in an infamous war, I will put our case before them in plain words. I am neither "Little-Englander" nor "Pro-Boer," nor "cosmopolitan crank," but a patriotic Englishman, who does not think his country's greatness needs to be eked out with more Klondikes and Ugandas, and refuses to applaud every folly and crime into which demagogues in office may contrive to delude the nation.

The official return has disclosed a barbarous, vindictive, systematic attempt to terrorize and crush a brave enemy in arms, by devastating a coun-

try which it was found impossible to conquer, by ruining the homes of soldiers with whom we were waging war, and by exposing their wives and children to misery and want. This was a violation of the recognized laws of civilized war, and was expressly forbidden by The Hague conference. It was especially infamous when resorted to against an honorable body of citizens who were defending the existence of their country. It was insane folly in the case of a people whom it was designed to incorporate in the empire, who had actually been proclaimed as our own fellow-countrymen.

It was a policy so degrading in plan and so revolting in its consequences that any honorable soldier would have been justified in declining to undertake such butcher's work. But our commanders, accustomed to wholesale slaughter and devastation in warfare with savages in Asia and in Africa, and unaccustomed to fight with any men of European race, were found willing to act on it. And ministers at home were found willing to palliate it with cheerful indifference and evasive sneers. Both soldiers and ministers may count on this, that their names will live in history with those who ordered and executed the barbarities of the Thirty Years' war, the devastation of the Palatinate and the dragonnades of Louis XIV.

Barbarities of the kind became only too probable when our rulers entered "with a light heart" on a war to conquer and crush one of the toughest, bravest, most independent races in the world, and gayly announced that "not a shred of independence" would be left to men of proverbial courage and obstinacy, who for many generations have faced death, famine and the extremes of suffering in order to live free—and especially free of the hated British bondage. When the swindlers and braggarts told us that a little show of force would cow these Dutch farmers, that, even if war did result, it would be over in a few weeks, and would only cost a few millions, when they entered on one of the most formidable wars of the century with ignorance so laughable and arrogance so blind, it became clear to all who knew the history and nature of the Boer and the physical conditions of the task, that ghastly ferocities would be resorted to, and that our British name would be dragged down from each meanness and atrocity to still lower depths.

The horrible side of this war to us who retain some feeling for the honor