

VERBATIM REPORT OF THE
DEBATE IN ST. JAMES'S HALL,
JULY 2ND, 1889.

THE SINGLE TAX — VERSUS — SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY:

Which will most Benefit the People?

BETWEEN

HENRY GEORGE

AND

H. M. HYNDMAN.

WITH INTRODUCTION BY H. M. HYNDMAN.

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A WORD OF INTRODUCTION.

Seventeen years have passed since Mr. Henry George and myself had the debate of which a verbatim report is reprinted in the following pages. We Social-Democrats have made great progress since July, 1889, but events have not marched so fast as we all hoped at that time. The strange lack of logical faculty among the mass of Englishmen, their love of petty compromise, their admiration for personal success achieved at their expense, their inability to conceive or accept any high ideal as worth striving for, have headed back the progress of our great cause in this island. Now they are exhausting their last possibility of error in the shape of Labourism without a programme, and political independence without a base. We have, therefore, good reason to hope and believe that the advance towards Social-Democracy, which is so marked a feature of Continental society in the twentieth century, will become more and more rapid during the next few years even here.

In view of the fact, however, that great efforts are being made at the present time by really well-meaning and benevolent capitalists, and by others who are neither well-meaning nor benevolent, to divert the attention of the working classes from a serious attack upon their worst enemies, to a bootless campaign against the landlords alone, in the shape of an agitation for a single-tax upon what they call land-values, it has been thought advisable to reproduce at full length my arguments against the principal champion of that nostrum. The suggestion for republication was made by my old and intimate friend and co-worker Henry Quelch, whose services to the great cause of International Socialism for nearly a quarter of a century, as speaker, writer, editor, and organiser, have shown that an able English workman, having no social or educational advantages to start with, can, if loyal to his principles, and true to himself, obtain a high and well-deserved reputation throughout the civilised world as a formidable leader of the disinherited class to which he belongs.

Henry George has been dead some years. His "Progress and Poverty" is already almost a dead book. But the effect it produced in 1881 on both sides of the Atlantic will never be forgotten by those who were in active political life at that time. George's book was a curious instance of the strange fact that attractive error sometimes does more to instruct than sober truth. Intelligent people who eagerly read "Progress and Poverty," with its light pleasant style, could not remain satisfied with its superficial con-

clusions, and were almost forced to go forward to Socialism ; though they might shrink back, as most of them did, when they discovered whither they were mentally drifting. Henry George, therefore, acted quite unconsciously as a valuable propagandist for ideas almost entirely in opposition to his own.

I knew George well. When he and his family first came to this country they stayed for some weeks with my wife and myself. I then had numerous private conversations with him in which I learnt how strangely limited his capacity was. It amazed me to find that he was quite unable to see an inch beyond his land-taxation theory. Capitalism and competition remained almost sacred for him. He showed this, I think, most clearly in the discussion between us published in the "Nineteenth Century." It was this also which so terribly misled him in after years and brought him into political connections which his friends could not but deplore. He was essentially a good, earnest, simple man, possessed of no profundity of thought, but with a delightful character, who was wholly unspoiled by his phenomenal literary success, and believed that he was working as effectively as he certainly was honestly for the benefit of his fellow-men. Marx, talking to me of Henry George's book and his confiscation of rent proposals, referred to the whole of it as "the capitalists' last ditch." Let us hope he was right ; for the ditch itself is neither very wide nor very deep, and looks even less difficult to leap to-day than it did at the date of the St. James's Hall Debate.

There is only one point in the debate to which I think I need call attention, though it does not affect my general argument. The great factory-farms in the United States have not played the part in American agriculture that was anticipated by Marx and his followers twenty years ago. The combination of capital against the freehold farmers has been made on the next plane, with the trustified elevators, creameries, packing-towns, mortgage-banks, &c. The farmers remain owners of the land, but they obtain little more than the remuneration of agricultural labourers in return for endless, exhausting, and anxious toil. Our comrade A. M. Simons of Chicago has brought all this out admirably in his "American Farmer."

H. M. H.

London, July 16th, 1906.

Single Tax v. Social-Democracy.

WHICH WILL MOST BENEFIT THE PEOPLE?



A debate took place between Henry George and H. M. Hyndman, in St. James's Hall, London, on Tuesday, July 2nd, 1889, on the "Single Tax versus Social Democracy : Which will most benefit the people?" Professor E. S. Beesly occupied the chair.

The CHAIRMAN : It will perhaps conduce to the good order of this discussion if I inform you of the conditions or regulations which have been agreed upon between the parties. The object of the discussion is the proposal of Mr. Henry George for a single tax, and it has therefore been arranged that he should commence by explaining that proposal of his, but what he will say will be only in the nature of an exposition, and ten minutes only will be allotted to him for that purpose. He will then be followed by Mr. Hyndman, who will take half-an-hour ; after that Mr. George will reply for twenty minutes to make up his half-an-hour. The remainder of the time will be divided in this way :—Each of these two gentlemen will take first a period of twenty minutes, and then a period of ten minutes, Mr. George having the last word. That will make up two hours. I am quite aware that it would be out of place for me to occupy your time, as you have come here to hear these two disputants, and not to hear me. Moreover, although it is usual at the meetings which are held here for the chairman to be appointed because he holds strong views in respect to the subject to be brought before the meeting, and a strong party speech is naturally expected from him, we are not here for that purpose to-night. We are here to have a discussion on which no vote is to be taken ; so it would be evidently out of place if I were to show any partiality by arguing one way or other at the commencement of the debate. I shall endeavour to discharge my duties as fairly and as impartially as possible, and I have no doubt I shall receive every assistance from this meeting. (Hear, hear.) We have here, no doubt, a great many who sympathise with Mr. George, and a great many who sympathise with Mr. Hyndman ; but there are also, no doubt, a great many who have not made up their minds at all, and who are naturally seeking to be informed. It would, of course, be impossible to

prevent all expression of feeling, but I trust we may expect that the two parties will attempt to rival one another, not in the loudness of their expressions of approbation or disapprobation, and still less in the length to which those expressions of opinion are kept up; because you will see very clearly that if there were to be anything of that sort it would add considerably to the difficulties your chairman will be under in carrying out the arrangements that have been agreed upon. (Hear, hear.) There appear before you to-night two very able men, both thoroughly well acquainted with the subject which they are going to discuss; both of them completely familiar with its discussion. We shall therefore have, I feel sure, a most interesting and instructive debate. I am looking forward to that, and you are also, and, therefore, without wasting your time any longer, I will call upon Mr. George to open the discussion.

Mr. HENRY GEORGE: As to the injustice and wrong of present social conditions, the parties who are here represented to-night both agree. We both agree, moreover, as to the end to be sought—a condition of things in which there shall be opportunities for work for all, leisure for all, a sufficiency of the necessities of life for all, an abundance of the reasonable luxuries of life for all. (Hear, hear.) We differ as to the means by which that end is to be attained. Mr. Hyndman styles himself a Social-Democrat: I a Single Tax man. Let me state why we have adopted that name and what we mean by it. Looking over the civilised world to-day, we see that labour nowhere gets its just dues. (Hear, hear.) We see there is everywhere a fringe of unemployed labour. We see all the phenomena that are called sometimes over-production and industrial depression; we reject as superficial the theory that this is caused by there being too many people; that this is caused by there not being enough work; that this is caused by the multiplication of labour-saving machinery. We say that until human wants are satisfied there can be no such thing as over-production—(applause)—that until all have enough there is yet plenty of work. (Hear, hear.) We trace the cause of all these phenomena to one great fundamental wrong. We ask what work is, and we see that what we call productive work is alteration in place or in form of the raw material of the universe that we call land. We see that man is a land animal; that his very body comes from the land; that all his productions consist in but the working up of the land; and that land to him is absolutely necessary; and we behold everywhere the phenomena of which I have spoken. We see everywhere that this element, indispensable to all, has been made the property of some. (Hear, hear.) To that wrong we trace all the great social evils of which we complain to-day, and we propose to right them by going to the root and removing that wrong. (Loud applause.) It is perfectly clear that we are all here with equal rights to the use of the universe. We are all here equally entitled to the use of

land. How can we secure that equal right? Not by the dividing up of land equally; that in the present stage of civilisation is utterly impossible. Equality could not be secured in that way, nor could it be maintained. The ideal way, the way which wise men, desirous of according to each his equal right, would resort to in a new country, would be to treat the land as the property of the whole, to allow individuals to possess and to use it, paying to the whole a proper rent for any superiority in the piece of land they were using. (Hear.) The ideal plan would allow every man who wished to use land to obtain it, and to possess what he wished to use so long as no one else wished to use it, and if the land be so superior that more than one wanted to use it, a proper payment according to its superiority should be made to the community, and by that community used for the common benefit. (Hear, hear.) Whether it would be better wherever circumstances change, to change the rent every year; whether it would be better to secure payment at a fixed rent for a certain time; there may be some differences of opinion. In my opinion it would be better to adopt a flexible system which would allow a change every year. Now if that were done, if the land were let out, those using it paying its premium value to the community, it would amount to precisely the same thing if, instead of calling the payment rent, we called it taxes. "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet." In an old country, however, there is a very great advantage in calling the rent a tax. In an old country there is a very great advantage in moving on that line. People are used to the payment of taxes. They are not used to the formal ownership of land by the community, and to the letting of it out in that way. Therefore, as society is now constituted, and in our communities as they now exist, we propose to move towards our ideal along the line of taxation. (Hear, hear.) If we were to take the rent of land for the community, one of the first and best uses which would be commended to us would be that of abolishing all taxes that bear in any way upon production, or in any way hamper industry, or in any way increase the price of those things that people wish to use and can use without injury to others. Therefore, as bringing in the idea of abolishing these taxes we call our measure the Single Tax. (Hear, hear.) We would abolish all taxation that falls on industry, and raise public revenue by this means, and move to our end, the taking of the full rental value of land for the use of the community, in this way. This name, Single Tax, expresses our method, not our ideal. What we really is liberty men; what we believe in is perfect freedom. What we wish to do is to give each individual in the community the liberty to exert his powers in any way he pleases, bounded only by the equal liberty of others. (Applause.) We would abolish all taxes, and begin with the most important of all monopolies, the fruitful parent of lesser monopolies, that monopoly which disinherits men of their birthright, that monopoly which puts in the hands of some that element absolutely indis-

pensable to the use of all; and we believe not that labour is a poor weak thing that must be coddled or protected by Government. We believe that labour is the producer of all wealth—(applause)—that all labour wants is a fair field and no favour, and, therefore, as against the doctrines of restriction we raise the banner of liberty and equal right in the gospel of free, fair play. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. H. M. HYNDMAN: Mr. Chairman, friends and fellow-citizens,—In rising here to-night to oppose, as a remedy for the evils of our present society, that proposal for a Single Tax which Mr. George has just laid before you, I shall first of all commence by stating those points in which we Social-Democrats—and I stand here as a revolutionary Social-Democrat—(applause)—agree with Mr. George. At page 20 of Mr. George's book, "Progress and Poverty," you will find these words: "That wages, instead of being drawn from capital, are in reality drawn from the product of the labour for which they are paid." Very true. So say we; and we say consequently the profit which ensues results from the unpaid labour of the worker employed by the capitalist. (Applause.) I say we agree with that statement of Mr. George's, and we draw from it that inevitable deduction. Secondly, we agree with him in this: that the increase of the population is not the cause of poverty—(cheers)—and that Malthus, as Mr. George has most ably and elaborately shown, is entirely wrong. Thirdly, we agree with him that the remedies proposed for the present state of things, those which find favour at the present time, economy in governments, limitation of families, better education for the working classes (which simply means better wage-slaves for the capitalists), greater industry by the workers (which simply means an increase of production for the capitalists to take and the landlords to share), thrift and temperance. Thrift because, under present conditions, as Mr. George would admit, mere thrift cannot change the conditions under which the mass of the working population and many of the middle class have to suffer. Even temperance will not alter the economic conditions in which the people live. It may be an individual virtue; it may be an individual advantage—but it will not make the wage-slave less a wage-slave, nor the tenant of Ireland less at the mercy of the landlord. (Hear, hear.) Trade unions will not attain that object. There Mr. George and I would agree. Co-operative societies which, at present, are merely for distribution, more general distribution of land by way of peasant proprietary, are also remedies which are useless under the present condition of things. That takes our friends who support Mr. George a very long way, as I shall presently show. Then, fourthly, that the tendency of the times is towards production on a larger and larger scale, with larger and larger capital, alike in agriculture and in manufacture. That you will find laid down in "Progress and Poverty," I think, and in

"Social Problems" at page 300. The consequence of that I shall call attention to. Fifthly, that the tendency of wages at the present time is to fall in proportion to the amount of wealth created by the workers—that as wealth increases wages become a less proportion to the amount of wealth so created. Further, Mr. George says that he is in favour of collective ownership and collective management of monopolies. Now, I say all this taken together brings us a very long way on the road to that Social-Democracy which, as a matter of fact, I am here to champion as the delegate of the Social-Democratic Federation. (Applause.) Wherein then, do we differ? First, that a rise in rent in countries where the capitalist system of production exists reduces the rate of wages. I say that it does not. I say that rent does not reduce the wages in countries where the capitalist system of production prevails; that rent only reduces the rate of wages in quite exceptional circumstances. I do not deny that rent reduces what Mr. George calls wages, what the cottier tenant proprietor can get out of the soil of Ireland. But the condition of Ireland is not the condition of America, nor the condition of the majority of countries. It is an exceptional condition, and in this exceptional condition, no doubt, rent reduces that which the worker retains out of the soil. Secondly, that rent absorbs all the difference between wages and the total wealth produced as that wealth increases. That, we say, is not so, and you have only got to look around you in this country to see that it is not so. Figures and facts will prove it unmistakably. Thirdly, that the taxation of land values up to their limit, the confiscation of rent namely, and the equivalent reduction would benefit the people. I maintain that it would not. That, too, competition can be other than harmful: we hold that competition in itself is harmful. (Hear, hear.) Further, Mr. George does not propose to nationalise the land. We do. (Hear, hear.) Mr. George proposes this. He states on page 364 of "Progress and Poverty," "It is not necessary to confiscate land; it is only necessary to confiscate rent, to abolish all taxation save that upon land values." Again, we contend that the monopoly of land is not the chief cause of industrial depression at the present time—not the chief cause. Now why, then, agreeing so far with Mr. George as we do, why is it that we Social-Democrats should in the country and in London oppose him, and that I should be appointed on this occasion to debate with him upon this subject? Because, Mr. Chairman, we have arrived at a point where social questions are the questions of the day—(applause)—and where political questions are becoming more and more insignificant every day. This is due in great part to Mr. George's own exertions. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that we should proceed upon a true and scientific basis in order that we may achieve as an organised democracy those results which we both are aiming at. (Applause.) I say that the rent of land—the increase of the rent of land does not lower wages. It has not lowered them in America. Wages in America and in Australia have not fallen as

the rent of land has advanced. (Hear, hear.) I can speak confidently in relation to Australia, especially in Victoria, where, since the enactment by the working classes of practically an eight hours law, wages have risen relatively to what they had been, and, therefore, the increase of rent in that country has not lowered wages. In the early days of California, with which Mr. George is acquainted, no doubt wages were nominally exceedingly high, but the real wages, the purchasing power of wages, are higher to-day in America than they were twenty or twenty-five years ago in various trades. Mr. Arnold Toynbee, with whom I was acquainted, went very carefully into this matter, and although he took a different point of view from me his statements have never been controverted. He maintained that the rise of rent in various countries in no case reduced wages in those countries as wealth increased. But we need not, as a matter of fact, go from England in order to discover that. Between 1878 and 1888, as we are all perfectly well aware, the rent of land fell considerably in Great Britain, but while rent has fallen 25 per cent., can anyone say that wages have risen to the same extent? (Cries of "No.") Certainly not. Yet according to Mr. George's law, if rent has fallen wages ought to have risen. I ask the working men here present, have they risen? ("No, no.") Then again between 1850 and 1878 rent rose enormously in England, and during that same time wages rose—the purchasing power of wages. (Hear, hear.) Therefore, the very basis of Mr. George's argument, namely, that rent rises when wages fall and falls when wages rise, is not borne out in this country, not borne out in America, not borne out in Australia. What then becomes of his argument as laid down in "Progress and Poverty"? But to go farther. Mr. George proposes to confiscate rent. (Hear, hear.) From our point of view, as Social-Democrats, we have no objection to that—not at all. (Laughter and "Hear, hear.") Confiscation, as we contend, is going on to-day—(applause)—the confiscation of the well-being, the health, and the very life of the people by the landlords and capitalists. Here I may point out, Mr. Chairman, that so far from my holding any brief to defend the landlords, such as the Duke of Norfolk, Lord Salisbury, the Duke of Westminster, the Duke of Sutherland, and the other great landowners of this country, I sincerely hope that we may yet have the power to upset these monopolists and other monopolists, and to really nationalise the land of England. (Applause.) I am not here under any circumstance whatever to defend the landlord, but I want to get at him—(laughter)—not merely to confiscate rent, but to take the land for the people and to organise production upon the soil. But, says Mr. George, the taking of economic rent—the taking, that is to say, of land values—will produce a very serious effect. What is the amount in England? For, after all, we are arguing in England. If ever I have the good fortune to go to New York, I shall be happy to argue with Mr. George there. But we are arguing at present in England, and what is the

economic rent of England? It is taken at about £60,000,000 a year, which I admit is a large sum. Mr. George says tax that rent. Take it and apply it to what? Mark, he has not proposed to apply that sum to building better dwellings for the people, for the providing of better parks and open spaces, or for the better education of the people; he has proposed to apply these £60,000,000 to what? To the reduction of the general taxation upon industry. Now to whom would that general taxation so taken off go? I say that it would go without a penny's worth of deduction into the pockets of the great capitalists of this country of ours. (Loud cheers and cries of "No.") To whom else would it go? Mr. George does not propose to interfere with competition. Mr. George says that competition is a right thing, that the man who has exceptional faculties ought to rise upon the shoulders of his fellows. (A voice: "Hear, hear.") If they are foolish enough to bend under the burden so much the worse for them. (Hear, hear.) So say not we. We say that competition for profit produces more degradation than any form of production the world has ever seen. He leaves competition untouched. The labourer who goes to the factory or dockyard gates now begging for work would have to go to the factory gates under the same conditions if the Single Tax proposals were carried out. I maintain that the miserable wage-slaves would be in precisely the same state ten years hence after rent had been confiscated as they are at the present moment, and that the only people who would benefit would be the Rothschilds, the Barings, the Chamberlains, the Mundellas, and such people who pile up great fortunes out of the workers of to-day. (Applause.) Very well; that would be so, and I challenge contradiction upon it. I ask how can the Single Tax be a remedy? What is the reason of this terrible number of unemployed, the existence of which we both deplore? Mr. George says it is on account of the land not being taxed. But mark here again, he does not propose to relieve the land of rent. He simply proposes to transfer that rent to the State, and, therefore, the man who desires to go upon the land will have to go upon it with a deduction for the purpose of getting upon it precisely the same as he has to-day. He does not propose to relieve him from rent, and I do not say that under competition it is just that he should. But how is the labourer to get at the land? To-night Mr. George has told us that he is in favour of a yearly assessment of land, if I do not misunderstand him. Now, there happens to be upon this platform to-night an Indian gentleman who could tell you the result of an annual assessment of land in India where the very proposal which Mr. George has laid before you is in operation. The land in Madras was nationalised in accordance with Mr. George's views, and was assessed annually to the amount of its full rental value. The result was such an enormous increase of poverty that the Government in India was absolutely obliged to give it up as a complete failure. (Hear, hear.) As I am upon the subject of

India, I may mention that Mr. George does me the honour at page 106 of "Progress and Poverty" to quote some articles of mine that I wrote some years ago, pointing out the excessive poverty of that country. But how does that excessive poverty arise? In India the land is taxed in precisely the way that Mr. George proposes. The full economic rent of the land is taken to the amount of £22,000,000 or £23,000,000 a year, and is the sheet-anchor of the taxation of India—(applause)—and yet there is no such poverty in the world as in our great and glorious Empire of India. (Cheers and applause.) There is, therefore, some other reason than the monopoly of land for this excessive poverty, and, singular to say, Mr. George notices it and then passes it by. That reason is the draining of produce from that country; the taking from the people that which they produce under pressure for capitalist drain. We say whether you confiscate rent or whether you do not, this appalling poverty would remain so long as you left the capitalist system untouched. (Cheers.) Now then, therefore, I say that Mr. George's remedy is just as hopeless as any that he denounces. The income of England is variously estimated, but if I take it from £1,200,000,000, to £1,300,000,000, I neither overstate it nor understate it. The total amount of wages which is taken by the working class is variously estimated. I take it at £300,000,000; others take it at £400,000,000 to £500,000,000. The economic rent of land is taken at £60,000,000, which I believe is considerably over what it is. (Hear, hear.) Add that amount to the total amount paid in wages, be it £300,000,000 or £500,000,000, you will still have many hundreds of millions left between the amount of the rent and wages added together and the total income of the nation. (Hear, hear.) To whom does all that go? Mr. George would not deny that most of it goes to the shareholders in the railways, the shareholders in the banks, the shareholders and owners of the great instruments of production. Those are the men to whom that great difference goes, and I say if Mr. George taxes the rent, whatever it may be in this country, it leaves those hundreds of millions untouched, and the condition of the working population will remain precisely the same as it is to-day. (Hear, hear.) Therefore, our object, as Social-Democrats, is not mere burden-shifting. (Hear, hear.) We do not particularly hate landlords more than capitalists, or capitalists more than landlords. The alligator and the crocodile, it matters not which it is from the point of view of those upon whom they feed. (Laughter.) We wish to get rid of both, and what we are aiming at is the abolition of the wages system—(hear, hear)—and that aim can only be accomplished by the abolition of private property in the means and instruments of production including the land. (Hear, hear.) Mr. George agrees with us that capital is rolling up into larger and larger masses, and if he would only look at home in his own country he would find that that is one of the principal reasons of the number of the unemployed whom he

himself has seen around in the streets of San Francisco, as I did myself in 1870 on the Sand Lots. The great factory farms are directed and worked it may be by 500 men in the summer and ten in the winter. Where do the 490 go? They are a body of men discharged to find labour where they can. A new machine is introduced into any department of industry which ought to be useful and beneficial to the whole community. The result under present conditions is that men are thrown out on the streets as unskilled labourers, while greater wealth is produced with fewer hands, and the capitalist alone benefits by that monopoly which the machinery gives him. (Applause.) Mr. George says in some parts of his works that he is in favour of taking over all monopolies by the State. Very well, then. The State, if controlled by the people, is not, therefore, such a hideous enemy after all. (Hear, hear.) The State to-day controlled by the landlords and capitalists is an enemy to the whole people, and I maintain that even the middle class themselves and the well-to-do are stunted in their faculties and their power of enjoying life by the miserable system we have to labour under. (Cheers.) If, then, this concentration of the means of production in fewer and fewer hands, if the rolling up of capital into larger and larger masses, renders it more and more impossible for an individual man to come to the front, as Mr. George says in "Social Problems" it does; then, as a matter of fact, you have to deal with these larger and larger growths of capital even before you touch the land. We Social-Democrats do not claim to be filled with any divine afflatus. We do not believe in any utopia come down from above. But we build up our ideas from the facts we see under our eyes every day. (Applause.) What do we see at the present time? We see that in this very capitalist system, which, based on the devil-take-the-hindmost for the many and economic harmonies for the few, the capitalists are eating up one another, and that the present system means monopoly in every direction. You have the salt "ring," you have the copper "ring," this "ring" and that; and especially on Mr. George's side of the Atlantic. Such "rings" are being organised every day, not "rings" in relation to the land only, but "rings" in relation to every department of manufacture. (Hear, hear.) These rings crush the worker far more than the initial monopoly of the land. (Applause.) Further than this, we see that it is impossible under present conditions speedily to nationalise or communalise that which has not already passed into the company form. I do not say that in countries where you have the communal system still surviving, as for instance in Russia, it may not be possible to pass direct into a higher and more elevated form of it. But here, in this country, circumstances are altogether different, and industries must pass through the company form. The present system need not have been accompanied by the horrors it has been, but being historically inevitable it is working out its complete evolution. At the present moment the capitalist class has proclaimed its own bank-

ruptcy. The landlord, after all, in this country, and even in America, is but a sleeping partner in the process of expropriation which is carried on at the expense of the workers. (Cheers.) If you kill the sleeping partner and leave the active one at work what the better are you? (Hear, hear.) We say look at the facts around you. Look at the great railway organisations. This is not a question of the wages of superintendence. The manager of a railway is paid at the outside £3,000 or £4,000 a year; the manager of the London and Westminster Bank is paid at the outside £3,000 or £4,000 a year; the managers of the coal companies, as of other things, are paid at the outside a few thousands a year. But those who never superintend anything, those who can roam around the Mediterranean superintending nothing, but consuming an enormous deal, take the lion's share. Then I ask you this, Mr. Chairman and fellow-citizens, even from the ethical point of view if you are going, as a matter of fact, to tax income from land, why not tax income from all robbery of labour? Why not put a stop to that confiscation of labour which makes the mass of the people mere slaves in the hands of the few? Social-Democrats assert that the poverty and misery to-day are the necessary result of the capitalist system, and if Mr. George's Single Tax were applied, our principles would have to be taken into consideration before one human being who works for his living would be in any way benefited. These principles which I advocate are spreading throughout the length and breadth of our land, not merely as a result of our agitation, not merely owing to the misery and poverty that exists, but in accordance with the natural evolution of society, and when they triumph, as they most assuredly will, the establishment of Social-Democracy will give the fullest outlet to every man and woman. I say that Mr. George as he stands on this platform is a reactionary and not a revolutionist. (Cheers.) I say that we should combine together in order to work for the co-operative organisation of society in which the railways, the mines, the machines, which at present dominate the worker, shall be the handmaids of labour, and where labour shall have its full reward, and the mental capacity, the physical power, and the health of the people their full development—a condition of things now easily within our reach, but such as the world has never yet seen. (Loud applause.)

Mr. GEORGE: Mr. Hyndman states that rent does not reduce wages—the increase of rent—and he cites England and the United States for that. He tells us that in the United States wages have not fallen as the rent of land has increased. He has referred to "Progress and Poverty." In "Progress and Poverty," I attempted to do what is indispensable and necessary to anyone who would think clearly upon these subjects, to define my terms. I have, in the first place, never stated anything more than that the increase of rent produces a *tendency* to the decrease of wages, and by wages in all such parts as that, I mean that proportion

which goes to the labourer. Money wages may increase or may decrease, but even measured in the absolute amount of things that the labourer can get, wages may increase or decrease without the proportion being affected. In the United States as a fact, with the rise of land values everywhere we have most exactly seen the decrease of wages as a proportion. Further than that, while in some vocations trade unions have raised wages as they have raised them here, the rise has never been commensurate with the improvement in production and the increasing wealth; and while land everywhere has been increasing in value in the United States, so everywhere have we become accustomed to what a few years ago we knew nothing about—the tramp and the pauper. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Hyndman says that rent in England amounts to but £60,000,000. He is surely thinking of agricultural land. To-day in England mining rent and rent of city and town lands is much greater than the rent of agricultural land. (Cheers.) We put the rent of Great Britain to-day at from £150,000,000 to £200,000,000 per year. We propose to take that for the benefit of the whole community instead of allowing it to go, as it does now, into the pockets of individuals. Is not that a change that ought to amount to something? (Hear, hear.) But that mere transference is but a little of the good that will result. What we aim at is not so much the taking of rent for the use of the community as freeing the land for the use of labour. (Loud cheers.) Mr. Hyndman says that if rent were taken and taxes abolished the labourers would be knocking at the factory gates and the gates of the dockyards as they do now. They would not. (Hear, hear.) With taxes on land values, with taxes on economic rent from land, whether it was vacant land or the site of a factory, or pleasure ground or farm, would compel all over this country the "dogs in the manger" to let go their grasp. (Hear, hear and cheers.) It would give opportunities by which labour could employ itself. Mr. Hyndman says that he speaks of labour as it is in the great cities here in England to-day, not as it is among the cottiers of Scotland or the small farmers of Ireland. Everywhere the social organisation rests on these men. Open the land to the little labourers of Ireland; open the land to the crofters of Scotland; open the land to the agricultural labourers of your own English counties, and how many men would be knocking at the factory gates? (Applause.) Where do those men come from? They are driven off the land. (Hear, hear.) I myself have seen a family evicted in Ireland, and that same family in a manufacturing town begging for work at any price. (Hear, hear.) Open the land. There is enough of it; and that is all that is necessary to do. Mr. Hyndman speaks of India as though the Single Tax were in operation there. I heard that the other night from Mr. Samuel Smith, and it did not surprise me, but it does surprise me to hear it to-night from Mr. Hyndman, who, in 1878 and 1879 wrote a series of articles in the "Nineteenth Century" that fully

explained the cause of the poverty of India. (Hear, hear.) Does the Single Tax admit of a salt tax? Even if the tax on land in India were what we mean by our proposal we do not say that given the Single Tax there can be no other evil, any more than a man who believes in temperance would deny that the people might be temperate and yet be oppressed. It is not the value of the land that is taxed in India; it is, as Mr. Hyndman has shown, the cultivator. It is as Seymour Keay showed in his series of articles afterwards, not the value of land, but the ryot, who is so heavily taxed that when he pays his taxes he has to take the earnings of his wife and children to supplement his own—(shame)—so taxed that he declares that the Survey Department of the Indian Government is nothing but a scientific instrument for squeezing the last drop of sweat out of the ryot; so taxed that he says if the most rack-rented peasants of Ireland were to go there they would find in three months that the little finger of the Anglo-Indian Government was more than the loin of the Irish landlord. (Hear, hear.) We say that all it is necessary to do is to give men their natural rights. We say all it is necessary to do is to open the land to labour. (Hear, hear.) I do not take the same view of labour that our friends of the Social-Democratic Federation do. They seem to have taken holus bolus the arguments of the old political economists who were writing for the purpose of proving that the poor you must always have with you. ("No!") They seem to have accepted as a natural law that the actual wages of labour are merely what the labourer can subsist on. They seem to have given capital the first place in the order of production. Capital does not come first. Land and labour are the only two absolutely necessary factors to the production of wealth. (Hear, hear.) Capital is the child of labour exerted upon land. (Cheers.) Give labour access to land and it will produce capital. Give labour access to land and the power of the capitalists to grind the masses must disappear. (Hear, hear.) What does that power come from? Merely from the fact that men are unable to employ themselves upon the land. It is the poverty of the labourers, not the wealth of the capitalist, which is the evil to be removed. Mr. Hyndman quarrels with competition. (Hear, hear.) He wants to abolish it, but to abolish competition would be to abolish freedom. (Loud applause and cries of "No, no.") How can you abolish competition except by saying to man, "Thou shalt not"? How can you abolish competition save by preventing men from doing what they have a perfect right to do—"No, no," and hear, hear)—and what it is for the interest of the community that they should do? Why, to-day, what are the grievances that the working classes everywhere justly complain of? The restriction of competition. It is monopoly, and monopoly simply means the restriction of competition. (Hear, hear.) How is competition to be abolished? We have a right to ask the Social-Democrats what they propose to do, and how they propose to do it. All I can find in their

platform that goes to the social question is this: "The production of wealth to be regulated by society in the common interests of all its members." (Cheers.) "The means of production, distribution, and exchange to be declared and treated as collective or common property." (Hear, hear.) They propose to take everything—(laughter and hear, hear)—not merely that which belongs of natural right to all men equally—namely, the land—but also that which by natural right belongs to the man who has produced it. (Hear, hear.) How are they to get possession of it? By buying it or by taking it? If by taking it, it is a big job. (Hear, hear and laughter.) If by buying it, what are you doing but taking the capital from the masses in order to give it to those people whom you now say hold the capital? You say the nation ought to abolish competition. Why you could not abolish competition without subjecting man to the worst form of tyranny—(Hear, hear and "No, no")—and without stopping all progress. It is where competition is not permitted that there is stagnation. (Hear, hear.) It is the competition of manufacturer with manufacturer that leads to the adoption of inventions in manufactures. It is the competition of steamship owner with steamship owner that gives you those greyhounds of the sea. It is the competition of producer with producer, it is the competition of tradesman with tradesman that brings to such a city as this all that is necessary to supply its wants. (Dissent, and cries of "Order" and cheers.) What we want is full competition. (Hear, hear.) What we want to do is to abolish monopolies, and it is to these monopolies, and not to the earnings of capital, that the great fortunes to which my opponent has alluded are due. What are the causes of these big fortunes? In the United States, go wherever you please, you find that the great element is land ownership. It is a great mistake to think that the only landlords are those which pose as such. To-day, who are the great owners of the Irish estates? Not so much the Irish landlords as the English banks and insurance societies. (Hear, hear.) Take our Jay Gould, the most conspicuous example of a great fortune made outside the rise of land values. He made his first stride by getting hold of a piece of land and taking advantage of its rise in value, and he is to-day the owner of millions of acres. He made his money in what? In a public franchise that we would abolish. Mr. Hyndman speaks of the comparatively small amount of rent and the great amount of capital. What does he count as capital? Capital is a real thing. Capital is something produced by labour from land. Public debts are not capital. Franchises are not capital. Look to-day what is included as capital to swell those figures showing how much greater capital is than land ownership. There is your public debt. Does that represent any capital? If it were wiped out to-morrow, would there be one iota the less capital in this country? There are such companies as that in connection with the printing machine that is now being introduced. They have a machine

perhaps worth £100, and they propose to capitalise it at £100,000.. What is there there? Not capital; but the expectation of future profits. So it is with the great mass of that which is vaguely treated as capital. Capital is wealth produced by labour from land, used again in increasing the production of wealth. And not only will it not hurt labour to leave to capital its full reward, but we must leave to capital its full natural reward if we would have a progressive community—(cheers)—and if we would give each what is his due. (Hear, hear.) What the labourers have to fight against is not competition—(hear, hear and "Yes")—but the restriction of production to their injury. Let there be competition all around from the highest to the lowest, fencing in no class against competition. Abolish monopoly everywhere, put all men on an equal footing, and then trust to freedom. In that way we would have the most delicate system of co-operation that can possibly be devised by the wit of man. The fight of labour is not against capital; it is against monopoly. Why just think of that state of things when all the means of production belong to the community and all production is regulated by the State, when every individual would have his work, his time of work, and everything else prescribed for him; when it would be utterly impossible for men to employ themselves! To abolish competition you must have restriction; you must call on the coercive powers of the State. How else are you going to do it? Supposing you organise industry in the way our friends dream of, if any individuals go outside of this organisation and propose to compete with it, how are you going to stop their competition but by coming in with the strong arm of the law, and putting an end to it? Why such a state of society, instead of being the ideal to which the Anglo-Saxon community ought to aspire, would be going back to a worse despotism than that of ancient Egypt. (Applause and cries of "No, no.")

Mr. HYNDMAN: What I would desire to point out to Mr. George in the first instance is that the tramp and the pauper appear periodically in the United States, and that at these periods of great depression the rent of land is practically permanent. It may rise steadily as he says it does, but these depressions occur periodically, and are, therefore, caused not by the rise of rent, but by some other cause, which I have endeavoured to point out—namely, this enormous concentration of the means of production both in manufactures and agriculture. According to Mr. George, the rent of land is a permanently growing quantity, and, therefore, I maintain these periodic depressions cannot be caused by that, but by something which varies, and that variation is the application of capital to the various industries. I will deal with this question of monopolies later on, and I will show that this present capitalist system is necessarily a monopoly—that capital means monopoly. The means of production are monopolised by the capitalists, with the landlords as their sleeping partners, and those who have no

other property than the force of labour in their bodies are compelled by that monopoly to sell it for practically a subsistence wage. Now I am accused by Mr. George of having merely given the figures of agricultural rent. This is a mistake on his part. It is a very remarkable thing to me that these figures of Mr. Arnold Toynbee's having been before the public now for six years, Mr. George has not taken the trouble to criticise them. Mr. Toynbee took the greatest pains to get at these figures, and their accuracy has never been challenged. According to them, the rent of land—which is now very much reduced—was at that time 69 millions a year. According to Mr. Toynbee's analysis, the economic rent would not be more than 30 millions out of the 69 millions; and that is true, because the rest of it is return to capital invested in the land. But again, Mr. George says that I left out the City lands. I did not do anything of the kind. The ground rents of the cities of England taken in the same year as I have taken the agricultural rents, amount to 30 millions a year. Those figures are unchallengeable; if anything, they are over rather than under the mark. But, after all, what does this difference in the estimate matter with reference to the present argument? Say that we take 150 millions more or less to reduce the taxation of the country, what the better is the worker? These figures, 60 millions or 150 millions, sound very big, but the important question is who gets the money?—(hear, hear)—or, rather, who gets the wealth? because money is merely the symbol of wealth. Whether it be 60 millions or 150 millions which by means of the Single Tax on land is to be applied to the reduction of taxation in England or America, the capitalist classes will get the benefit of it and not the workers. (Applause.) Mr. George says his object is to free the land to the influence and the power of labour. (Hear, hear.) But that is exactly what he does not do. ("Yes, yes.") It is just as impossible for the worker to get upon the land after the Single Tax as before. ("No, no.") I say, "Yes, yes," because Mr. George is going to exact the full economic rent; and not only so, but he is going to exact it every year. There is to be no permanency of tenure, and nothing to encourage this investment of capital which he is so anxious to bring about. A man is to be assessed his full economic rent every year, so that so far from freeing the land for the labourer to get upon it, Mr. George will keep him from the land more than he is kept to-day. ("No, no.") How are the unemployed knocking at the dock gates and the factory doors to get upon the land? No doubt, as Mr. George says, the monopolists of land are the dogs in the manger—I do not deny that for a moment, and we are anxious to get at them—but where is the poor dock labourer, who has nothing but the force of labour in his body, to get his tools to go upon this land which is thus nominally freed? (Loud applause.) Again, when he gets there, how is he to meet the competition of the big factory farmers? (Hear, hear.) If this competition of which Mr. George

speaks is such a glorious thing, I should like to know how the man who is working with a spade on ten acres is going to compete with the great factory farmer in Dakota who is working 100,000 acres with steam ploughs and all the best machinery. (Hear, hear.) If Mr. George would only try competition under those conditions he would very soon find that it would grind him to the earth. ("No.") I have seen it done. I have seen it myself actually taking place. When I landed in America in 1870, the farmers of the West were then a fairly well-to-do folk, and I have seen them crushed down by their own competition and the concentration of capital to such a condition that by far the majority of them now are mortgaged up to the hilt. Mr. George will say that if the full value of the land were taken you could not mortgage their land. Ask Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, who is on this platform, how the ryots of India mortgage. They mortgage their crops when they are unable to mortgage the land. They borrow money upon their crops, instead of upon the land, at excessive rates of interest. Therefore, I say this system Mr. George is proposing does not give free access to the land, and that even if it did give free access to the land, the effect of competition and the concentration of capital would crush out the small man who went on it with inferior tools. Further, I maintain that this competition which Mr. George holds up as a thing to encourage and aim at must necessarily mean the degradation of the mass of the people. (Applause.) Mr. George says that he is surprised that I should talk about India in the way I have done. I believe that I have truly pointed out what the cause of the poverty in India is, but I have also shown that his remedy is applied there, the land being taxed up to its full economic value, and therefore there are very much greater causes of poverty than merely the monopoly of the land. The land in India in the main is owned by the State; but the capitalist comes in between the ryot and the State and robs him of his production, and the drain of capital to England for interest on railways and so forth burdens and oppresses the ryot even more than the land tax. Mr. George says that by natural right you ought to have the land. We are not arguing about natural rights; we are arguing about the condition of society in which we live. We say that we are here owing to a series of causes over which we had no control whatever. We have to look at the history of this development of capitalism in England in order to know how to control and overthrow it. That is the way we look at it—not from any notions of natural right. We see in our midst a relentless conflict to-day, the result of which is that the worker lives but half the age of the class to which I belong; and hundreds of thousands of children are growing up rickety and scrofulous because you fill their heads before you fill their bellies. (Applause.) The competition we have all around us in every direction must mean the degradation of the masses. (Hear, hear.) Co-operation such as we Social-Democrats are striving for would afford the means

and opportunities for the development of the faculties of each and all; and this national and international co-operation is the necessary future for mankind. (Loud cheers.) I am asked what capital is. I have before said that capital consists of the means and instruments of production, including the great railways, shipping, machinery, etc., which men have to use to create wealth, concentrated in the hands of a class. Those machines and instruments have come into existence since the Middle Ages, and they have pushed in between the landlords and the people. They came in the first instance as an opposition to the landlord; capital appears in every instance in the Middle Ages from the period of individual production as the enemy of the landlord. It is the enemy of the landlord to-day, and what Mr. George is practically proposing and advocating on this platform is the monopoly of the capitalist by competition against the monopoly of the landlord by rent. (Hear, hear.) What we as Social-Democrats desire to bring about is co-operation in production and in distribution. We would accept all those points wherein Mr. George agrees with us, but we say that at the present time the system of competition is falling by its own weight. Competition has been tried and found a failure in every department, and its bankruptcy has been proclaimed to the world. (Hear, hear and "No, no.") The question is will Social-Democracy benefit the people? I am glad the word "people" has been used, because I maintain that it will benefit not merely the working classes but the capitalists and middle classes also, whose interest Mr. George, it appears to me, is so anxious to defend, and who form, I think, the majority of the audience here to-night. Even they would be largely benefited, not by the Single Tax which leaves them still competing with one another for the wealth produced by the workers, but by the establishment of Social-Democracy, and by the amount of necessary labour growing less and less with every improvement in machinery, which would leave them abundant time to cultivate their mental faculties and develop their physical powers without that hideous feeling that every advance they make is made at the expense of their fellow creatures. (Loud applause.) There is a moral side to this which I cannot deal with fully to-night. Take the case of the large body of shopkeepers in this city who fancy they gain by this competition. Are not our large stores crushing out the small shopkeepers? Are not they as a matter of fact at the present moment injuring the middle classes? ("Yes.") Take the case of the stockbrokers, and the great mass of barristers, doctors, and others in a similar position; how far are they allowed the full outlet for their faculties by being kept with their noses to the grindstone all their lives for the sake of bread and butter? The middle classes of this country do not realise how much their faculties would be enlarged and their scope of usefulness increased if this miserable system of competition by which they can only gain at somebody else's expense were removed. (Loud cheers.) This system which Social-Democrats

are anxious to see is inevitable, and is coming as we are talking : it has gained ground enormously in England in the five years since I debated in this hall with Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, and has gone on from strength to strength until at the present time it is the most rapidly growing movement in the country. We are told that it will mean the stunting of men's faculties. Are not the faculties of most people stunted by competition and the mere desire to beat and crush down their fellows? We constantly see men possessed of the finest faculties, who might be of immense benefit to their own fellows in every possible way, overworked and crushed down by this very competition which Mr. George champions. Mr. George says that we stunt the individual faculties by organising the social forces. These social forces have been and are being organised to-day, but they are being organised for the benefit of the capitalist class. The Post-Office is organised by the State to-day, but for whose benefit? Not for the benefit of those who work in it most certainly, for they work under competition many hours a day for practically subsistence wages. (Hear, hear.) The same applies to the railways. Mr. George asks us, "Will you buy them?" Does he intend to buy rent? (Laughter.) Oh no; you may confiscate rent. (Hear, hear.) It is moral to take the rent of the landlord without buying it, but do not touch the capitalist. (Laughter and applause.) I say, to use a vulgar phrase, "What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander." (Hear, hear.) If Mr. George says it is immoral to nationalise or socialise the instruments of production, then I say it is equally immoral to touch the rent which goes to the landlord. ("No, no" and cheers.) The one is the result of historical causes just as much as the other; the one has grown up out of the past just as much as the other; the one means the expropriation of labour just as much as the other. (Applause.) We say that from the moral point of view our duty should be to take for the benefit of all that which comes from the labour of all. (Hear, hear.) Again, to return to this objection about crushing down individuality, how could individuality be crushed down when if the labour of all were properly applied none need work more than two hours a day, and thus all could have leisure and opportunity for the full development of their faculties? So far from stunting the powers of man it would give opportunities for the physical and mental development of mankind which can be obtained in no other way. (Applause.) It is said that to replace competition by co-operation would be to stop progress. Nothing of the kind. (Cheers.) Why, at the present time capitalism stops progress. Electricity might replace steam in many cases if it were not for capitalism barring the way. Along the canals to-day you can see women doing work which could be done by steam or electricity were it not for this infamous competition. Competition may produce the vessels which Mr. George terms the greyhounds of the sea, and which transfer us so swiftly across the Atlantic; but the inside of those vessels is never seen

by millions of our people. I wonder he should have put it forward here as an instance of the progress of mankind, when the very competition which produces the City of Paris, New York, Umbria, and other vessels of the kind has produced degradation in our cities, and the miserable condition of the men in the stoke-holes of those very vessels. Let Mr. George stand up for the stokers who run these greyhounds on the Atlantic, and whose miserable condition will not be relieved by opening to them the land which you are going to rack-rent up to its full value. (Cheers.) I am glad the discussion has been narrowed to the question of competition which Mr. George champions, and co-operation of all which we champion. I am glad that on this platform we have the flag of Single Tax put up as against the red flag of Social-Democracy, which I am here to champion to-night. (Applause.) I, Mr. Chairman, have not the slightest fear as to the future; I know on which side the victory will be. I can hear the measured tramp of the millions of people as they march behind our flag to the glorious victory which will emancipate the whole human race from the bondage of capitalism. (Enthusiastic cheers.)

Mr. GEORGE: I will reply as well as I can seriatim to what Mr. Hyndman has advanced. As to Mr. Arnold Toynbee's figures, I have never thought it incumbent on me to analyse any figures. I am not disposed to attach much importance to figures, and especially to the figures of professed statisticians. (Hear, hear.) I can find figures and figures until I cannot rest to prove conclusively to the satisfaction of those who get them up that everybody is all right, and that there is nothing whatever to complain of; that wages are good and have been steadily advancing for a long time. Whether the rent is large or small is not of importance to the principle. I would take rent—always meaning by rent economic rent—for the community because it belongs to the community. (Cheers.) I would not abolish it; I would exact it from anyone who used land wherever it was used, because that is the only way in which all can be put upon an equality. (Hear, hear.) If you are to leave to the man who gets possession of a piece of land in the centre of London the whole rent you give him an enormous advantage over the man who for his purposes, to get his land, has to go to some out-of-the-way district or up to the Highlands of Scotland. (Hear, hear.) The importance that we attribute to this taking of rent is that it is not merely taking that much from a source that will not restrict industry, will not oppress labour, will not hamper production; but it will make mere landownership utterly valueless. (Applause.) By taking the rent we make it unprofitable to hold land in expectation of future increase in its value. (Cheers.) We make it impossible to extort from the worker a monopoly rent. (Hear, hear.) We make it impossible for great landowners to hold vast tracts of land—which their fellow citizens would be glad to make fruitful—in idleness or for

purposes of pleasure. (Loud cheers.) Tax land values up to the full and what would you have? The land that has no value, that is to say, the land that two men do not want to use could be had by labour, not merely without price, but without tax. The selling value of land would be destroyed, and all that the user of land need pay would be a price amounting to the special advantage that he had above his fellows by the possession and use of a particular piece of land. Mr. Hyndman asks who is to supply the tools. That is a striking illustration of how the Socialists simply take the old dicta of such political economists as Ricardo, McCulloch, and so on. Just as they used to say that labour cannot be employed unless there is capital to employ it, and capital must therefore restrict the employment of labour because labour cannot support itself save upon the proceeds of past labour, which is capital, so do the Socialists now say that labour cannot go on land and make any use of it without capital. (Hear, hear.) That is not the fact in the first place. (Cheers.) Who was the capitalist who supplied the first man with tools? (Hear, hear and laughter.) And to-day what would be the effect of opening the land to labour? Among the unemployed there are very many men who could get some amount of capital; there is hardly any man who can see an opportunity of making a profitable use of his powers who cannot obtain some capital. (Interruption and cries of "Order.") How is labour to get the land? How has labour got the land when it was much further off? Irish labourers have gone some 3,000 miles across the sea, and then in many cases 1,000 miles further west, by saving or by borrowing—some member of the family has gone across, and their earnings have constituted an emigration fund for the rest of the family. That great emigration has been going on all these years, not by capital supplied by the Government, but by capital earned by the strong arm of labour. (Applause.) The whole development of the United States, the whole development of every new country, proves the fallacy of this assertion that labour cannot employ itself without capital, and proves the fallacy of the assertion that the opening of land to labour would do nothing to improve wages. Go into a new country where land is free; go into a country where the price of land is not yet high, and there you will find no such thing as an unemployed man; there you will find no such thing as a man begging for employment as though it were a boon. (Hear, hear.) What has the deterioration in the condition of our farms been caused by? Not, as Mr. Hyndman says, by any exploiting power of capital, but by the monopolisation of land, and by the taxes levied on industry. (Hear, hear.) What do these great farms come from? They come from the great railroad grants. (Hear, hear.) They come from the system permitted under the land laws of the United States, under which single individuals have taken hundreds of thousands of acres. And from the same cause come the mortgages on the farms. Wherever the farmer goes he finds the

speculator ahead of him; he finds the land already taken up, and he must either start with capital and pay a large sum for the purpose of getting virgin soil to cultivate, or he must mortgage his labour for years. That is what he does. (Hear, hear.) The great cause is in the high purchase price of his land, and that is why times have been getting harder in the United States. Then I am asked, how can a man using a spade compete with the great machinery of the 5,000 acre farm? This, at least, he can do; he can make a living, and a good living, too; and when men can make a good living themselves they will not work for anything less than that for any capitalist. (Loud cheers.) There is in capital no power to oppress labour; capital is not the employer of labour; labour is the employer of capital. (Applause.) That is the natural order; labour came before capital could be; it is labour produces capital; there is no particle of capital that can properly be styled capital that labour has not been exerted to produce. (Hear, hear.) Give labour land; let it get it on equal terms; secure to the labourer the reward of his exertions, and the distinction between the labourer and the capitalist will pass away. With the increase in the wages of labour, if there be great organisations of capital they must necessarily be co-operative organisations in which labour shall have its full share and its full right. (Applause.) Mr. Hyndman speaks of the history of the development of England. What is the history of the development of England? It is the gradual suppression of the common rights—the gradual making of private property out of what was originally recognised as common property. (Hear, hear.) It is the gradual taking of the land of England from the whole people, and making the class originally tenants land-owners. (Hear, hear.) The long series of usurpations was finally consummated by a no-rent manifesto, by which the landowning class threw off the rents they had agreed to pay for the use of land, and put them in indirect taxes upon labour. (Cheers.) What we propose to do is to go back the same way. What we single tax men would do would be to go back to the old system, to bring it back in a way adapted to our time, to recognise, not half-heartedly, but fully, that all men are equally entitled to the use of the land, and its correlative that each man is absolutely entitled to that which his labour produces. (Applause.) Now we have heard a good deal to-night, as we always do whenever our Socialist friends talk, a great deal about nationalising all the instruments of production, a great deal about making capital the property of the State, and about organising labour by the State; but I have not heard to-night, and I have yet to hear, of any practical steps in this direction. (Hear, hear.) How do they propose to begin, and what will be involved? Here let me say, to interrupt for one moment, that I have never made any proposition to confiscate the railways. What I propose to take is the rent of land for the use of the community; what I propose to take for the community are all valuable franchises; but I would take nothing that is the product of labour for the use of

the community without paying its owner its full value. Now, to take all the instruments of production will involve a good deal. (Hear, hear.) The instruments of production comprise not merely the railways, not merely the ships of the steamship lines; they go down to the axe, the spade, and the other tools of the individual workman, and to the stock of the storekeeper. Are you going to take all that? ("Yes.") It is a big job. (Laughter and applause.) Has it ever happened in the history of the world that the men who had nothing took everything from the possessing classes? Never. And when it is taken, what do you propose to do with it. ("Use it.") To use it under Governmental directions, and to have a Government official or a board at the head of every vocation; lawyers, doctors—I suppose no lawyers would be needed—down to milkmen, costermongers, and boot-blacks. Now what does that mean? We are told it is all to be managed in the interest of the community—the whole people—but is that the history of such organisation? Does not organisation always mean a concentration of power in the hands of a few? Do not you men who belong, as I have belonged, to a political organisation, know that always the tendency is to the management by a few? Is it not always true that when things are left to the vote of a large number of people that a few designing men always have the advantage? Here is an example of Government directing production: under the plea of directing production, of controlling exchange, you had a system called a protective tariff—we in the States have it still. The wisdom of the people freely expressed by means of manhood suffrage, endeavouring to so direct industry as to benefit the whole people, and what has been the result? A system of utter robbery and spoliation; a system that has given to such men as Andrew Carnegie incomes of five millions of dollars per year, and has driven our ships off the high seas; a system that has been used by every corrupt influence to add to the wealth of men who are willing to spend their money for corrupt purposes. (Hear, hear.) Think of what would be the result if you were to apply that system to all industry. (Applause.) You speak about organising an industrial army; the organising of an army always means tyranny; it means that a man must be put in the ranks as a machine, and must obey arbitrary authority. Do you think that there is less tyranny because men claim to act in the name and by the authority of the people than without it? Not at all. Do you think that there is any virtue in any party, or any men, or any system of Government attempting to do things for the benefit of the whole? ("No.") Why, we know that in the United States that there can be a tyranny of majorities just as bad as the tyranny of despotism. My time is up. (Loud applause.)

Mr. HYNDMAN: I maintain that Mr. George has not dealt with my arguments at all. I contended that the system he is proposing—namely, taxing land up to its full economic rent, would

not give the people access to the soil. (Hear, hear.) I contended that the difficulty of their getting upon the land would be every bit as great then as it is now, because they would have to pay to the State in taxation the full amount they now have to pay the landlord. I pointed out further that even if they got on the land the competition which would be brought to bear against them by heavier guns than their own, by better tools in the shape of steam ploughs and the like, would gradually but surely grind them down to the condition in which they are to-day. Not one of those points has Mr. George answered. (Applause.) Mr. George says that in new countries where land was obtainable unemployed men were not to be found. I can only say this: that I have seen the streets of Sydney crowded with unemployed men with lots of land all around them, and I have seen identically the same thing in Melbourne, and identically the same thing in San Francisco. (Hear, hear.) How is it that Mr. George does not deal with the impoverishment of those farmers—not those who have to get on the land, but who are already on the land, and who are beaten by the competition of cheaper production on a larger scale. Mr. George has not shown you, Mr. Chairman, nor any man or woman in this hall, that if the economic rent of the land of England, be it 60 millions or 150 millions, were taken and applied to the reduction of taxation that the people of this country would be benefited in any particular. I say he has never met my argument in any shape, way, or description, that the capitalist class would pocket every sixpence of the difference, and that the people of this country would not be benefited at all. I would ask you to mark this, that Mr. George both begins and ends this debate, so that he cannot say he has not had a fair opportunity. I have only a few minutes in which to answer him and cannot go into the question as fully as I should like to do, but I will try to make the best of the short time at my disposal. Mr. George says that I have put before this meeting to-night no practical proposals. I will deal very rapidly with what we do propose. We propose, as I said before, to organise labour on the soil. We are just as much in favour of the taking away of private property in land as Mr. George is, and in a much more effectual way. We propose to organise labour on the land in co-operative farms by means of the communes and county councils under the control of the whole industrial community. Again he says, "How do you propose to act?" Well, by way of palliatives to the existing evils we would shorten the hours of labour by law in every employment where it is possible to do so. On the railways and tramways and in all Government departments eight hours might be made the normal working day, which would give the people more leisure to combine, think, and understand how it is they are expropriated at the present time. We would have free education and free meals in our schools in order that every child might be educated—not merely instructed in the three R's, but educated—and in order

that their physical condition might rise to the level of their education. (Loud applause.) Then as the proper housing of the people is of the greatest importance, we would have healthy buildings erected by the communes, municipalities and county councils to be let at rents to cover the cost of construction and maintenance alone. (Cheers.) Further, we would take this unemployed labour of the working classes and organise it under State and communal effort, and when I speak of the State I do not mean the State governed by the landlords and capitalists, but the State organised under the control of the whole industrial community. (Hear, hear.) Then as regards the railways we say they should belong to the community—the organised industrial community as a whole. Mr. George says, "How are you going to take them?" Well, friends and fellow citizens, by vote if possible, by force if necessary. (Loud cheers.) And precisely the same thing applies to rent. How are you going to take the rent? By vote if possible, by force if necessary. (Applause.) The railways are now organised by directors on behalf of corporations which have neither souls to be damned nor bodies to be kicked; we maintain that they should be organised under the whole community, which will then be a democratic industrial community, no longer dominated and dictated to, but able to turn out the present directors who trample upon them and to put in those whom they can control. (Cheers.) Then there are the mines which at this present moment might just as well be organised by the workers, they themselves electing their own directors. (Hear, hear.) The same thing applies to the factories. To-day you have the most complete organisation of the workers in production and the most terrible anarchy in exchange. We see boot manufacturers throwing out as many boots as they possibly can on the market for the sake of profit—not for use. (Hear, hear.) Then when they have in this way brought about a glut in the market, they throw the men out of employment, and you have men and women going without boots because, forsooth, there are too many boots! (Loud applause.) There are men going hatless because there are too many hats, and coatless because there are too many coats. (Cheers.) We would restore by the co-operation of all, in a State not dominated and dictated to by the capitalist and the landlord, but in an organised industrial community, order in place of this chaos which at the present moment is prevailing all over the civilised world. (Cheers.) This is what we would do, and the things we are proposing the men who come into office are forced to carry out. My master in political economy at Cambridge, the late Henry Fawcett, one of the most vigorous champions of individualism and non-interference, was obliged as an administrator to kick himself downstairs as a political economist. When he became Postmaster-General, he was forced to introduce the control of the State in connection with the Savings Banks and in other similar measures. Why? because it is necessary for the State to come in to organise this miserable system of monopoly which the capitalists have engen-

dered; they themselves are obliged to bring in laws to limit their own robbery. We contend that if it is necessary for the capitalists it is still more necessary for the labourers (Hear, hear.) I have very little time, but I have tried to present before you what it is that we would bring about. We would bring about a real beneficial co-operation in place of the hideous "devil-take-the-hindmost" competition which now exists. (Applause.) We would substitute for the system where some men work 16 or 17 hours a day, one where all men working but two hours a day wealth shall become, as Robert Owen said, as plentiful as water. I have enough patriotism left to hope that this country will take the lead in this great movement. (Loud applause.) Here is the centre of capitalism, here the commercial world has its nexus. (Hear, hear.) Tyler and Ball and Cade and Ket and More and Vane and Blake and Harrison, those are the names of the men of the past who will be the heroes of the future. (Cheers.) The Chartists, too, and Bronterre O'Brien and Ernest Jones and the rest, with the great Robert Owen. (Renewed cheers.) If I look to the other side of the Atlantic also, I see that the men who broke down negro slavery, Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and their friends, were but a despised few, who nobly struggled and fought on until at last their day of triumph came as ours is surely coming. (Enthusiastic cheers.) We have a greater cause even than theirs: we are fighting for the emancipation of the workers throughout the whole civilised world. (Applause.) I do beseech you to read our literature, study our principles, and then endeavour to help us to benefit the whole people, not by the single tax, but by establishing permanently a beneficent co-operation which shall be an untold blessing to generations to come. (Loud and long-continued applause.)

Mr. GEORGE: Mr. Hyndman says that in San Francisco as in other new countries he has seen men looking vainly for work though there is unemployed land there. That is true; but he never saw a man looking vainly for work where the land was not fenced in and monopolised. (Applause.) What the Single Tax would do would be to break down that monopoly; to make it impossible for any man to hold valuable land without putting it into use; to compel those who are now holding land unemployed to use it themselves or sell out to someone else who would. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Hyndman says that these industrial depressions come from too much production—"No"—that because too many boots are made men go shoeless. That is not so. There cannot be too much production until all wants are satisfied. (Loud applause.) It is because the men who would like to wear boots are unable to apply their labour in producing anything that they can exchange for the boots. (Hear, hear.) The cause of industrial depressions is not too much production, but it is the speculative increase in the value of land, shutting out labour and capital from employment on land, and throwing idle men back to compete

with each other for work. (Applause.) That is the cause. (Hear, hear.) We have talked here for a little to-night, but I for one feel that we shall have accomplished nothing unless in so far as we induce people to think. What I ask you all to do is to think about these things. (Hear, hear.) What I would like Mr. Hyndman to do is to seriously set himself to thinking—(loud laughter)—how this organisation of labour, this appropriation by the State of all capital, is to be brought about. I asked that question, and he replies by saying they propose to take the railways. We Single Tax men also propose to take the railways. What I want to know is about the other things. How are all trades going to be organised? You are going to begin with one here and there; you are going to end competition a little at a time—a piece here and a piece there. Wherever you end competition you give some special privilege. Monopoly—in what does it consist? In the abolition of competition. What are the things of which you complain in Government? The absence of competition. Your House of Lords is not open to competition; it is fenced in by monopoly. (Loud applause.) So wherever you find a special privilege, there you find it a special privilege because competition is excluded. What was the essence of slavery to which Mr. Hyndman has alluded? The prohibition of competition; no one else could employ the slave save his owner—the slave was not free to compete with owner. (Hear, hear.) If you men seriously think of these things you will see that what the Social-Democratic Federation vaguely proposes, if it were possible to carry it out, would inevitably result in the worst system of slavery. (Loud cries of "No, no," and "Order.") Simply imagine a state of things in which no one could work save under State control; in which no one could display any energy save under the control of a board of officials, and ask yourselves who this board of officials are likely to be. Socialism begins at the wrong end; it pre-supposes pure government; its dream is simply of a benevolent tyranny. ("No, no.") Mr. Hyndman is proud of England; so, too, I am proud of English blood. I stand here to-night claiming membership in the great Anglo-Saxon race, and I ask you men of England why is it that our speech in the coming century must be to the world what the tongue of ancient Rome was to the old world? Why is it that America is ours? Why is it that great nations of the English speech are growing up under the Southern Cross? Why is it that we have succeeded in colonising where Germany and France have failed? I will tell you: it is because the English people have trusted very little to Government, and it is because, more than any other people, they have allowed free scope to individuality. (Cheers.) French colonies, Spanish colonies, and the German colonies are all far more deftly arranged so far as organisation and direction is concerned; but English colonies have had but the individuality of the Anglo-Saxon race, and that is the reason why the Anglo-Saxon race is the dominant race of the future. (Applause.) I

ask you to follow your traditions, to more and more remember that this German Socialism is nothing but an attempt to establish tyranny—"Oh!"—in the interests of the people. ("No, no.") The interests of the people are always in freedom. (Applause.) Let the people have their natural rights; let them stand on an equal plane with regard to the opportunities of nature, and then they will have a fair, full, and free field. (Cheers.) Then if one is more active, more industrious, more enterprising than another, then in God's name let him go ahead. The notion of reducing everybody to one level is a preposterous notion; it is the notion of ancient Egypt, not of the 19th century. This is the watchword: freedom, freedom, always freedom. To each the fullest opportunity to develop his own powers; to all that which belongs to all—that which God above has given to all equally—that which the community, as distinguished from the individual, produces. That is the doctrine of the Single Tax. (Great applause.)

Mr. HYNDMAN: I rise to propose a vote of thanks to our chairman of to-night. I do so with the very sincerest pleasure, and I feel that I am honoured in so doing. Twenty-five years ago when the working classes of England were making some sort of effort to obtain freedom in the form of trade unions and other combinations for their benefit, our chairman, in the face of the most hideous obloquy, stood forward with his fellows in the face of the world to champion their cause. (Cheers.) Again, in 1871, when the whole of the capitalist press of Europe howled down the Commune of Paris, when the men who had striven for the enfranchisement of the workers landed in this country in rags and in misery, Edward Spencer Beesly, in spite of all the obloquy, vilification and abuse of the Press, came forward and lent a helping hand to them. (Loud cheers.) I wish in these days of political tricksters, turncoats, office-seekers, and wind-bags, we had more men like our chairman. (Cheers.) Again, when the Liberal Party went in for miserable coercion in Ireland, and when they took away the right of asylum, our chairman, though he is a Liberal, stood out against it. (Applause.) I have the greatest pleasure in proposing a vote of thanks to our chairman, who has conducted this meeting so fairly and held the balance so well between us.

Mr. GEORGE: I most heartily second that vote of thanks.

The resolution was put to the meeting and carried unanimously amidst loud cheers.