WHY I WORK FOR THE SINGLE TAX*

By Bishop Charles E. Williams.

I AM not sure that I or any other Single Taxer makes much distinction between preaching Single Tax and preaching the Gospel. Jacob Riis told me once of a funeral where the minister did not arrive, and while the mourners were waiting, one of them arose and said: "I will improve the opportunity by addressing you on the Single Tax." (Laughter.) Now, why is the Single Tax such an idea today when once one has "seen the cat"? I think it is because it is a great moral enthusiasm.

There are a great many sides to the Single Tax—a fiscal and moral side. I do not propose to deal with the first, because I am an economist, and I have an ignorant, unfounded notion that an economist is a panacea. But a moralist, as a moral expert. And for that reason I will deal with the moral side of the Single Tax. Also because I believe that morally right will be fiscally, politically, and every other way practicable. I think God has committed the use of the earth to man of nature—What the individual produces belongs to the individual. What the community produces belongs to the community. What nature or God gives belongs by right to all nature's or God's children.

Taking this last statement first, I believe that only the hand of labor can write a valid original title of property to any natural wealth. Thus a man may own the crops he raises, the building he erects, but that does not give the laborer a title to the natural resources from which he produced the wealth. Thus a man may own the crops he raises, the building he erects, but that does not give him a title to the soil or the site. He did not create that: no man created it; God gave it, and by rights that belongs to all society. Savages have an instinctive feeling of this. When the Maoris sold New Zealand to the English, a Maori woman brought her baby, born after the purchase, for his share. And she was right. We have no right to barter away the birthright of generations to come. The babe in the slums of New York has just as much right on this earth and where God has yet how much air and sunshine is there in the slums? Doubtless if air and sunshine could be sold and cornered by a trust the people who asked for their share would be called Socialists, Anarchists, Nihilists and anything else that came handy—they would be attacking the sacred rights of property. (Laughter.) A man in Cleveland has just won a suit against a bridge company for swinging the bridge through his air.

But let us turn to the land. In Pennsylvania is most of the coal of the United States. Nobody has impressed his labor on it yet. To whom does it belong? I say it belongs to the people of the United States. (Applause.) Mr. Baer says it belongs to him and a few other gentlemen "to whom Almighty God in His wise providence has committed the wealth of this country." I never saw the deed of gift. Well, Mr. Baer has the key to the coal-cellar, and we can say, "Johnny, bring us up some coal." And we are willing to pay him a fair profit for the work. But he and his friends say, "We have got the key to the coal-cellar in our pocket. We will keep it there until you pay us all we can get from you." Mr. Baer is thus getting wages for service rendered, but he is also extracting by the pressure of monopoly a graft from us that is really ground out. At the time of the coal strike the President of the United States had to go down on his knees and beg Mr. Baer to sell us coal. Monopoly of natural resources is an unbeatable power so long as it is in private hands. There is not a trust in this country which could exist ten minutes if it did not rest on a monopoly of natural resources.

There is no way to deal with this but to claim natural resources as common property by taking the ground rent for the government. Over in Pittsburgh are some abandoned soft coal mines, and in the sink-holes
moral enthusiasm.

There are a great many sides to the Single Tax. I do not propose to deal with the first two, because I consider them to be the economist, and I have an ignorance about money matters that is very credent.

But a moralist—theoretically, at least,—has to have land to preach about. For that reason I have given myself to the moral side of the Single Tax, and also because I believe that every man, woman, and child that is morally right will be fiscally, economically, politically, and every other sort, and every sort will be practicable, and I believe that the single tax scheme for the equal division of the whole purchase, for his share. And she was right. We have no right to barter away the birthright of generations to come. The babe in the slums of New York has just as much right on this earth and where God has put him as the babe of the Astors; and yet under our present system the babe in the slums belongs to the Astors for the right to exist. We usually recognize a common right to the air and the sunshine, and social righteousness.

The Single Tax combles Anarchism, Anarchistic and Socialism, giving liberty in law, and freedom in order. The most unfortunate, for the single tax prates of the practical application of a great social philosophy.

The Single Taxer maintains that all man consists of things produced for our wants and needs, and that there are always two factors in the production, wealth of any kind—natural resources and human ingenuity. All that nature furnishes the value of the natural term "land." This does not imply that we are to consider the ethics of occupations, the preacher has to have land to live on, and that is true of every trade or profession. Profits, interest, wages are considered by economists and the questions and answers man or nature... Baer has the key to the coal-cellar. He can say, "Johnny, bring us up some coal." And we are willing to pay him a fair profit for the work. But he and his friends say, "We have got the key to the coal-cellar in our pocket. We will keep it there until you pay us all we can get from you." Mr. Baer is thus getting wages for service rendered, but he is also extracting by the pressure of monopoly a graft from us that is really ground rent. At the time of the coal strike the President of the United States had to go down on his knees and beg Mr. Baer to sell us coal. Monopoly of natural resources is an unbreakable power so long as it is in private hands. There is not a trust in this country which could exist ten minutes if it did not rest on a monopoly of natural resources.

There is no way to deal with this but to claim natural resources as common property by taking the ground rent for the government. Over in Pittsburgh are some abandoned soft coal mines, and in the sink-holes there ice and snow collect, which the poor miners used to use. Then the absentee landlord heard of this and sent word that they could not use the ice without paying him for it! Under our present system of giving over God's gifts into the hands of the few by private monopoly, what can the good Lord do with our problem of poverty? He has stocked this land richly, and yet the many starve—while the few are glutted.

THE PRAYER

Father Almighty, we beseech Thee to loosen the scales from our eyes that we may see the wickedness of our inhumanity to each other. Thou hast given the land filled with treasure for the blessing of all Thy children. We have so misused it that millions suffer for lack, while thousands are choked by surplus. Thou hast provided plentifully for all. Help us to remove the system by which the strong and the favored get something for nothing and the unfortunate and the lowly fail to receive the full reward of their toil. Make us to see, we pray, that the fault lies in us every one, and that the responsibility for mending it is upon us every one. Give us the grace to do it patiently and fairly, but certainly. Amen.
THE QUESTIONS

Q: If you believe that all natural resources belong to the people, how do you determine the amount of taxes to establish?
A: Land values are more easily estimable than any others.
Q: If Pennsylvania taxed the coal company, as you suggest, wouldn't they just add the tax to the price of coal?
A: If they were taxed full ground rentals, they would have to throw open their collieries to competition.
Q: Do you think a section of the community should suffer for the mistake of the whole community centuries ago?
A: It is a simple question of whether, if you have allowed an injustice to run a thousand years, you must not let it run another thousand years.
Q. (Miss Polsky): At what price could the Public Garden be sold?
A. That could be done only by the State.
Q: How would the Single Tax operate against the extortions of professional men?
A: I said it would not cure everything; but generally competition remedies extortions of any kind.
Q: What about patent monopolies?
A: That is another thing entirely, and I would make them inure to the inventor, not the gobbler.
Q: Tell us about Pastoriza's work in Texas.
A: I simply know that he was elected tax commissioner, and gradually took the taxes off improvements. I do not know if Pastoriza has the law back of him, but he has the people.
Q: What would you do with a man whose sole income is from stocks and bonds?
A: Stock and bonds represent land values.
Q. (Mr. Sachmary): Do you believe your cathedral should be taxed?
A: No, my cathedral is an improvement. I believe in taxing the land upon which it is built.
Q: What progress has the Single Tax made in Houston, Texas?
A: I am sorry I can't give the details. I know it is gradually coming in there, and also in Pueblo, Colorado.

Q (Mr. Fraser): I know a man who greatly improved his land by building a house, but was taxed heavily for it. Is that a good illustration of the Single Tax?
A: No, it is a good illustration of the double and treble tax of today.

AN OUTSIDE VIEW OF OUR FIRST TOWN MEETING.

If any of the 125 "citizens" who attended the first town meeting of Ford Hall Folks Kingsley Hall last night, failed to rise to at least one point of order or otherwise distinguish himself in a parliamentary manner during the evening, it certainly did not appear on the surface. For the official record showed that there were enough of the kind said "points" to go around twice, and more, over questions, motions, etc., were almost numerous.

All of which was intensely gratifying to those responsible for this latest addition to the regular Ford Hall course, and George Colemann the "father of the Ford Hall meetings," congratulated the newly "enfranchised citizens" on the success of the opening session.

Last night's session was taken up almost entirely with straightening out little difficulties which naturally arose in the minds of those new to this form of government. Though the questioning and debating times threatened to assume the proportions of a real "down-east" town meeting, Chairman Williams and President Foster ably met every situation. There were some decidedly perplexing complications, too, for which chairman might be pardoned for scratching his head, but when adjournment came everybody appeared to be satisfied.

What the meeting really did was this:

It chose committees to bring in nominations for permanent moderator, sergeant at arms and clerk. It resulted in the appointment of committees on rules and on by-laws. It satisfied George Coleman and Mr. Foster that the people were really interested in such a movement for civic betterment.

During the heat of battle, excitement not lacking. At one time Mr. Coleman forgot himself and promptly subsided when he was ruled out of order. The Rev. Grover Mills was the principal offender, embarrassing the chair, and he had his bowing throughout. H. S. Victorson championed red tape, but an uncleaned
Q: Tell us about Pastoriza’s work in Texas.
A: I simply know that he was elected tax commissioner, and gradually took the taxes off improvements. I do not know if Pastoriza has the law back of him, but I have the privilege.
Q: What would you do with a man whose sole income is from stocks and bonds?
A: Stock and bonds represent land values.
Q: Does the Eastman Kodak Company depend on a monopoly of land values?
A: No, but on a monopoly of patents, which is also a special privilege.
Q: What would be the best way to create a Single Tax law? How about teaching the children in the beginning?
A: Yes, you are right; everything begins with the children.
Q: Under the present system, do you vote, and if so what political party?
A: I try to vote the Democratic ticket when I can find the Democratic party democratic. Just now it is. (Applause.)
Q: Suppose the smelting company in Utah paid its full taxes, wouldn’t it be able to keep Bishop Spaulding off just as it does now?
A: I think it would be impossible for it to own its holdings if it paid full value. The government would then be practically the owner, and could dictate to the company.
Q: Cannot private individuals by controlling industry make men slaves to that extent?
A: There will be lots of things to be done after we get the Single Tax. But if you take away land monopoly you take away the great lever.
Q: Does not Socialism solve the problem of the Single Tax?
A: Give me another evening to lecture on that. I believe the Single Tax allows more for the freedom and paid full value. The government would then be practically the owner, and could dictate to the company.
Q: Cannot private individuals by controlling industry make men slaves to that extent?
A: There will be lots of things to be done after we get the Single Tax. But if you take away land monopoly you take away the great lever.
Q: What has the Single Tax to say with regard to the private ownership of capital?
A: I must answer again that if you broke up the private ownership of natural resources competition would soon break up the private ownership of the tools of industry. The meetings meant to develop a new democracy. The democracy of today, I mean, as the democracy of our forefathers, he added. Frederick J. Allen spoke for the City History Club and helped Mr. Foster out during the evening. Miss Louise Adams Grout appeared for the School of Social Science, and acted as temporary clerk.
Q: What do you think of Henry Ford’s profit-sharing scheme?
A: I know Mr. Ford very well personally, and I can say that there is no ulterior motive in his mind. He feels that labor should share in the profits, and that is as far as he sees.
Q: Don’t we need regulation of monetary values as much as we do of land values?
A: Don’t ask me any questions about money; I don’t know anything about it.
Q: What can you say about the fact that Ford recently held a conference with Edison where both of them spoke of inventing owners each would pay in proportion to his holdings.
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All of which was intensely gratifying to those responsible for this latest addition to the regular Ford Hall course, and George Coleman, the father of the Ford Hall meetings, congratulating the newly enfranchised citizens on the success of the opening session.

Last night's session was taken up entirely with questioning and debate, the natural sequel of the meeting, when William Horton Foster ably met the criticism of a real "down-east" town meeting, times threatened to assume the properties of a regular Ford Hall course, and George Coleman and Mr. Moore were satisfied George Coleman and Mr. Moore.

What the meeting really did was this: It chose committees to bring in no one was satisfied George Coleman and Mr. Moore.

The most interesting plank to me in Mayor-elect Curley's political platform is his proposition to hold monthly conferences on city planning with representatives present from the clergy, press, labor, and the City Council. Nothing could be more far-reaching for good to the people of Boston than this if it is intelligently planned and vigorously executed. And Mr. Curley has backed up this enterprise with the very generous statement that he will himself provide the money for this new development if it cannot be had through the usual channels. I am sure that every one of us at Ford Hall will rejoice to see such a plan carried out and will support it in every way at our command. It would put into action in a very conspicuous way the very principle of mutual co-operation for which we stand, and the object aimed at is that commends itself to every intelligent student of municipal affairs.

A group of Tufts College students were among our guests last Sunday night. Of course they thought Bishop Williams was a bit old but they thought our people were an equally fine part of the equation. "I would put into action in a very conspicuous way the very principle of mutual co-operation for which we stand, and the object aimed at is that commends itself to every intelligent student of municipal affairs."

Mr. Coolidge was very much impressed with the absolute democracy, the friendliness, interest and attention of the audience. The question period was most interesting to him. The intelligence displayed by the questioners, their seriousness, earnestness, and courage were evident in each question asked.

MR. COOLIDGE VISITS US.

Mr. Louis A. Coolidge, treasurer of the United Shoe Machinery Company, was our guest a Sunday or so ago.

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FORD HALL FOLKS 3

AS IT LOOKS TO ME

By GEORGE W. COLEMAN, Director of the Ford Hall Meetings

At the Open Forum in Manchester, N. H., last Sunday night, with Miner Chipman speaking on "Efficiency," they had to turn the audience away, although the theatre has a seating capacity far beyond Ford Hall. We will be proud of such a thriving three-year-old baby. Of all the forums which have been started under our guidance and operation this one in Manchester is more like Ford Hall in all its ways, and is likewise now the largest success in short time.

Bishop Williams last Sunday night just like one of us. How many could go right into a church gathering any night and immediately take our place of them? It isn't every church big enough and broad enough to and work right along side of men the church who are earnest and Not all of us outsiders are big and broad enough to welcome the generation church people who, like us, honestly and honestly seeking the Brownness and bigotry are no re-turned persons or classes. Quite often the epithet of bigot is him- unswittingly the real bigot.

Ford Hall was filled full last Sunday night, but we didn't turn any one away because people are beginning to Tax for granted?

The last two Sunday evenings fully crowded audiences came in long after the program was over. At last, it would appear that people are beginning to understand and care before the doors are on the night when exceptional popularity is not more than a few nights during the season.

Mr. Gutierrez and his chorus, of the new hymn went very well.

OTHER MEETINGS.

Wells Memorial Institute, 987 Washington Street, Tuesday, Jan. 27, at 8 P. M., Efficiency and Its Effects on the Workingman, by Miner Chipman.
Sunday Commons, at Huntington Chambers Hall, Sunday, February 1, at 3.30 P. M., Dr. Charles Fleischer, leader.
Public Library, Thursday, Jan. 29, at 8 P. M., Mr. Gort, and Its Vast Paganism, by Charles Wellington, Furlong.
Lowell Institute, at Huntington Hall, Monday, Jan. 26, and Thursday, Jan. 29, at 8 P. M., America and France in Contact in the Past, by Fernand Baudenbery.
Mr. Coolidge was very much impressed with the absolute democracy, the friendliness, interest and attention of the audience. The question period was most interesting to him. The intelligence displayed by the questioners, their seriousness, earnestness, and courage were evident in each question asked.

Mr. Coolidge was most enthusiastic over the manner in which our chairman interpreted each question as it was asked. This feature, to him, was the most forceful of the question period. He says, "Mr. Coleman understood exactly what each questioner had in mind; sometimes better than the questioner himself; and each was confident of a sympathetic interpretation of the question asked."

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THE STORY OF JOSEPH BERAK.

By Mary C. Crawford.

The astounding thing about the young Jew as I see him is the way he fixes his mind upon the thing he desires to do or be, and then, through every obstacle, pushes ahead and attains his goal. Take Joseph Berak. As a boy he never lacked for anything because his father was a prosperous clothing manufacturer in New York, with a well-equipped shop of his own, the profits of which gave every promise of enabling little Joseph to stay on at school and college as long as he desired, and mayhap sustain the tradition of his mother's family by becoming a rabbi. Then, by one of those quick turns of fortune very common in the clothing trade (read "Comrade Yetta"), if you would understand that in the case of the "bosses" as well as the workers this business is full of hazards), Berak senior lost everything, and the little Joseph was confronted at thirteen with the necessity of going out into the world to help support the family.

At school he had always led his class, and the teacher, full of sorrow that he could not go on, helped him to get a place at $4.60 a week with Saks & Co., who were relatives of hers. Here, however, the chances of advancement seemed too slight to satisfy the already ambitious Joseph and he transferred himself, at 15, to Warner's, where, being a large lad for his age, he was put in the packing and shipping department. There, during the Christmas season, he worked a number of days, from eight in the morning until two of the following morning packing gifts which were to bring to people a "very merry Christmas." This experience fitted him to be quite responsive when he heard his first Socialist speaker, Algernon Lee, and it was then that he set his eager mind upon the absorption of Socialism.

Periods of service at several of the Boston department stores followed, but during the panic of 1907 even the young, sturdy and quick-witted Berak could find no work to do. This was his opportunity to fit himself to be a traveling salesman. He thereupon learned all that there was to know about men's shirts, got a chance to show that he could sell them in large quantities—and found himself at eighteen traveling from Boston to Chicago, and making a very good income.

FORD HALL FOLKS

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(Continued from Page 1.)

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For some time he stuck to this because the long, journeys and the lonely evenings in strange towns gave him the leisure he wanted for the study of Socialism. But presently he decided that there is something disintegrating mentally, as well as morally and physically, about life "on the road," and settled down in Boston with his sister. Berak started to sell Life Insurance by day and to study at the Y. M. C. A. in the evenings.

Socialism he had by this time made a part of himself, and he had for some time been a party member. He now wanted to become a lawyer, "because," he says, "I saw that when Socialism gets strong, men who know the law will be especially needed."

Ford Hall first came to Berak's attention on the night, some three years ago, when John Spargo was speaking here on Karl Marx. Our eager young Socialist has scarcely missed a meeting since. He always takes notes at the lectures and studies afterwards the contents of his note-book.

The value of Ford Hall to him lies, he says, in the fact that it shows him where the other fellow stands. That so many excellent fellows stand in such widely separated spots has undoubtedly had a very broadening and hence highly valued influence upon Berak. For to be as thoroughly educated as possible is still his shining goal.

powers and abilities. Suppose a number of Robinson Crusoes to be wrecked on the desert island with a number of Man Fridays. They divide their labors into superstition and manual work, and so long as the land is held in common all goes well, for in case of either a strike or a lock-out the other parties could manage to live. But then come some Spanish grandees with a paper giving them a title to the land. They establish themselves in idleness, and make the Crusoes and the Fridays alike slave for them, taking the whole of production except just enough to keep production going. And if there is any complaint they say, "If you don't like my terms, get off my land"—which is all the land there is. That is modern society. In California, in the days following 49, wages were high, interest was high, and rent was low, for every man could stake off a claim and mine where he wished. Today where all the land is monopolised wages are at a starvation level, interest is low, and rents soar. And whenever the bets of these landholders on the future rise of rent get so heavy that the machinery of production breaks down, we have a panic, which we blame on the Democratic administration. Land monopoly even restricts mental liberty. Bishop Spaniards wanted to start a sort of social centre for the workmen in a town in Utah which was owned by the Colorado Smelting Co. Then he made an address on Socialism in which he attacked the Colorado Smelting Co. The result was that he could not have sleeping rooms for the men or a billiard room, because the company held the monopoly of these things for their landlords. When you own the land you own the man: the ownership of the land makes slaves of all men but the owners.

Our present system makes every one of these three axioms impossible of application. Somehow or other we must make land common property. This can be done by holding all land in common, as the Indians do, which is impossible in an advanced civilization; by equal division of the land (and if you do that I will have my ten acres on Wall Street, and you can have yours in Labrador: which shows the absurdity of some such a scheme); by a method of "state landlordship and unions never can.

The philosophy of the Single Tax is a panacea, but the great sub-foundational economic justice, whereby the whole God can stand sure and safe.

Friends Who Are Coming


Jan. 25—Dr. Alphonso Woodbury Small of Chicago University, “The Strength and Weakness of Socialism.”


Feb. 8—Prof. Edward A. Steiner of Inter-National Mind and the Inter-Heart.

Feb. 15—Symposium, “The Beginnings of Socialism.”

Dr. De Will G. Wilson, “The Venereal Disease.”

Prof. of Sea Education”, Robert Cummings, “The Responsibility of the Sea.”


March 1—Leslie Willis Sprague of Chicago.

March 8—Symposium, on “Journalism and the Challenge of Socialism to Christianity.”


April 5—Mary Church Terrell, “The Case of the Sam and the Sons of Ham.”

April 12—Dr. Thomas C. Hall of New York.

April 19—Prof. Walter Rauschenbusch.

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