

# THE PEOPLE'S BIRTHRIGHT.

## Its Restoration Urged as the Antidote to Socialism.

### WHO PAYS THE LAND SPECULATOR?

Who Has a Right on the Earth?—Burdens for Weak Shoulders—Too Much Middle-class Law—The Reform Necessary—Is it Just?—Results.

Continuing our inquiry into the land question we will be forced to the conclusion that if the earth is, in any reasonable sense, intended for the children of men, and not for the speculative purposes of a few of them; if the Creator is the "father of the spirits of all flesh" and the world is the work of His hands, then multitudes of men have been cheated out of their birthright and have not received even the fool's mess of postage. They have been born into a world belonging not to the Lord for the uses of all the children of men, but into a world owned by the landlords and in which they find themselves tolerated only on condition of paying tribute in the shape of a considerable proportion of their earnings. Not only are they forced to pay to the landlord for the privilege of living and working on the earth, but they are further required to pay taxes on almost everything they consume, for support of Government and whatever schemes, wise or otherwise, it may undertake. It even occurs that the owners of the soil are privileged to vote heavy taxes upon them while they are denied the franchise, and the money thus taken from them is taken to make a gift to some man or company about to engage in some private enterprise which the landlords expect will enhance the speculative value of their properties, and by so doing increase rents and make narrower the workers' margin of subsistence. They cannot vote; they must pay. A new factory locates in a neighborhood, or a new railway is built; capital and labor are expended; but do capital and labor reap the full reward of their investment and expenditure of energy? No. Mr. Landlord may not have expended a cent or a day's work, but he takes advantage of the improvements and turns on the rent screw and raises the speculative figure. The result is that the landlord and speculator obtain money without laboring. Where did it come from? Who earned it? Nature requires perfect compensation. Somebody earned it, and the land shark pocketed it; somebody is out exactly the amount of the increment thus appropriated. Figure it out as your leisure, and justify it if you can.

Take the case of a new town, as one in which a simple illustration can be briefly outlined: Say one hundred settlers locate a town site, survey it, pick out their lots and go to work. Ninety-five of them build houses and business places and live on them. The other five may have other employment or they may be unemployed, but they do not build but leave their lots in a state of nature. Business attracts business, and our little town in a few years grows to be a city. The five lots held by the non-improvers have grown immensely valuable owing to the concentration of population in their locality and the desire of many to possess them, and having paid only a vacant lot tax and expended not a dollar in improvements, their owners after a few years are able to unload them at prices that make them comparatively wealthy. Somebody earned that money; what did these five men do that they should be enabled to take it as the price of their permission to use them?

They had done nothing, expended nothing. The price they obtained represented what is known to economists as "unearned increment"—unearned to them it certainly was; it was the product of the labor of the community, which was, to the extent that they profited, crippled and impoverished. They were purely and solely land speculators, and land speculation is rendered possible only by our system of land ownership, which serves no other useful (?) purpose.

And here let me remark that land speculation never added a dollar to the value of a lot or to the wealth of the world; it never made crops grow better; it never improved the roads or bridges or sanitation of the world; so far as land dealing is speculation it is gambling in land values as much as are the deals of the bucket shops and stock exchanges gambling in grain futures. Land cannot properly be said to represent capital, although improvements (products of labor) do. Nor does a man, correctly speaking, buy land, but rather the right of possession. In the transfer no capital is locked up as far as the nation is concerned; but the taking of the earnings of a community without the return of an equivalent in productive energy or its representative is evil and only evil. Its sum total is the abstraction of money from those who produced the wealth it represents without giving an equivalent. The addition of \$1,000 speculative value to the price of a piece of land makes it worth not one cent more as a place of residence or as a farm. The city lot that sells for \$250 would under similar conditions be just as valuable for a residence or a business place as if it cost \$2,500. If we destroy speculative values the world will not be a dollar poorer, but some who have amassed wealth will be prevented from charging their fellows toll on the bounties of nature.

Nor is it alone in this way that we encourage speculation at the cost of production. If we turn to our system of raising the large sums of money necessary to conduct our somewhat elaborate and middle-class system of government, we will find that the producers' candle is burned at both ends. Instead of taking into consideration the fact that the earth is owned by the few, who are thus enabled to possess themselves of much of the product of the mere sojourners upon it, and levying the tax on them, we adopt the absurd principle of taxing men in accordance with their diligence and capability as represented by their possessions and expenditures. We fine industry and allow idleness to escape. The man who lives in a hovel, or whose house is an eyesore in a

locality, yet who may own a miser's hoard, escapes with a small tax while he who works productively and erects a good house, store or factory is levied upon for a large sum. We carry this idea of taxing industry into the little shreds of life, and the man who spends five dollars on his lawn or front fence can usually depend on finding it noted in his next assessment. Then Government, not satisfied with taxing production, levies odious and burdensome taxes on commerce, which have the effect as well of enabling home dealers to charge consumer high figures for poor goods as of adding to the cost of those he imports. All this time labor is not only subjected to the competition consequent upon free immigration, but a part of our taxes is taken to bonus foreigners to come in to bear the labor market. And men are found who from ignorance and a superstition miscalled "loyalty," think there is nothing wrong in all this, wonder they are poor, that work is scarce and remuneration small, that while there is a cry of "overproduction" they have scarcely the necessities of life, yet support and join in combinations to limit the exercise of productive energy and make scarce the very good things they so much desire.

The remedy is not to be found in high taxes on production or products; combinations to restrict production are economic sins which bring swift and sure punishment as their natural consequence. Combinations of labor are necessary only in an unnatural condition consequent on a violation of fundamental economic laws, and industrial or economic happiness and prosperity will never be realized in a high degree or on an enduring basis until we restore to the children of men the birthright of which they have been deprived—until we found our society and our principles of property on a correct basis. No plan which robs the owners of the soil, except the giving up of the plunder to the last farthing, will undo the wrong committed. The land of the nation belongs to the people of the nation as a natural right; it also belongs to them as a right in British law; let us give that law effect and assert that right.

But would you dispossess men of their farms and lots? Softly. No; that would be neither just nor necessary for our object. We do not want to equalize wealth; we do not want to equalize the possession of land; what we do ask is to equalize the absolute property in it and the opportunities such property gives. If it be conceded that the community has made any part of the value of land apart from and above that made by the expenditure of labor and capital upon it by the owner, it cannot be an unreasonable proposition that such value should belong to the community. It is not a very revolutionary proposal, yet that is all there is in the theory of land taxation known as Land Nationalization or the Single Tax Theory. What it contemplates is the absolute removal of all taxes upon improvements, produce and commerce, and the support of the Government by taking in taxation the value added to land by the natural increase of the population. It aims to exempt the product of industry and take instead thereof that unearned increment which now goes into the pockets of those who spend not an hour in producing it. It aims at squeezing out the dog-in-the-manger who improves not yet demands a price for permitting others to improve. Its result would be to encourage industry, multiply openings for the exertion of skill and muscle, cheapen goods and give to those who earn it the product of their labor untolled by society's blood-suckers. It would solve the labor problem and strike the shackles from commerce; it would elevate the producer—the worker—to his proper plane, and thus bring us much nearer that time when the brotherhood of man is a conceivable condition and not a mere rhetorical ear-sticker; it would be a recognition in fact and action of what we now preach and profess but deny in practice—the Divine Paternity.

"But how is a simple change in the mode and direction of taxation to do so much?" It is the assertion and adoption of natural laws as our guide. Nature never errs, and she remorselessly punishes violators of her laws. If the earth is for all and each has a right here, we are now doing a great wrong; everybody cannot well be given an equal area of it, and if they could the advent of a new part-proprietor would be a disturbing factor. Moreover, all do not wish to possess land. Now, by taking in taxation, to be used in lieu of all other taxes that are, or might be, levied on mankind, the sum of the value added by the presence of the population there is paid into the common treasury of the nation the annual worth of the rights of each to the soil of the nation. There is no levy upon the products of labor, no penalty upon improvement, and he who does not use the land is not taxed (his share of the land paying his proportion) and the land user pays no tax on his improvements or produce but only for the land value which he monopolizes to the exclusion of all other men. No one would be dispossessed; men would buy and sell and bequeath as they now do, and they could and would improve to a much greater extent when they knew that no matter how much they improved they would not be fined therefor by the assessor.

"But how would you get at men who have already made money, some of it by speculation in land, and who have it in houses or improvements or produce, in cash or mortgages?" Some of it might escape. But it will be discovered that if the speculative value of land were destroyed, much money now placed in mortgages would be turned into active channels, business would be given a healthy stimulus and the mere usurer would be discouraged. And were it even shown that the past evils could not be undone, that would be no good reason for continuing an evil course. That we have had the contents of one room destroyed is no reason why the house should not play on the fire and save the rest of the house.

The vast reduction in taxation that would follow the adoption of such a system would in itself be a boon to the people of any country. An indirect tax is always an unequal tax, paid in large measure by those who are least able to bear it. It is costly to collect, and fraud is difficult to prevent. It costs in our own country millions annually to collect, besides the unknown sums hypothecated in one way and another between the foreign shipper and the exchequer; and it permits the consumer to

be bled by rings and combines on every hand. The improvements and income taxes are equally reprehensible. A land tax is an easy tax to levy; an easy one to collect. A direct tax, while it would save millions in collection, would save more millions in its expending over an indirect one. If a man knows exactly how much he pays and for what he pays his money he will take more interest in seeing that it is properly expended. We would have more economical and honest government, and thousands who now live by commercial piracy, would join the land sharks in seeking honest, productive employment instead of remaining an incubus on social progress.

Here, then, is a ready remedy for the cancer of socialistic paternalism which threatens to crush out individual liberty and make of the nation one huge penitentiary in which every man's every act will be governed by arbitrary legal enactments and where all incentives to excel in any direction save that of shirking are destroyed. The socialistic theory of paternal government is based on the monstrous assumption that our governors will be always wiser and better than the masses by whom they are placed in power—a rash assumption and one which carries with it material for its own overthrow. Can the stream rise higher than its source? Will not a democratic government usually reflect in great measure the excellencies and frailties of those whom it represents? And if the individuals composing it cannot under free conditions direct their social concerns with success how can it be presumed that they will in the concrete, in violation of natural laws, succeed in so doing?

It is not more restrictive laws to repress individual effort and take away nature's reward for intelligence, industry and skill that are required. We need not to have our natural rights further curtailed; we need no more manacles or chains. We want to quit talking about liberty and try to realize it; we want to have more freedom; we want less of middle-class law; we want the restoration of our natural rights in this planet. We must found our system on the rock of Universal Right and we can burn the rotten props, the maintenance of which now consumes much of our substance.

"But," says the traditionalist with a tone of stage horror, "to compensate these men would be beyond the paying power of the nation." Who talks of compensation? Who has any valid claim to such? Compensation for something that never existed, that British law affirms never existed; and that in the nature of things cannot exist! "King William I. gave certain land to his followers, and as he represented the nation the nation is bound by his act." Yes, I know Burke fell into a similar absurd worship of loyalty and denied the right of posterity to revoke allegiance sworn by former generations. But this age is well over the nightmare of that so-called "loyalty" superstition which made the masses the slaves of their "superiors." They are rapidly getting over looking upon people of other countries as natural enemies. But even had William I. given away all the land of Britain absolutely he would have done what no man or body of men can have any right to do. As a matter of natural right he might just as well have determined that the present people of Britain should not dig coal out of the earth. But even this terror is not available to the opponents of reform. The right of the whole people as represented by the Crown in the lands of the British realm has never been abrogated by law, as it cannot be in fact, and the way to enforce that right is to cease burdening labor, production and exchange with taxes, and use the public's part of the land value, as represented by the unearned increment, to support government instead. It is easy, it is honest, it is equitable; only the idler and speculator need fear the outcome.

MASQUETTE.

Flowers For Mother.

Those who live in crowded communities have no need to seek the pathetic in fiction. Real life is ever ready to draw tears from the eyes and help from the friendly hand. The *Detroit Free Press* says that a lady residing in that city one day answered a ring at her door bell and found a little girl shivering on the step.

"Please ma'am," said the wail, lifting her shy, beautiful eyes to the face above her, "will you give me a flower?"

The request was such an unusual one that the lady hesitated in surprise.

"Just one little flower!" pleaded the child, looking as if she were about to cry.

"Why of course you shall have a flower, child! Come in. You shall have a pretty red rose," and the good woman looked for her scissors and stepped to the window where the flowers grew. Before she had cut one a light tuff fell on her arm.

"Not that one please; not a red one; that white one. Oh, won't it be just beautiful!" and the little girl pointed to a lily just unfolding its petals.

"That!" The mistress of the house shook her head. "I cannot cut that one, child. Why must you have a white one? Why won't any flower do?"

"Oh, because—because—because it's for poor mamma!" and the child burst into a violent fit of weeping. "Mamma is dead and I runned away to get her some flowers."

The next moment she was sobbing on the bosom of a new friend; and when she went away she carried the precious lily with other flowers to the home where death had been.

Plenit Joys.

Colonel Yerger—Well, how did you like the picnic?

Ghooly—I was so glad to get home again that I was glad I went.

Arabi Pasha a few years ago was a handsome, black-haired man with a fine military bearing; now he is quite gray, is often ill and complains that he suffers much from the hot and humid climate of Ceylon. Nobody would think of calling him Arabi the Blest.

Mrs. Wannamaker has introduced a new fad in Washington, and has a class of young women meet at her residence twice a week, where a professor of physical grace from abroad teaches them how to walk, to go up and down stairs, to bow, to smile, to dispose of the hands.

### TELEGRAPHIC SUMMARY.

The French Government Labor Bill fixes 10 hours daily as the limit for men's labor. Large quantities of gin and whiskey have been seized by the Customs authorities at Quebec.

The village of Mountain Grove, on the C. P. R., was almost wiped out by fire last evening.

The northern part of the city of Sofia, Bulgaria, has been almost destroyed by a hurricane.

The anniversary of the engagement at Ridgeway in '66 will be commemorated in Toronto to-day.

The Argentine Republic has determined that in the payment of Customs dues one-half the amount must be payable in gold.

O. C. Brown, a millionaire banker of Marionette, Wis., committed suicide Saturday by shooting himself. He had been ill, and was temporarily insane.

An official inquiry is being made concerning the frequent cases of starvation in London, England, the object being to obtain information for the benefit of Parliament.

Owing to a leak in a gas-heating stove in his room on Friday morning, Mr. George M. Colborn, proprietor of the Clifton house, Niagara Falls, had a narrow escape from death by asphyxiation.

An attempt was made on Saturday to wreck the fast Irish mail train at Castlebar. The obstructions, a couple of gates placed across the track, were discovered in time to avert a disaster.

Judge Dugas, Police Magistrate of Montreal, has been ordered by the Attorney-General of Quebec to commence an investigation into the circumstances attending the death of the Englishman Kimber.

Another stage in the case of the Jesuits vs. the *Mail* was reached on Saturday at Montreal, when the counsel for the Jesuits filed their answer to the defendants' plea. The arguments on the plea and answer will be heard at an early date.

The crop prospects in Manitoba and the Northwest Territories are reported to be better than they have ever been at this season of the year. In Manitoba itself there are 1,000,000 acres under cultivation, of which 800,000 are in wheat.

The body of Ida Doherty, who was one of the victims of the boating accident on the river at London, last Monday, was found about 9 o'clock Sunday morning near the Byron dam. Adam Johnston's neck was broken, it is supposed by coming in contact with the timbers in the dam.

The new ocean greyhound *Normannia*, which arrived at New York on Friday, had a remarkably narrow escape from destruction. In the midst of a dense fog her captain suddenly sighted an immense iceberg right in her path. His presence of mind and prompt action enabled him to turn the steamer in such a manner that she only grazed the iceberg.

Mrs. Parsons, Chicago, in a speech Sunday at a meeting of the "Arbeiter Bund," said dynamite was to be the liberator of the human race. Not that people should go round with bombs and destroy human life, but that as gunpowder had abolished the power of the feudal barons, so would dynamite in the hands of the working classes render the armies of the capitalists useless in a street fight.

What will probably prove to be a murder happened in the Brooker settlement near Windsor on Wednesday night. Two farmers, Jones and Speechley, got into an altercation about a cow. When Jones started to take the cow off Speechley's farm he was set upon by the latter's wife and son, who used pitchforks. Jones' body and head is frightfully cut, and his physicians have grave doubts of his recovery.

The steamer *Exeter City*, from Swansea, last night brought to New York the captain and 11 men of the crew of the Norwegian barque *Louis*, which sprang a leak and sunk off the Irish coast May 19th. The barque was bound for Quebec. The crew passed three days and three nights at the pumps before they were rescued. The work of rescue was difficult, as a high sea was running. Captain Heffermehl of the *Louis* was struck by a wave and injured.

How "Pinafore" Was Written.

W. S. Gilbert, the dramatist, writes in the small hours of the morning, beginning work at midnight, and often keeping on until after the sun has risen. Like many literary men his vein of composition will not flow by day, requiring candle light to stir it into activity. In preparing a libretto he goes slowly but surely. Hitting upon one of his characteristic ideas, he turns it over in his mind during many long walks and solitary cogitations, adding circumstances and incidents as they occur to him. Then he makes a rough skeleton sketch of the plot, which he puts away. A few weeks later this skeleton is carefully written out in extenso, with such additions and improvements as may have occurred to him meanwhile. This, too, is shelved for a while, but ultimately the perfect framework is made, which only needs—if such expression is allowed—the wedding to it of the dialogue and songs. It is at this stage that Sir Arthur Sullivan comes upon the scene, for the writer has to keep the musician's needs in view, and the composer must bear the writer in mind. The writing of one of their famous operas entails much labor and endless consultation upon the collaborators. Playwright and composer often see the morning come in at the windows while they sit over cigars and cigarettes, discussing with the most anxious care points which to others might seem of little moment. But it is to this untiring industry and care that they owe much of their success.—*Sheffield Telegraph*.

The Duke of Connaught arrived yesterday in Winnipeg, and was presented with an address, to which he made an appropriate reply, in which he extolled the greatness of the country, and wished for its future success.

To keep the bright, green color of summer cabbage and some other vegetables, boil fast in plenty of water in which has been dissolved a piece of washing soda the size of two peas; cover until the water boils and then take off the lid. If the steam is shut in the cabbage will be yellow and unsightly.

### BABY'S GOT A BEAU.

It Seems Awful Queer, But There's No Getting Around It.

She ain't nuttin' but a baby!  
Twarn't but yistiddy—I swow  
It don't seem so—since them blue eyes,  
Jes' ez blue ez they be now.  
First looked up in her old dad's here  
From her mother's bosom! She!  
Taint' t'rew now—taint' in natur—  
That our baby's got a beau!

Why, we've alluz called her "baby,"  
Me and mother—Tenny tot!  
Land alive! She is the baby  
Of the big an' bloomin' lot!  
Toters they'd growed up, an' mostly  
Lighted out, when one day, lo!  
Thar she wuz in their ole cradle;  
An' now baby's got a beau!

Why, taint' no time since I see her  
Lay a-playin' with her toes!  
Gals will grow up inter wimmin—  
Mine's like all the rest, I s'pose;  
Mighty queer, tho', when I hear her—  
Or still think I hear her—crow  
From her cradle at my comin'.  
To think baby's got a beau!

I kin see her gettin' bigger,  
See her toddlin' at my side,  
Jes' the cutest little critter,  
Tassin' pants for a ride.  
I kin see her gettin' bigger—  
Can't help seein' baby grow;  
But I can't see how it comes ter  
This—that baby's got a beau!

Course I wouldn't keep her single  
When she really is growed up;  
Mother in me hev been too happy  
Not to want the same sweet cup  
Of good married love to sweeten  
Her life so; but it's a blow—  
An' there ain't no gettin' round it—  
To think baby's got a beau!

—M. N. B., in Boston Globe.

### The Farm at Dusk.

When milking time is done, and over all  
This quiet Canadian island forest-borne,  
And wide rough pasture-lands the shadows  
Come,  
And dews, with peace and twilight voices  
Fall,  
From moss-cooled watering-trough to foddered  
stall,  
The tired plough-horses turn—the barnyard  
loam  
Soft to their feet—and in the sky's pale  
dome  
Like resonant chords the swooping night-jars  
call,  
Then, while the crickets pipe, and frogs are  
shrill  
About the slow brook's edge, the pasture bars  
Down clatter, and the cattle wander through—  
Vague pallid shapes amid the thickets—till  
Above the wet gray wilds emerge the stars,  
And through the dusk the farmstead fades  
from view.  
Youth's Companion.

### "My Bike."

Girls, wait a minute! What do you think  
I have been doing for the past year? Why,  
I have been riding a bicycle.

"Well, that's nothing," I hear a hundred  
voices say, "so have we been riding  
bicycles, and fine fun it is, too."

Now, if you would just give me breath-  
ing space, my dear enthusiasts, I would  
tell you that what I was going to say was  
to those who don't ride and who "don't  
quite know whether to try it or not."

Ah! thanks—now I will proceed.

The idea of riding a bicycle never entered  
my head until early last summer; and this  
was how it finally got possession of me. I  
had several young men friends who rode  
and as they related to me the delightful  
adventures and exciting incidents of their  
many little runs, I became suddenly fired  
with the idea that I too might enjoy these  
sports, "if I only had a bicycle."

I was wise enough to consult the family  
physician first, and trembling with im-  
patience, after boldly stating my project  
(that of learning to ride at once) I awaited  
his answer. "Certainly—go ahead and  
ride," he said. "It will do you good;  
only remember this, it is not in the use  
but in the abuse that it will harm you."

At the riding school I learned to manage  
the wheel in two lessons, and in the third  
accomplished the most difficult part, that  
of "mounting."

I next purchased "my bike," and then  
came the fun.

I rode over all the good roads, of which  
we have quite a number, and found that  
the sight of the shining spokes, the easy  
saddle and the thought of the delightful  
motion (which comes nearest to flying of  
anything I can imagine) would often tempt  
me out in the fresh air when otherwise I  
would have spent my time indoors in la-  
zily reading or drawing.

Then came the bracing autumn weather,  
when I would go spinning along amid the  
falling leaves, and as I whirled over the  
hard ground, and breathed in the cool air,  
it sent the blood to the very tips of my  
fingers and toes, and I felt as though I  
could scarcely refrain from singing, in  
sheer exuberance of spirits: "The cares I  
left behind me."

And now comes spring, gentle, balmy  
spring, when the air is filled with the  
odor of apple-blossoms, a dreaminess steals  
over our senses, and we long for the sea  
air, and a lonely spot wherein to indulge in  
the delightful *dolce far niente*—but no!

In the spring the brilliant sunshine  
Lightens up the shining steel;  
In the spring the youthful fancy  
Turns unto the faithful wheel.

Yes—Girls, rouse yourselves! now is the  
time. Get a bicycle as I did, learn to ride  
and you will never repent it.—L. A. W. Bul-  
letin.

### Breathe Only Through Your Nose.

A Dutch physician has recently declared  
that a close connection exists between  
the exercise of our mental faculties and  
disorders of the nose. The opinion is  
expressed that if it were generally known  
how many cases of chronic headache, of  
inability to learn or to perform mental  
work, were due to chronic disease of the  
nose, many of these cases would be easily  
cured, and the number of child victims of  
the so-called over pressure in education  
would be notably reduced. According to  
the above mentioned authority it would  
seem that breathing through the nose is  
absolutely indispensable in order to secure  
the full value of the mental capacity.—  
*Herald of Health*.

### Society Note.

The lady who wore a low neck dress and  
forgot to take the porous plaster off her  
back attracted much attention.—*Burlington  
Free Press*.

### Doubtful.

"Do you think your father likes me?"  
he inquired.

"Oh, yes," she answered. "He said he  
was going to wait up to-night to see you."

It is reported that times are very bad in  
the coast towns and cities of British Col-  
umbia.