Liberty.

To Fannie Oppenheimer, my friend and co-worker in the cause of Freedom.

When outstretched hands a world has bent to thee,
And at thy shrine in blood their offering laid,
And still they bend, in patriot suffering mute,
Still through the blood of martyrs onward wave.
To thee, my queen, my life I consecrate,
And at thy sacred shrine I lowly bend;
For thou I live, I labor; thus I follow
Till in the lonely grave they find the end.

T. H. GARRIDE

The Single Tax as an Expedition.

In Australia there are many avowed Anarchists, chiefly of the "Individualist" party, who advocate the Single Tax as a temporary expedient, or as a step in advance; the fact of the Single Taxers opposing State Socialism, and holding Spencerian ideas as to government, may have something to do with this, also no doubt the extreme inaccessibility of land at the present time, and the idea that the Single Tax would to some extent remedy this particular evil.

The effect of putting the Single Tax in operation would, however, be very different from what its advocates imagine. It would either virtually alter nothing, or else reduce the population (except the official class) to the same dire straits as the worst paid and worst overworked are in to-day. This is easy to prove.

The doctrine of the Single Taxers is that instead of all other taxes a tax should be levied on the "improved value of land" and, further, that this tax should be raised to the full amount of the Economic Rent. The Economic Rent is the amount by which a piece of land is perceptible to an equal area of the worst land occupied under the jurisdiction of the taxing government. Ultimately, after the profit system by the process of co-operation or other mode, the Economic Rent is the amount of labor saved by the operation of superior soil, climate, or other natural advantages, and on account of the nearness of population, in producing the same result from one allotment of land as from another of equal area less favorably situated; and the labor so saved, or the products arising from its expenditure, the Single Taxers contend, pertains not to the individual situated at the favorable locality but to the community as a general whole. They maintain further, that the taxing away of this Economic Rent would abolish landlordism, and it is through believing this that certain Anarchists have been deluded into favoring the Single Tax as a government for the time being.

Now, to begin with, the Single Tax cannot abolish landlordism except on one condition—namely, that the worst land occupied, the productivity of or rather the unproductive elements of which determines the amount of taxation in respect of land which is better, will only yield, even to the utmost labor of the most effective kind, the very barest animal subsistence; in which case, after the tax has been paid, the occupier of the best land also, be he owner or tenant, will have nothing but a bare animal subsistence; consequently no rent, and for that matter no profit or interest either, can be extracted from one or the other—so long as he gets nothing back from the State. The State must collect from everybody all he can produce, except a plate of homely food and a fig leaf to cover his nakedness—and keep all it collects. On that condition, indeed, landlordism can be abolished by the Single Tax.

If the worst land occupied will yield, with sufficient labor and skill, something more than a bare subsistence, there is evidently still something which the landlord can extort, in return for his permission to the tenant to occupy this land; and as much can be extracted from the amount of the tax from the occupier of any better placed land only, the amount which the landlord receives himself is equal from equal areas, irrespective of quality or situation; the difference between the rent capable of being paid upon different blocks going to the government.

And if the tax having been collected, the proceeds (less the expenses) are distributed among the people, so that each is in the same position as if he were laboring on land of average quality and situation, the landlord could extort, in addition to the rent, if any, possible as just mentioned, the whole amount of the dividend for permission to occupy the land at all.

In countries where there is a great deal of unoccupied land belonging to the government, if these were thrown open to anyone who undertook to pay the tax, some people might avoid the extra burden of private rent; but the difficulty and expense of removing and starting anew would hold many as prisoners to the landlords. Moreover, the sites of the great cities are fixed by conditions which the mere distribution of population in the rest of the country does not materially affect; the whole population of Victoria, outside of Melbourne, might even be moved over the border into the Southern part of New South Wales, without making much difference to Melbourne city or their relation to it; and I suppose the business of New York would not be much affected if the population of the Eastern States were moved on the west of the Mississippi. Consequently, where the rent evil is scouted it would remain untouched, the land in such cities and for a long way round them being privately owned. The Single Taxers allege that the tax on vacant land would cause owners to compete for tenants, and reduce rents to the vanishing point; but there are very few people who are merely landlords of unoccupied land. It would pay to pay the tax on a vacant lot rather than abandon the ownership provided by doing so a tenant would be compelled to remain a tenant; for as a matter of fact far worse and worse situated land than any in Australia is yielding vastly more than a bare subsistence in many parts of the United States, and much worse blocks than any in the States—say, for instance, at the South Pole—could also be made to do so by the application of preparatory labor; so that the economic rent is actually only a paltry addition to the production of the wealth capable of being produced, in any ordinary country. The tax would accordingly be small relatively to the plain every-day rent extortable; the rent of one acre might easily pay the economic rent of two, and as much to the landlord for his personal profit; besides, if the collected tax were redistributed, that raised from the land of average favorableness would be returned, less the cost of handling, so that—being able, as before pointed out, to extort this from the tenant, as a condition of permission to occupy the land—the landlord would virtually hold one block tax free; not only this, but the taxation levied on unoccupied lands, being similarly averaged and redistributed, no matter whether to the owners or to the citizens at large, this could also be grasped by the landlords, who would, therefore, in the end, have paid scarcely any tax at all; and the certainty of this result could be increased by combination and mutual assurance among the landlords, to prevent one upon whom the tax might casually press heavily, from competing against the rest or abandoning his ownership (except in favor of a landlord trust).

The palliative effects of the Single Tax therefore vanish under investigation, except on the condition already mentioned: production forced to the extreme of practicability, distribution— to the producer, homely and severe as to the State, all the rest, to be made a bonfire of, consumed by the official classes, or applied to taking people away from ordinary production and setting them to build temples to Henry George. This, indeed, appears to be what the Single Taxers intend, as they generally repudiate the "dividend" idea with scorn. State Socialism is only the way of combining the destruction of landlordism by the Single Tax with a partial restitution to the community of the wealth derived away from individual members of it by the government. But we might as well have State Socialism pure and simple without the Single Tax as State Socialism without the simple necessities of life being provided for by it, and everything else thrown under its operation by means of the Single Tax. In fact, to choose between the two evils, I think State Socialism straight out would be preferable.

The "economic rent" problem would be simply and satisfactorily solved in Anarchist-Communism by the fact of individuals and groups laying their wants mutually before each other and ascertaining what each one could practically do towards providing for the various wants communicated. I hope these remarks may help to weaken the Single Tax superstition, against which very probably a special crusade will be necessary in more than one country before very long, as not only the Single Taxers but the Antitrust and Free Traders are trying to pass it into law.

J. A. ANDREWS
Communism and Liberty

Mr. Means declines to answer my questions about certain imaginary prohibitions because they do not seem to him to be pertinent. I am not sure that this is a matter of any consequence, for the want of a question it is not possible for me to answer a question in the affirmative. The query is this: Suppose it were possible at once to put a stop to all radical agitation, by the total obliteration of all radical parties from men's minds in any other way; suppose all radical publications could be once destroyed, the memory of them blotted from our minds, and the desire for further agitation permanently extinguished. Would it be possible for a condition of Anarchy or Anarchist-Communism to come about? If so, how?

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by

It is set in operation which results in compelling Mr.

Buyington to pay some one for the use of a chair.

He will probably tell me that he is not compelled, but the

reason is, because it pays him to do so; but

I wish to suggest to him that to that extent in

which his landlord is able to make a profit, aside from

personal use, out of the chair, to that extent it is

opportu

nity to become, because if the opportunity to

make chairs were free, the present unemployed would

make chairs so plentiful that there would be no profit

on them. It pays him to rent a chair because some

people require it. But this point will be fully developed in

the article referred to in the beginning, and space is

being saved here. Mr. Buyington's walking stick, ordinarily

should be inclined to that extent to which it has

connection with it. But "liberty is scope to act as I

please", and I please always to act upon my sympa

thisy sentiments, and I think of it and a third party

were walking in company, and Mr. Buyington's

ordinarily good legs as well as the only stick, and the

third party might make a mistake and turn his ankle

and Mr. Buyington was as sympathetic as not to

offer our companion the stick, I would nudge him with

the suggestion; if he refused, and I was big enough, I

would dispense him to help the needy. I

should state no property idea at all in the way of my

tender to render a service.

J. H. M.

Destruction of Profit.

One of the chief means, if not the chief means, to be

employed in attaining Anarchist-Communism, if I read

the A. C. doctrine right, is the destruction of land

titles, and this result, if I understand correctly, is to be

attained by "propaganda", or education.

The Single Taxer desires to arrive at the same

conclusion through force, or legislation, though he may

deny that the elimination of "property" is the specific

object of his reform project.

One advocates moral suasion, the other physical

force, the force of majority, manifestly the force behind

which lies the least intelligence,—else it is easier to be

informative than to persuade. Naturally the Single

Taxpayer, who has the eye of justice lightened will side

with the Anarchist-Communist, physical force, as a moral

agent, being considerably out of favor at this end of the

nineteenth century.

Still, in one respect both Single Taxer and Anarchist

Communist seem to agree. Both invoke the landowner to

step up and voluntarily confide his "property", the

only apparent difference being that one invites a

majority to consume the deed, while the other asks

all who may listen, and are agreeable to participate in

the good work, to do so

Now, I may be utterly "off my base", and very

far away from it, but with some slight knowledge of human

nature, and especially human selfishness, it does appear

that both asked too much, certainly far more than the

are likely to realise for a very long period of time to

come. It seems that some sort of force must be used, and

it is the only real practical characteristic of the supplemen

tal law, to accomplish the end desired. Furthermore, all

progress (if we admit progress as existent at all) in

cluding education, has been made through discovery

and application of "force", the force of majority or

mass, that is, the belief, is a self-evident truth. Still further, I

am unable to point out a single instance in which the application of a natural law has not first been put to the

benefit of the whole human race, without a single ex

ception, or more carefully stated, to the possible benefit

and no carriage to it's own "propaganda", or education, with it.

Our powers of pure deduction, as is well known, are

extremely limited, being chiefly confined to a range already

practically explored, as is well within the know

ledge of what people engaged in propaganda work. We

have only to regard the economical interest and expenses

exerted by reformers, and the difficulties they encounter,

compared with the world wide and almost instantaneous

effect of persuading the multitude to be of every sort, to

be set up on that point. Note the "educational" effect of every

invention, for good and evil.

From what I have said the Anarchist-Communist
document I believe that Anarchist Communists very

generally realise the difficulty of attaining their ends

through propaganda, and that many of them rest con

fidently on the assumption that it is to arrive from the fact accomplished, so will not enlarge.

Still, I would suggest the possibility, and the advis

ability, of trying other methods, and especially giving them direction, else they may not teach exactly what

is desired. History, I believe, furnishes some evidence on

point, some very valuable evidence. To

some extent we seem to be brothers keeper (though such opinions are dreadfully unan

archistic, I am aware) but the brother has an inconvenient way of becoming exasperated and flying the track, just

at the critical period, and "thieves whom the gods would destroy they first make angry."

Now it is no secret that as "profit"

decline, property declines also, in sympathy, and while

possession is admittedly a state difficult to disturb, still

profits are amenable to the touch of a clever few, or

of a great many, and therein lies the uninitiated. That is a mistake that has cost labor much blood.

We have then one of those courses to pursue. We

may work for the destruction of property, or we may

work for the destruction of man, and his virtue, and his

original, and trust old mother Nature to bring us out

of the woods at some distant time.

I do not think the great majority of us can

confess a great unhappiness in propaganda, still, I cannot refrain from suggesting the possibility of

destroying possession, or monop

opoly, through the destruction of profit. It may not be

possible to destroy it by any direct or even virtual

possession, but it certainly does seem possible to render

possession uselessness, and if ignorance may not be edu

cated, to this extent at least, it is the fool

hollowness of going into debt to possess a property in

which there is really no profit, that is not the best,

most necessary, or most expedient course to employ. We

employ education more directly. To go, or break into a
court house and destroy the title deeds is only for

force, as I would remain my friend Addis, and

not be the best, to which the most facile and

t Declaration of independence. No, no! the party

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If we regard land monopoly as public and private, it

will be seen, I think, that the public variety of that

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Observations.

This dream of that eminent and ancient theologian, Gladstone, has failed to materialize. The belief that the Anglican Church could be Roman Catholic and yet be at the same time exactly what we want in this world is not only a dream, but a dream that has never been realized. Only by individual conversion can the process of incorporation make headway, and even then the Anglican converts will have to go through a trying period before they can juggle as members of the Church of Christ. The infallibility of the Pope is not a question that can be Forsaken by any of his supremacy acknowledged. Infallible Papal decrees are to any man a source which would lead to confusion. Poor Gladstone! he has been riding his theological hobby so long and actually thought he was making real progress; when, even if his hobby had, instead of roosters, been mounted on as many wheels as he had in his head, his traveling would have only been in a circle.

The old theological fossil has lately been throwing adjectives at Turkey in defense of his admirable and gentle people, the Armenian Christians, and the Christian Empire. indeed it is a good thing the old man is not among us. The old relic has uttered no protest as far as I know. He has never been a voice of the temper for any revival of Christianity to be Christian. Doubtless Gladstone has read the New Testament, but he has perished during the early Aralan epoch, one million in the Christian world. By the way, have you noticed that after recognizing the distinction between liberty and liberty, and liberty and religion, he does not attempt to make standards of life? They are all equally good. Don't you think it? If you do, how will you get along? It is a sad thing that you have to do less. It is a sad thing to believe in a 'strong government.' Learn to discriminate in the use of terms.

Mrs. Walsheborough's Books.

By My Country Plant.

The Pumarih of Life.

Those who desire to study the fate question will find ample material in this new book by Lord Acton. His Grandmother's Legends to Men. Young and Old, and the Council of the Poor House, by Thomas Arnold.

Our has but to read the above and then to tell the pub- lisher, for they will send us the books at once. The editor of Theatrical Weekly papers for the writers and actors is a man of strong principle, and it is not at all surprising that he is a strong man.