

grained in human nature, being based upon the hoary and time-honored notion that riches can be acquired only through extortion, that therefore the possession of wealth indicates wickedness and that its owner ought to be punished. Taxation of property practically discourages thrift and puts a premium on poverty. Would it not be better to encourage the accumulation of wealth and frame the laws in such a way as to induce the wage-earner to become a capitalist and thus develop into a responsible share-holder of our general prosperity?

But how to prescribe a tax that would hurt no interests whatever, that is the question? Who can solve the problem?

What of the single tax?

No doubt, the single tax possesses many alluring features, and in the brilliant exposition of Henry George's *Progress and Poverty* it would seem preferable to any other system of taxation, but it would fall hard on the farmer and expropriate an element of our social conditions, the landowner, important on account of its conservative tendencies, the beneficent influence of which should not be underrated. Taxes are always a burden, and though the single tax cannot tax the land out of existence, it abolishes, if consistently and rigorously carried out, the homestead, changing the farmer into a tenant. For all that, Henry George's arguments remain worthy of deeper study, and we might after all accept much of them as true. His system may prove salutary in a modified form.

The policy of our legislators ought to be to encourage, not to reduce the production of capital. The law presses most severely, not upon the big capitalist, but upon the small thrifty man who attempts to save and is punished for doing so by taxation. He has no means of escape and is at the mercy of the assessor. It is in the prevention of the growth of small capitalists where the law works more mischief than in the reduction of the wealth of the wealthy whose power of resistance has grown strong enough to survive its injurious effects.

Is perhaps the endeavor to find the right method of taxation a problem that is comparable to the squaring of the circle? Who can tell?

The present number contains an important contribution to the problem of taxation by a man who is competent to discuss it, Judge Arba N. Waterman, and we have complemented his article by the publication of extracts of a symposium on the subject which took place some time ago in the Sunset Club of Chicago.

P. C.

REPRESENTATION WITHOUT TAXATION.

Revolutions are the expression of a protest against existing conditions, and it is a fact that almost all revolutions have taken their origin from a dissatisfaction with unjust modes of taxation or overtaxation. The inhabitants of the thirteen colonies broke away from England because they refused to pay the tea-tax and insisted upon the principle, "No taxation without representation." In our days we are confronted with a problem which is the reverse: in the administration of our cities we have representation without taxation. In other words, the irresponsible voter who pays no taxes at all possesses a paramount influence upon the disbursement of municipal funds, the result of which is the sad spectacle of boodling and squandering public money that is attempted and frequently accomplished in our big cities.

What is the remedy?

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