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## EQUALIZING WEALTH.

**By Louis F. Post.**

A. M. Rich, of Sebago Lake, Me., writes to say that in replying to his question as to the equalizing of wealth, we did not understand him. He has no desire to equalize possessions regardless of service, but believing that Barnum and Stewart collected more wealth than they had produced, he felt that somebody had been impoverished, and he asks how the single tax can afford a remedy for such cases.

In this way: General demand for labor products is the employer of all labor. Land is the storehouse to which labor must resort to obtain labor products. Land is now largely held out of use. This appropriation gives a scarcity value to land, and labor is forced to pay for access, even to the poorest. Thus all labor is impeded, and many laborers are completely locked out. That condition forces laborers to seek employers who can unlock nature's storehouse by paying the price to its owners. This in turn makes such a glut in the labor market, that labor is cheapened. The demands of laborers being a very large proportion of the general demand for labor products, the cheapening of labor materially diminishes the effective demand of laborers for labor products. This falling off of demand for products causes a falling off of the demands of employers for labor. Laborers, nevertheless, need employment and the competition for opportunities to work becomes keener, still further cheapening labor, and consequently still further lessening the effective demand for products. There is, therefore, a downward tendency of labor value, which enables men like Barnum and Stewart to get rich, just as Mr. Rich sees it, through the impoverishment of their employees.

Now, if the single tax were applied it would be unprofitable to own land except to use it. Hence, unused land would be put to use, which would increase the demand of employers for labor, or be abandoned, which would widen the opportunities of laborers to employ themselves. The first effect of that would be an increase of employers wanting to hire labor, a decrease of laborers wanting to be hired, a consequent rise in wages, and a resulting increase of demand for labor products. This increase of demond for products would still further increase the demand for labor; that would further increase the price of labor; and that would make renewed demands for labor products.

The action and reaction, now, certainly tend to lessen wages and *decrease* demand for products. Under the single tax the action and reaction would constantly tend to raise wages and *increase* the demand for products. And just as now the Barnums and the Stewarts get rich through the impoverishment of their employees, they and their employees together would get rich under the operation of the single tax; for competent men would not sell their services below their value, which would tend constantly upwards. The probability is that in such cases every employee would have an interest in the business commensurate with his contributions to its success—in other words, would employ himself.