

senses that all can deal with it as they please, but that no part of it has been assigned to any particular individual, and that the limits of private possession have been left to be fixed by man's own industry, and by the laws of individual people.

The object of this new tax is to cure the evils of the present system of land-holding. But in attempting to cure the supposed evils of that system, greater ones are sure to be created. Abolish the present system by direct methods, if it is necessary to abolish it, but not by taxation. Equity will not permit the one-fifteenth of the people of the country to bear all the burdens of government. Taxes are levied to satisfy collective wants, wants that spring from the organization of society; and those who share in the benefits of society, in the protection of the state, must share as well in the burdens. It is a principle of wise taxation that taxes should be so levied that no one class of people, or no one kind of property, should bear all the burden or bear more than an equal and just share. Put all taxes on one class of persons and you at once unite them to protect their common interest. Put all taxes upon one kind of property and you at once create a class out of those who possess that property. It has been a maxim of the American people, and it should continue to be, that there should be no taxation without representation, which means also that only those who are taxed should be represented.

The single tax is recommended because it is an easy and simple method of providing for the revenue to support this government. While ease and simplicity are good things, neither that which is easy nor that which is simple is always the best thing. Perhaps the easiest and simplest way of getting rid of a man who annoys you is to shoot him. But it frequently happens, however, that this is not the best way. If state ownership of land would, as Henry George claims, extirpate pauperism, abolish poverty, lessen crime, elevate morals and tastes and intelligence, purify government, and carry civilization to yet nobler heights, then indeed it

is to be devoutly desired. Is it not how ever true that the causes of poverty are deep seated in the nature of men; that human nature would need be revolutionized and formed anew before poverty would become unknown? Is it not true that the most effectual remedies for poverty must come through the individual himself rather than through legislation from within rather than from without?

The question of the origin of private ownership or land has been one of much dispute and confusion. It may be said, however, that its origin is not different from the origin of man's right to property in general. Whether that origin is natural or conventional it is the same with personal property. The single tax theorists cannot consistently destroy the property in the one without destroying the property in the other. If man has no natural right to exclusive ownership of land, how is it possible for a state to acquire that right? Since the state is simply the people in their organized capacity, the rights of the state are the rights of the individuals that compose the state. How would it be possible for a single state to stand out among the nations of the earth as a single individual and claim ownership of land? If an individual has a natural right to land then that right rests only in the whole people of the globe, and in the state that includes all nations. Then may not the single tax theorists more consistently say with Marcus Aurelis while standing at the threshold of the Christian era, and looking forward seventeen centuries, "That men are under one common law, and if so, they must be fellow citizens and belong to the same body politic. From whence it will follow that the whole world is but one commonwealth."

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### The Big Cut.

"I can think of nothing else, nothing else," and Olaf straightened up where he stood half way up the side of the Big Cut, and drawing his sleeve across his forehead, looked down with a haggard face on the