

CHAPTER XXI.

SELLING VALUE KILLED BY NATIONALISING GROUND RENT.

THE principal effect of the introduction of the Single Tax, and of its increase until it ultimately took up the whole ground rent received or enjoyed by the owner, must be that the selling price would be practically reduced to nothing.

When the levy reached a point at which no present margin existed, and no future margin was expected, between ground rent received and tax paid, it is quite certain that landlordism and speculation would disappear. The former exists upon income from investment, and the latter upon purchases at a low value and sales at a higher. "When the hope of their gains was gone" landlords and speculators would cast about for other investments which offered a prospect of return. The only parties, therefore, in the land market of the Single Tax era would be *users* of land. In buying land they would be purchasing no beneficial margin, which would be equivalent to an income of itself, over and above the net profit which their business operations would yield if they were carried on upon land which could be obtained rent free. The result could not fail to be, under these new circumstances, that when a sale was desired by one party and a purchase by another the exchange of the title deeds to the land would take place in consideration of the payment for improvements only; the land itself fetching only a nominal price.

But this extinction of the selling price of land would not take place if the landlord was able to pass on the tax to the tenant by raising his rent. This is not possible; but, in order to make the fact clear, it will be necessary to call attention to the precise *term* used. Note, then, that the proposal is not one to tax all *land*, but all *land values*, as represented by ground rent. This is not an ingenious quibble, nor is the distinction a fanciful one. If a tax was imposed on *all* the land of a country the problem would be quite a different one. Before such a tax was imposed it would be possible to use land which would just afford to the user a *bare living* when he paid no rent. After it was imposed no land could be used which would not permit of the user *paying the tax in addition* to making a bare living. The *universal* tax would therefore reduce the total

amount of available *hind*, while there would be the same number of *people* to be supported off it as before. This would alter the problem in two important particulars. In the first place, competition for land would become keener than before, and this would result in a slight increase of the rate of ground rent paid over the whole country. Rent would also start from a higher platform—viz., from the upper surface, so to speak, of the Universal tax, just as a building would be raised bodily if another course of stones was added to the foundation on which it was designed to stand. Ground rent is paid for the "extra desirability" which any piece of ground possesses beyond the most desirable piece which can be got rent free, and which will yield a living. It follows, therefore, there being a tax on even the poorest land which will do this, that the "extra desirability" ranks above this tax as its starting point. There could, therefore, be no escape for users from a universal tax, and if the landlords were called upon to pay such an one, they would add it to the rent, and would thus be enabled to retain the full selling value. Such a tax would not accomplish either of the objects sought by Single Taxers.

On the other hand, a tax on land *values* would not be a universal tax, because it would not fall upon land which had not acquired an annual value. Such a tax, seeing that it would not fall upon land which could be got rent free, would not throw any land out of use. The "extra desirability" principle would not in this case start upwards from a *tax level* but from *zero*. For these two reasons competition would be *less keen*, and would also *start* from a *lower level* than in the case of the universal tax. The landlords would be powerless to pass on the *value* tax, and the result would be that the selling value of their land would gradually disappear.

But a little consideration will show that the annual ground-rental value would not disappear. Preferences will always exist, as they do now, for certain localities and for land possessing good natural advantages or fertility. Ground rent will, therefore, always remain as a well understood market value, and could be as readily assessed as at present. The Single Tax must for this reason be levied upon the ground rent, which will maintain its existence, and not upon the selling value of the land, which will vanish.

CHAPTER XXII.

A LAND "VALUE" TAX IS NOT AN ADDITIONAL BURDEN ON LAND.

A VERY usual answer to the Single Tax proposal is that it would put all the burden of taxation upon the land, and would let off every other form of wealth and of income. It has been shown that the burden (wrongly so called) of *ground rent* is now borne by tenants and landless people. Single Taxers don't propose to add to this, but simply to take it for public purposes from those who are now receiving it—from the landowners, whose unearned perquisite it has been. It is not, however, true to say that this would make landowners only pay all the taxation. It would be equally true to say that the wholesale importers now pay all of the Customs taxation because they are the ones who actually pay the cash to the collector. The landowners *now* receive the amount from their tenants, or enjoy it in extra advantages if they use their own land, and would *then* pay it over to the State. The importers pay down the cash, but recover it from the retailers, and they again from their customers.

The inferences which are drawn from the incorrect supposition, that an additional burden would be imposed, are, that it would, in the first place, be unjust; and, in the second, ruinous to industry and to accumulation by discouraging the use of land.

It will not be necessary to take any notice of the *inferences* if the *premises* can be shown to be without foundation. It may be at once, then, denied that a land-value tax is a burden upon land. The argument under the preceding heading completely disposes of the fallacy of one popular assertion. It is there shown that the landlord has no power to pass on to his tenant the tax on ground rent. The ground rent is the only charge to come against any tenant in the Single Tax era, because all taxes and rates would be abolished. It is, therefore, not a *new* charge. The Single Tax would wholly fall upon the ground rent received or enjoyed by the land-owners: it would be so much *abstracted* from what they received, and could not be made to constitute an *addition* to it. The consequence is that, as far as the tenant would be affected, the so-called *burden*, so far from being increased by adopting the proposed

reform would, on the contrary, be *reduced* by the amount of the present taxes.

The next heading will show the effect upon the various classes of landowners. The most important portion of it, in this connection, is that which deals with the cases of owners who have carried on operations upon their land which have added to the produce of the country. It will be shown that improvements and all other effects of their industry will remain intact, and that they will all benefit from the remission of the present taxes. The inference may fairly be drawn from the existence of the latter fact that, where an owner's investment in land is not greater than he is able to make personal use of, the credit from taxes remitted will fully balance the debit arising from the adoption of the Single Tax. There will, therefore, be no additional burden placed upon the land of working proprietors.

These two classes—the tenants and the working proprietors—are the only ones who exercise their industry upon land, and as *they* will not be *burdened* by the reform, it follows that *no use* of land will be *discouraged*.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE EFFECT UPON LANDOWNERS PRODUCED BY THE CHANGE.

HAVING shown that the *principal* effect of the taking up of all ground rent by means of the Single Tax would be the destruction of the selling value of land, it will be necessary to show what its *secondary* effects would be. In considering these effects it will probably make the matter clearer if the cases of landowners and landless people are dealt with separately. The landowners consist of four principal divisions, viz., the speculator, the landlord, the working proprietor, and the owner who has borrowed on mortgage.

Take the speculator first—the man who buys land and keeps it out of use, or lets it for some inferior use, waiting for a tempting rise in value. The early effect of the introduction of the tax would be to make such a man anxious to sell out. His prospect of future profit would have disappeared. If he held on until the tax was fully imposed he would, after having been subject to an ever increasing annual payment, find that his land had no selling value. Of course he would not accept this horn of the dilemma, but would sell out early. Some fixed scheme for gradually increasing the tax over a given number of years would have to be laid down by Parliament. This would enable both buyers and sellers to calculate or estimate the present value of any holding with sufficient accuracy for their respective purposes. Speculators would probably soon cease to obstruct the progress of useful settlement, as they do at present.

Next take the landlord—the man who has inherited or bought land which he does not personally cultivate or use, but which he lets to others for rent. The result to this class of owner would be a gradual and progressive reduction of income, until at last he would pay away to the State all the ground rent which he had received from his tenants. Of course, he could sell out at any time if he elected to do so. It may be noted, also, that the speculator could let his land, and for the future become a landlord, with an ever-decreasing rent-roll.

Let it be remembered that neither of the representative owners just dealt with is one who has added improvements to his land. But there are cases where tenants have taken improving leases, and where the

improvements, wholly or in part, fall in to the landlord at the end of the term. These improvements would not form part of the assessed value, and would, therefore, not be taxed. At the end of the lease the landlord could sell these with his freehold, or re-let the whole to the same tenant or to another. He would thus get cash or derive an income from the improvements, without being subject to any deduction. This power of the landlord to "reap where he had not sown and to gather where he had not strawed," has caused great indignation even amongst those who look upon ground rent as a legitimate charge, made by a man who allows another to use his land. With how much more horror Single Taxers—who wholly deny the equity even of ground rent—view such "reaping" and "gathering" had better not be expressed in words here. In London, and most of the large towns of England, many thousands of acres have been covered by tenants with houses and other buildings, with the knowledge that they will wholly revert to, and become the property of, the ground landlord at the end of the lease. Suffice it to say that the Single Tax would effectually stop the growth of this evil system and cause it to gradually die out at the roots. But it cannot be altered in any other way.

There are other landlords who have invested capital in making improvements and erecting buildings on their land. The income arising from these would not be reduced by the new tax, nor do Single Taxers grudge the landlords a penny of it. They have no enmity to any class, however they may be named, and are prepared to recognise the value of improvements by whomsoever made, and whether they are large or small. Land and raw materials are provided by the Creator, hut buildings and other improvements are not—they don't fall from the clouds or spring up of themselves, and therefore no man can expect to get the use of them for nothing.

In the third place, take the *working proprietor*—the man who owns the land which he cultivates, who owns the site and building where he keeps his country store, or his town shop, office, hotel, ware-house, factory, or dwelling house. Such men are all better off under the Ballance Land Tax Act, 1891, than they were under the Property Tax, by reason of the exemption from taxation of improvements up to £3,000. Single Taxers rejoice in this reform as far as it goes; but they would go further in this direction by exempting all improvements, however large. On the other hand, they would refuse the present

exemption of small properties and the deduction from moderate ones. They hold that under any circumstances, and especially where there is no plurality of votes, it is demoralising to make such a proposal. It is equivalent to offering a bribe to a numerous class of voters in these terms: "If you will keep our party in power we will impose taxation which will not touch you."

Let us consider how the Single Tax would affect these working proprietors. In the first place, it is quite clear that the selling value would, as in the other cases, be gradually taxed out of their land. Their balance-sheets would therefore show this item as a steadily decreasing asset. Their improvements would remain intact and absolutely secure to them, because they would continue to hold the title-deeds of the land on which they stood. They could sell or bequeath the whole without interference from anyone. So much for their capital accounts. Next as regards their profit and loss accounts. All taxes upon existing or future improvements would disappear from their "business charges." They would be relieved from all existing taxes of every description, except the penny in the £ on unimproved land value; from Customs duties (and consequently from the annoyance, delay, and labour entailed by the necessary "search"); from stamps on cheques, bills, receipts, and deeds; from stamp duty on land transfers, from excise, from death duties, income tax, graduated tax, tax on improvements, and from miscellaneous duties. These would be their principal credits. On the other hand, they would be called upon to pay to the State a tax of 20s. in the £1 on their annual ground rent assessment. An estimate of the amount of this value for the whole Colony is hazarded at page 58. Everyone will be able to judge for himself of the soundness or otherwise of the forecast, and can apply such a percentage as he thinks fit to his capital value as fixed by the last assessment. This will give him an approximation to the amount of his new annual charge, supposing the change to be completed *at once*, which is not contemplated. It will be evident that the credit under the head of Customs duties will vary in each case. It will be greater to men with large families than to those having small ones, and to bachelors. It would be greater to those who use wines, spirits, and tobacco than to the abstainers from these luxuries. Those who conduct large commercial businesses would benefit more than small traders and farmers from the remission of stamp duties.

It is impossible to give any general estimate of how the Single Tax would affect any particular class of owners, because the circumstances of its different members vary so largely. It is probable, however, that all who cultivated or used the whole of their land would receive credits fully equal to the new tax.

In the fourth place, there is a considerable number amongst all landowners who are only *part owners* of their land. Reference is here made to those who have borrowed a portion of their purchase money upon mortgage. There are probably more such cases amongst working proprietors than in either of the other sections. To a man of small means wishing to get the use of land, the first inducement to purchase in this way, is his desire to be able to make improvements without the fear of losing them. The second is, to make his tenure a permanent one, and by this means to escape the risk of having his rent raised. The third inducement, but a more distant and less certain one, is to ensure that any increase of selling value shall remain with himself. The first reason does not weigh with speculators or landlords at all, and the second not so much; the inducement, therefore, to buy more land than they are able to pay *cash* for, is not so great in their cases.

The effect of the tax upon the working proprietors who are in this position would be materially different from what it would be upon sole owners. It has already been stated that the mortgagee would be treated as part owner, both of the bare land and of the improvements, *pro rata* with the real owner. Neither would be taxed upon the improvements, but each would pay upon his respective interest in the ground rental value. This class of owner would therefore pay tax only upon the unencumbered part of his rent, and would thus be called upon to make a less sacrifice than the owner who had found the whole of the purchase money.

But, notwithstanding the foregoing explanations, Single Taxers must not be understood to base their case upon how the reform will work out in detail to the satisfaction of individuals. It is desirable to indicate its effects in the way that has been attempted, so as to make the whole proposal quite clear, but not for the sake of making converts on account of self-interest. They do not seek to make it attractive to any special class, for that would be to lay its foundation in sand. They urge its justice, the soundness of the principle upon which it is based, viz., the complete and permanent removal of all taxes, hindrances, and

insecurity from industry of every kind, whether it is of the hand or the brain, and whether on a large or small scale.

Single Taxers, therefore, point out without concealment or hesitation, that it is to the landowners of the present day that they look for whatever sacrifice it may be necessary to make, in the first instance, in bringing about this great fiscal readjustment. They do not believe that these men are any worse than other classes of the community, or a whit less patriotic than their fellows, when they clearly see what is for the public good. Nor would even they be wholly losers by the reform. "In blessing others, they would themselves be blessed." To see some prospect of stopping much of the industrial strife which exists everywhere, and to greatly reduce the terrible distress which prevails amongst the lowest paid classes of all large cities, and at times amongst the unemployed, must be the desire of every humane man. To make some pecuniary sacrifice from an ample income, where it exists, would be readily assented to by nearly all, if only the prospect of *real and lasting benefit* was assured. Let all well-disposed men, therefore, look earnestly into the suggestions here made, and test them in every way that may suggest itself. They are put forward as possessing a *direct* value in themselves, but if this is an error, they may yet be the means of *suggesting* some better theory. No one who has the ability to read and think, can excuse himself for neglecting to look into economic questions when such astounding facts are everywhere staring him in the face. Let him consider the fact that the *bulk of mankind* in civilised countries is still living in a condition *far below* a desirable standard, in spite of the fact that our productive power is *many times greater* than it was fifty years ago. Let him set alongside of this the abnormal growth of great fortunes, and if it does not strike him that there must be some wrong principle at work, his reasoning powers require the stimulus of collision with other men's thoughts. The facts ought to be enough to induce him to seek this by reading a few books that will show where mens ideas and hopes are tending. The exercise will be sure to do him good.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE RESULTING "INCREASE" OF GENERAL INCOMES, EMPLOYMENT, PRODUCTION, AND SAVINGS; THE IMPROVED OPPORTUNITY FOR SELF-EMPLOYMENT.

THE landless class forms by far the most numerous section of the people, and includes all tenants, whether of farms, or shops, or dwellings, all who receive salaries or wages, and all who would like to, but don't receive them. It includes many who feel themselves possessed of powers of body and mind which would enable them to employ *themselves* rather than ask work and subsistence from *others*, but are yet so hedged round that they are never able to attain their commendable ambition.

To these, the Single Tax would be *wholly* a gain. Not that it would give them anything for which they did not work; for this would be a wrong to someone else. Its early effects would be felt by a gradual reduction of the taxes and rates which they would be called upon to pay. This would *be* equivalent to a gradual increase of their incomes. It would be the first step in the direction of gradually restoring to them their share of the common use of the ground rent which they had helped to create, but from which they had received no benefit. The Single Tax would collect it to be used for the good of all, in providing for the public needs of the whole community.

But it has been shown that a change more important still, to the landless man would follow. The destruction of the selling Value of land would make it equally accessible to all who wished to use it. There being nothing to pay to secure the possession of land for the purpose of using it, the man of small means would be placed on a par with the capitalist, and could elect to employ himself instead of asking for work. Here would be the legitimate opportunity for one who was qualified, or who felt the desire to try, to step out of the ranks of wage-earners, and to employ himself. Now he has to pay down a premium in the shape of purchase money, to induce someone to stand aside.

Single Taxers are confident that this change in the incidence of taxation, and the consequent killing of selling value, would give a most powerful impetus to the improvement of every class of property. It would be

equivalent to *servicing a notice* upon all who saved anything, that for the future they must invest it *all* in *improvements* or in *useful enterprises*. Every natural and prudent instinct would, moreover, tend to the observance of this notice, and not as they do with so many of our highly artificial regulations respecting land—to its evasion. This change of investment would, first of all, afford more employment and better wages, and would increase the production, profits, and savings, of every farm or factory which had been so developed. This would correct the lack of purchasing power amongst the many, which now causes sluggishness in production and distribution.

Then, again, the ground rent, which is abstracted from the community through the medium of land users, is expended by the landlords in luxurious living, which involves the withdrawal of men from useful work in order that they may perform personal and often menial services. This has introduced a false and ostentatious style of living, which the more successful men of business are too apt to imitate, and which many, with less means again, follow at a greater distance. Part of that which is saved by landlords is generally invested in purchasing more land, and therefore in extending the evil which exists, by taking up more ground rent, and by retarding production over a larger area. Part is also invested in creating companies or syndicates, which obtain, by their superior power of competition, practical monopolies in other departments, or else draw industrious people on to the ice by offers of loans. All these forms of the use of capital contain large elements of injury—and even of danger—to the community.

These are not small matters. Financially they are important, but *socially* they would be even more far-reaching in their results. They would, as has been shown, enable the more capable and thrifty of the wage-earners—whether they worked by hand or brain—to step out of the ranks and cease to compete for wages. Nay, not merely to cease to compete for wages, but to swell the ranks of the employers who compete for service. There would thus be opened out a constant possibility of selection between various employments and pursuits as their expansion or contraction—or the tastes of the rising generation—caused them to be desired. The question now anxiously asked, "What shall we do with our boys?" would no longer fail in getting a satisfactory answer.

But these are not the only possibilities to be secured by the reform. The speculator and landlord having disappeared, there would be no class left to be supported in idleness by the workers. All would then live by industry, and none be left to despise it. The true "dignity of labour" would then be acknowledged as a reality. Now it is obscured by the shallow fancy that those who do least are the happiest, and that they are ennobled and raised above their fellows by such abstinence. The chief observable peculiarity in the position of the so-called nobility of the day is that they are people who are supported in idleness by the contributions of a number of their fellows who are, poorer than themselves. The future test of nobility may come to be due to the fact that a man supports himself and devotes part of his leisure to the public good, while scorning to use his position or influence for the furtherance of his own and his friends interests at other people's expense?.

Under the new system trades unionists would not *need* to bind themselves together in hostility to free labourers, nor to stipulate for the exclusion from their respective trades of numbers of their own sons and those of their mates. The burning question of the hours of labour, as well as that of the sanitary condition of workshops, would solve themselves by the increased chances afforded to the workers of self-employment.

It will be desirable to say a little more as to the comparative advantages of self-employment and of working for wages in the Single Tax era. It may be thought by some, owing to the frequency with which these have been contrasted, that Single Taxers believe that everyone would decline to work for another, and would enjoy a much more desirable status in self-employment. But this is not the correct inference. It would be rather this: that Single Taxers see that those who *now* work for others lie under considerable disabilities, and they expect that the reform will remove some of these, and render the two conditions for the future equally desirable. If this proved to be so, then the choice would simply be one of individual preference, just as a man now prefers a certain trade or profession to all others. "Freedom of contract" is one of the sophisms much paraded in these days, but it is one of the conditions which cannot now exist as far as the wage-earners are concerned. The fact is that there is no alternative open to most of them but to take what wages are offered in their line of business or to go without. Now, to go without would mean, in most cases, to starve, and that can hardly be considered an

alternative, bringing with it the blessing of "freedom of contract." A valuable and welcome alternative would be that which is predicted as a result of the Single Tax, viz., a chance of employing themselves. That does-not exist *now*, and it never *will* so long as land for use is unobtainable, except upon payment of a premium in advance, or upon the annual payment of rent, besides rates and taxes. It is only a man with capital who can do either, and very few wage-earners can ever save enough to attain to such an alternative. What is *unattainable*, by the seekers has practically *no existence* as far as they are concerned, except in so far as it exists merely to tantalise them.

The wage-earner of the present suffers under three disabilities:—

1. He pays his share of taxes and rates.
2. He helps to create the ground-rent fund; and
3. From the fact that this fund goes into private hands, instead of being treated as public revenue, arises the "selling value" of land, which forms the barrier which cuts off his alternative chance of employing himself.

The wage-earner of the new era would be in the following position:—

1. Neither he nor anyone else would pay taxes or rates.
2. He would continue to help, along with every other member of the community, to make particular sites more valuable than others. If he did not elect to use land he would not evade any duty to the public, nor would he receive any favour from those who did take it and who paid the equivalent rent. Such persons would make no sacrifice on his behalf, for they would get full value for their money.
3. He would have the "alternative chance" fully open to him. If he preferred, he could work for wages, or if he chose to use land he could do so by paying annually the assessed value of the piece which he selected. He would neither benefit nor lose by choosing either alternative in preference to the other.

But it is not only tenants and wage-earners who would find their incomes increased. The working proprietor is likely to come to see the desirability of introducing the system of assessing *hind* value only, and of excluding *improvement* value. This will probably be seen in reference to local *rates* before it will appear desirable in Colonial *taxes*. The greater concentration of improvements upon smaller areas in towns

and cities will probably cause the dwellers therein to see it earlier than country settlers. It is for this reason very probable that the reform movement will mature first in the towns, then spread to the country districts, and then begin to reform Colonial finance.

A strong colouring is given to this conjecture by the action of the London County Council, which might reasonably have been expected to prove a Conservative body. So far from that, however, it has recognised that the great improvements carried out by the old Metropolitan Board of Works, with funds raised from the *ratepayers*, have greatly added to the values of the *ground landlord*. The Council has consequently promoted Bills in Parliament asking for power to charge *half* the cost of such improvements upon the landlord. These have been thrown out, and the Council has accordingly brought matters to a deadlock until public opinion on the point shall develop. If the resistance of Parliament is continued long enough, it is very probable that the eyes of the public will be sufficiently opened to enable it to grasp the fact that the *whole cost* should be paid by those who will ultimately reap the *whole benefit*. In their London Correspondent's letter, published by the *New Zealand Herald* on June 2, 1893, will be found this very significant sentence: "The London County Council has decided to postpone all improvements of the city not absolutely necessary until such change can be made in the incidence of municipal taxation as shall cause the ground landlord to bear his fair share of the burdens."

Since the above paragraph was written a cablegram has arrived, dated London, June 27, which reads as follows:—"In the House of Commons the Betterment Clause, in the London Improvements Bill, was carried by a majority of ninety-eight." There seems no reason to doubt the connection between the two allusions; and if this supposition is correct, it indicates a very marked advance in England in the method of dealing with the ground rent question.

It will surely not take long for all ratepayers to have their eyes opened to the injustice and the impolicy of assessing *improvements* for rating purposes. The rates are devoted to the maintenance of roads, to drainage, to lighting, and to other public services. These are amongst the advantages which enhance the value of *bare land*; that is, of land apart from improvements, or, as it is technically known in the Ballance Land Tax Act, "unimproved value of land." These public conveniences

do not increase the value of a ratepayer's *improvements* at all, but only of his *land*. They add just as much to the value of the *unused* land alongside of him. The improving ratepayer is there-fore being levied upon for the benefit of speculators and landlords who don't make improvements. A very little consideration would convince most ratepayers of the soundness of this reasoning, and would therefore show them that it is just and wise for them to insist that *rates shall no longer fall upon improvements*. Thanks to the 1891 assessment, made under the Act referred to, the figures are already in existence giving the separate values of *land* and of *improvements* throughout the Colony. The late difficulty, caused by the two values being lumped together in one sum, is therefore now removed, and it only requires that ratepayers should be resolved. "*No rating of improvements!*" should be the watchword of every man who exercises any form of industry.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE OLD "STOCK OBJECTIONS" DON'T APPLY.

THE explanations which have thus far been given, and which are in strict harmony with the principles and methods laid down by Henry George, will surely be sufficient to show that such objections as those which follow do not apply to the system proposed by Single Taxers. These objections are a fair sample of those which have been current in public controversy and in general conversation, and they exhibit the impatient intolerance shown by its opponents, and their very imperfect mastery of the question.

Among these objections are the following:—

- That it would involve handing everything over to officials.
- Turning people off their land.
- Taking the land away from the struggling settler.
- Making him a mere tenant of the State.
- Rack-renting him.
- Putting all the taxation upon him to the relief of the town trader and mechanic.
- Making him afraid to improve his land.
- Rendering it likely that the land would go out of cultivation.

The following misapprehensions have appeared in letters written in public controversy with the present writer. The letters indicate the opinion of their authors that the results named below would follow the introduction of the Single Tax—a term which they frequently use as if it was synonymous with Land Nationalisation:—

DR. WALLIS, in New Zealand Herald, of March 3 and 21, and April 5, 1890, says:

That it would "abolish the decalogue, and deny the primary obligations of public and private honour."

That it would place upon the land "a tax exactly equal to the rent which the land *reclaimed and cultivated by us* would yield, if we wished to let it or lease it to a cultivator."

That it means that "the hardest working class in the community should be selected and fixed upon as the sole class to be taxed, while all the other classes are to be exempt from taxation, and even to have dowries for their daughters, and different kinds of amusements provided, at the cost of the agriculturist."

That "they who own and till the land would be reduced to serfs, and slaves, and taxpayers, for the classes who follow all other kinds of business, or no business, in civilised lands."

That "Mr. Withy and his co-believers are entirely misleading the public when they say that it is only the unimproved value of the land that Mr. George's land grabbing scheme contemplates."

That "Mr. George is continually proclaiming in words that every man is most righteously entitled to the fruits of his industry, and at the same time he is doing all he can in order to seize upon, and confiscate to the use of the State, the fruits or results of the industry of all who hold property in land, whether the land be urban, or suburban, or rural."

That "the non-agricultural classes—the mechanics, tradesmen, merchants, manufacturers, professionals, capitalists, and idlers and rogues, etc. (forming from one-half to four-fifths of the population in most countries), are to be exempt from all taxation."

MR. F. G. EWINGTON, in New Zealand Herald of March 31, April 28, May 9, 17, and 26, 1892, says:

"Mr. George has demanded the immediate depriving of owners of their land values without compensation."

"Mr. George and his disciples are trying to force that 'hateful thing'—rack-renting—'upon us.'"

"If the tenants were compelled to compete openly against each other, as they would have to do under Mr. George's system, 'rack-renting' would be the rule and not the exception, and each tenant would have so little attachment to, and interest in, the soil, beyond his term of lease, that it would be unduly exhausted, and its products consequently diminished."

"The simple device of making landowners pay all the taxes."

Possibly both these gentlemen might somewhat modify the expressions used if they were writing at the present date, although the writer has no knowledge that they would do so. He has, however, no wish to place them at a disadvantage by quoting their past remarks. But they stand in print, and his desire is to impress everyone concerned with the inaccuracy, the total inadequacy, of such criticisms as applied to a serious controversy upon a matter of the most profound importance. There is every room for differences of opinion as to the causes of, and the most desirable cure for, the disease, but none as to the fact of its existence in our social system. These writers condemn unsparingly the solution of the difficulty proposed by Henry George. They would, no doubt, be listened to respectfully and gladly if they would advocate some other remedy. In the meantime, the present writer claims to have shown that their quoted objections are not applicable.