

EVERYMAN

For Equal Rights to the Use of the Earth, No Privilege, and the Public Ownership of Land Rent and Natural Resources

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Class Dominance or Single Tax

IS war over, or has it only just begun?

Well, constitutional war is for the moment ended—and the world swings, at last, between “lower” and “upper” class dominance.

For many centuries the Privileged class alone has ruled—save in the new territories before the idle lands became owned. It seems only natural that in Europe at least, the under dog should have his turn at dominating, before the day of no dominance could begin.

True, the dominance of Privilege has rested on the connivance and assent of the unprivileged, at first because Privilege was superstitiously revered, then because most of the unprivileged hugged the hope of gaining each some degree of privilege for himself—some adventitious aid to the favorable notice of his neighbors—and latterly because we have not known how to unseat Privilege.

So Privilege has ruled the modern world, until this war came to break old ties, sunder stale customs, generate new values—and now perhaps its rule is ending. A hundred and eighty million people seem to have cast it off, and a hundred million more are in the active process of doing so—whether for little or long, who can hazard? If “for keeps” then the war has been worth while. The “peace” that preceded it was not so lovely as a stranger might think from some people’s talk.

One need be only a little observant to guess that while the legal and constitutional war is over, the world’s real war is just breaking, the war against Privilege! This should be a bloodless war, and might be in this nation at least, if those comparatively few who perceive that the true line of social unfoldment is away from all class dominance, arouse themselves to some great united Action to exemplify to the world the theory of Freedom, the mere denial to all of any privilege, and first of all the privilege

to own unused land and take rent from those who work and live on the used land—the privilege of the Fee Simple title to earth!

There is a fair hope, with all our tools of political democracy, that thru the single tax this fundamental privilege could be revoked, the class war halted, mellowed—the world saved oceans of foolish, brutish, needless blood and violence.

War comes because a few people own most of the means of subsistence; because the natural opportunities for self-employment, the chances of making a living from the raw earth, are privately owned and monopolized; because the unused accessible land and resources are fenced in with paper titles, so that the new-comer on earth can only stay here on sufferance of rent, interest, high prices, low wages, toll in some form amounting to the lion’s share of his natural earnings; because the huge fortunes and profits are due to the misappropriation of land values artificially created by density of population—the earth being closed to the people they crowd into cities and compete for house room, food, jobs, and in business, the bulk of their earnings going to the land lords and money lords; because society is so organized (on land monopoly) that a Junker caste of rich property owners, brokers, and speculators, is automatically and inevitably produced—and this Junker caste, every once in so often, finds that the only way its “fee simple” titles can be maintained is by engaging the people in international warfare; finds that war is their only escape from revolution.

The Fee Simple is the complete, absolute title to as much land as one can procure, without regard to what use he makes of it; and to all its proceeds, earnings, increments, without regard to whether they are natural deposits, community needs, or who produces them.

While the Fee Simple remains war will be