

The Philosophy of Freedom

An Open Forum for Single Taxers

Do you want to understand the aims and objects of the single tax? If you do, you can obtain literature on the subject free of cost by writing to the Brooklyn Single Tax League, 1467 Bedford ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.

LAND VALUES.

Through the kindness of F. W. McGuire, of the Chicago Single Tax club, the editor is in receipt of a copy of "Land Values," the Scottish single tax magazine (similar in size to The Public), published at 13 Dundas st., Glasgow. It is a 20-page monthly; 50c a year to American subscribers. The April number is well filled with news of interest to land reformers.

Whilst another man has no land, my title to mine, your title to yours is at once vitiated.—Ralph Waldo Emerson.

AN OPPORTUNITY.

The following letter speaks for itself. It may not be amiss to state, however, that Mr. Herman addressed the students of the Peru normal on December 1, 1897, that he is the author of an article on the money question, published in the April number of Why?, which The Independent expects to reproduce at an early date, and that he is an old-time single tax lecturer, having spoken in many states. What say Nebraska single taxers to Mr. Herman's proposition? Here is his letter:

Editor Independent: After further reflection on the activity of your paper in the reform movement the thought occurred to me that we might be of mutual service in this work. I will suggest a plan for your consideration. I wish to first call your attention to the enclosed circular which speaks for itself as an introduction and what my work has been. I came to this state two years ago to campaign for the Australasian tax amendment, or what was more commonly known as the Bucklin bill. At present I am working at my trade and expect to keep up my single tax work as I can afford it, and the suggestion I wish to offer to you is this: I wish to make a trip to my old home, near Cedar Rapids, Ia., this summer, and if you wish to make a few dates through Nebraska that I might take in, I should be pleased to do so.

I have spoken in Nebraska before, as the enclosed notices will indicate. I wish to go from here to Cedar Rapids and back by way of Sioux City, Ia., to Colorado again. I am not concerned about pay, provided you do not make too many dates for me. I can get my traveling expenses out of it I would be pleased; at any rate, as I am going that way any way, I will make a few points whether I get anything out of it or not. I am used to starving and concluded long ago that they can't kill me. I will speak on the money question as laid down in my articles in Why? or on the single tax.

J. R. HERMAN,
505 Charles Block, Denver, Colo.

The greatest discovery of my life is that the men who do the work never get rich.—Andrew Carnegie.

GROUND RENT AGAIN.

Editor Independent: In The Independent of May 7 you ask, "If the community has a right to make common property of ground rent, why not of every other value that the community creates?" One answer is, that the community does not create other values in the same sense, or manner, that it creates ground rent. Of course no object can have value unless there are two persons, one who has the object and the other who wishes it. But the community does not "create" the value of labor products. It only affords opportunity for exchanging them. Land is not a labor product. The values known as ground rent are largely the actual creation of the community, as a community, through its efforts in building roads, lighting streets, maintaining order, etc. Insofar as ground rents or values are created by communal expenditure there can be no question as to the justice of taxing those values to pay the expense.

There is another and stronger reason why ground rent belongs to the community, that is, to the people as a whole and not to any one individual. Each man has an equal right to the use of the earth, therefore each man has an equal right with every other man to the best location on the earth—that is the most valuable location. It is obviously impossible for everyone to occupy the best location. However, substantial justice can be se-

cured by taking from those who have the best locations the ground rent which represents the advantage which these people have over those occupying the poorest locations in use.

A. C. PLEYDELL,
52 William st., New York.

WE WANT THE EARTH.

"The earth hath he given to the children of men."—Psalm cxv., 16.
We want the earth—our fathers' God,
Enthroned in majesty on high,
Sent his creative fiat forth
And framed and fashioned earth and sky.
He made provision grand and free
For all, His power had brought to birth.
The King of kings gave royalty;
He gave the earth.

"The Heaven of heavens," He said
"is mine;"

"This for my glory I decree,
But for these children of my love
The earth their heritage shall be.
By blessing of my sun and rain
Right bounteously shall it bring forth
And all shall know the Father's name;
I give the earth."

We want the earth—And who are we?
We are God's children, great and small.

The rich and poor and bond and free,
For He hath made and loveth all;
We daily pray: "Thy kingdom come;"
We cry to Thee in famine dearth:
"As Thy great will in Heaven is done
So in the earth."

We want the earth: we claim our own,
Not charity's reluctant meed.

Our title issued from the throne;
The Maker's hand drew up the deed.
And so we claim the land and sea
By right of our most royal birth,
By God's immutable decree
We claim the earth.

ROSE SICKLER WILLIAMS.

THE SINGLE TAX A SANITARY MEASURE.

Editor Independent: I have chosen this phase of the single tax because I am a physician and the topic of sanitation can never be considered a party question.

Just now there is universal interest in the question of the prevention of tuberculosis. A congress is shortly to be held in Paris, France, to discuss the best means of preventing this terrible scourge aptly called the "White Plague."

Now, medicine in all its branches has advanced in the nineteenth century to a position that places it in the front rank of sciences, but unfortunately too much attention has been paid to its study at the object end of microscopes, and not enough to the general causes incident to our social state which occasion disease.

It is now quite generally recognized that the housing of the people is the main predisposing cause of all consumptive case. In former times heredity was considered the main factor but now we know that it is the inherited conditions which surround the individual rather than the taint in the blood of the patient which occasions the great loss of life from tubercular infection. A change of conditions would therefore be the best preventive measure which can be suggested. The single tax proposes to exempt all improvements in dwellings from all taxation for all time. Let every one consider carefully in his own sphere of observation how such a project would work either in town or country. Imagine a farmer who either borrows money or has saved it expending it to build over his dwelling with all the modern means of making it disease proof and that he would pay no more taxes at any time, than he would if he continued to live in a tumble down shack.

In cities the thing is easily understood. Abundance of capital can always be secured to make improvements if a profit is in sight. Now, in nearly all large cities the moment a man improves his house the taxgatherer is after him, levying an additional tax upon everything which he has bought to save the lives of himself and family. So it is in the country, though my own experience is solely that of a city man. Where is the common sense of fining a man for trying to save the lives of those dear to him?

He who has thought of this subject for years can hardly put his ideas into words, so great is his indignation against the unjust law of taxation now

in vogue, which really has a murderous tendency.

Volumes could be written upon this matter, but I think it best for your symposium to write merely a suggestion of the possible sanitary results from the application of the single tax.

It is best that every man should think it out for himself. We who understand the theory know full well that no means within human ken is as likely to give all that is needed to sustain life in the increasing abundance of food, clothing and shelter as the single tax. The single tax will let men produce the food to nourish their bodies, the clothing to protect them from the inclemencies of the weather, and dwellings in which their chances of health are so greatly increased that the imagination is appalled at the prospect and astounded that men cannot at once see the truth and as a unit demand that the laws be made to conform to it.

As a true measure of prevention of disease the single tax stands foremost among the ideas of our time in the minds of all who know anything about the subject. WM. N. HILL, M. D.
Baltimore, Md.

STATE INSURANCE—EQUAL FREEDOM.

Editor Independent: A recent issue of Public Policy contains an extract from Prof. George Gunton's lecture, "Are Trusts an Enemy to Labor?" in which he urges insurance for labor by the national government.

The only proper function of government is to maintain equal freedom. Equal freedom means the absence of privilege. With all privileges abolished, labor would receive natural wages—its full product. Labor would cease to be a weakling, dependent on the state. Then there would be less need for insurance, while all would be able to insure. If labor wanted insurance it would insure itself without any governmental patronizing.

Society is already too artificial; government is too cumbersome. There must be a reversion to first principles. Adopt the single tax on land values, public ownership of public utilities, revoke all special privileges, remove the heavy hand of government and let giant labor work out its own salvation. A. FREELAND.
Mt. Pleasant, Tenn.

COMPELLED TO DO AS THE ROMANS DO.

I advocate now and have advocated the abolition of all these forms of monopoly, and yet I am and have been a beneficiary of them all. If there is any inconsistency in that it is not my fault. I preach what I sincerely believe to be the true and just social condition—the condition of equal rights, of real freedom. Yet I must live under such laws and usages as the majority of the people decree. They say that these monopolies shall exist; that bread-winning shall be a scramble; that there shall be man-poor among us and comparatively few rich. I do not believe that this is right, and I am raising my voice wherever possible against it. But the people will not yet listen. They have different views from mine, and they hold to them. Now being compelled to live in this state of things where life is a scramble which the people will not stop, I am bound to do the best I can for myself. And so I rush in and grab all the monopolies I can get my hands on, firm in the purpose, however, to use the wealth so obtained to teach the people how misguided they are to permit themselves to be robbed in this way.

TOM L. JOHNSON.

A tax on commodities makes them scarce. A tax on land values increases the supply of available land.

WONDERFUL RESOURCES OF THE WEST

If you are looking for a home and want to visit the west you can do so with very little expense as the UNION PACIFIC will sell one-way colonist tickets EVERY DAY at the following rates from Lincoln:

UNTIL JUNE 15

\$25.00 to San Francisco, Los Angeles and many other California points.
\$20.00 to Ogden, Salt Lake City, Butte, Anaconda and Helena.
\$22.50 to Spokane and Wanatchee.
\$25.00 to Portland, Tacoma, Seattle, and many other Oregon and Washington points.

ROUND TRIPS

July 1 to 10, inclusive.
\$15.00 to Denver, Colorado Springs and Pueblo.
June 1 to September 30, inclusive.
\$16.75 to Denver.
\$17.35 to Colorado Springs.
\$17.50 to Pueblo.

For full information call on or address,
E. B. SLOSSON,
General Agent.

1,500 Acre Hog Ranch

No. 709. The owner of this property is old, a widower and desires to retire. 1,500 acres all in a body, 400 acres of fine timber, entire ranch under fence; this timber is a never failing source of income and will sell for half the price asked for the ranch. A small stream runs through the ranch; 600 acres, including the timber, is in pasture; 200 acres of choice bottom land; over 80 acres in splendid stand of alfalfa, remainder all under cultivation; the entire 200 acres of bottom land will produce the very best alfalfa. Good frame house, bearing orchard, large barn, granary, cribs, lots, etc. Also a tenement house; four and a half miles from good railroad town. Right in the heart of the very best country in the Republican Valley. Price of this ranch and farm complete \$18 per acre. This is a money-maker and will be sold on easy terms. This is a great opportunity for a farmer who has several boys, or for several farmers to buy this tract of land together. It is also an excellent investment. Weber & Farris, Lincoln, Neb.

The European press is making many sarcastic remarks about Roosevelt's imperialistic speeches. One sentence at which they direct their shafts of sarcasm is his speech out on the coast when he said: "The Pacific ocean during the century opening must pass under American influence." They ask why he cannot as well say when he comes to Boston or New York: "The Atlantic ocean during the coming century must pass under American influence." It appears to the Britisher that his government having been permanently established in Hong Kong since 1841 and at other points on the western shore of the Pacific will have something to say about that great ocean passing under American influence.

Although the volume of money in circulation has increased 54 per cent in ten years, ex-Treasurer Lyman T. Gage declares that the present supply, including gold, silver and paper, is entirely inadequate and he therefore advocates its further increase by the issue of asset currency. He speaks for the leaders of the republican party who have wholly abandoned their "hard money" ideas and are now going in for an almost unlimited issue of paper. Paper money is all right with them, provided that the banks are allowed to issue it.

The readers of the president's speeches have become very tired of his repetitions concerning the virtues of life. He spreads these preachings over public, private, civil and military life and is forever talking about "doing things," instead of "talking things." He is especially hard on the "cravens" that are afraid to "do things." There are a good many men who think that he had better begin "doing things" to the postoffice thieves of high and low degree, instead of wasting his time in these unending sermons on the virtues and verities of life. It appears to many that the president is doing a good deal of "hanging back" himself. If he is not "craven" he can find an abundant opportunity at Washington just at present to "do things." The last defense made at Washington is that all those who drew salaries and performed no service as well as the eminent Mr. Heath, who put his women on the pay roll, are all out of the service now and nothing can be done. That is a makeshift. It is in no wise proven that all these looters have left the service, and if they have, suits can be brought against every one of them for the recovery of the unearned money. So let the president go to work and "do things."

Music and the drama have always been the foes of the oppressor. The authorities in the Philippines seem to be having as much trouble with the actors, playwrights and orchestras as they ever had with the insurgents. Literature and music has always been more difficult to suppress than small armies fighting for liberty. Taft and Roosevelt have begun an impossible task in the Philippines. As fast as one patriotic play is suppressed two more appear to take its place. The theatrical censor in "our new possessions" has a harder time of it than his brother in Moscow or St. Petersburg.

Those readers of The Independent who are interested in economical buying of up-to-date and fashionable dry goods should write today for the Spring and Summer Fashions book just issued by Lincoln's most progressive store, The Fit-Gerald Dry Goods Co. The fashion book has 60 pages profusely illustrated and is sent free to all who ask for it and mention The Independent.