

FROM THE SECRETARY OF THE FAIR-
HOPE CORPORATION.

Editor *Single Tax Review* :

The benefits of the Single Tax on so small a scale (less than five hundred people on less than three square miles of land, all poor) are necessarily very limited. Under present laws the Single Tax can be only partially applied, even on this small scale. We can refund direct taxes levied by the country and state upon our colonists, but we can not guard them from the incidence of indirect taxation. We can check speculation in land belonging to the corporation, but we can not guard our colonists from the effects of land speculation elsewhere, nor prevent its being reflected in the rise of speculative values here. Our taking them in the rent, instead of letting the tenant keep them, does not change their speculative character.

Some months ago in a lawsuit over a tract of land in this county, the testimony of witnesses as to its value varied so that one of the lawyers explained it, as nearly as I recall his words : "This land has two values; it is worth two or three dollars an acre for use, but it is worth twenty-five dollars an acre for selling to the frozen Yankees." Why is it worth \$25 an acre? Because there are "frozen Yankees" who have acquired some wealth where land is more valuable. They come ignorant of the real value of land here, and judging by values where they have lived, the price seems moderate. So they are able (some of them) and willing to pay it. So people come here with wealth acquired where land is more valuable, to whom from ten to thirty dollars is a moderate rent for land on which to build cottages for winter resorts. Summer resorters pay the State of Michigan \$100 a year for the sites of cottages on land that formerly belonged to Fort Mackinac and was given by the United States' government to the State when the fort was abandoned. It is true that rich resorters employ a number of men in building their cottages, and after they are built, spend a little of their income here, affording opportunities for a few persons to earn something by catering to their wants. But the increase in rent is greater than the increase in industrial opportunities. Our people have to pay it, not because they are so much better off, but because they have to compete with the beneficiaries of the unearned increment from other and more valuable land.

So much of the value of the land is speculative, even here, where it is not left in an individuals' pocket but taken for the public; and while we can show some benefit even from so imperfect an application of the Single Tax on so small a scale, it is not reasonable to expect it to display within these bounds the benefits that would result from its wider and more perfect application.

All visitors to Fairhope do not agree in

the results of their observations. Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox came here with extravagant expectations, picturing an earthly paradise in her imagination, supposing that we were applying the Single Tax more perfectly than we can do it, and that it was producing greater results than can be attained by its limited application here. She had been traveling, had not received the *Courier* for several weeks and knew nothing of what was taking place until she came, and then she heard just enough to give her an impression about as much worse than the reality as her previous imagination had been better than the reality. She was cruelly disappointed, and said she would never again write about Fairhope. There was not time to dispel the unfavorable illusions which had displaced the previous too favorable illusions. She expressed regret at not being able to stay longer, and hoped to visit us again some day. But meanwhile I suppose she will keep her resolution to write no more about Fairhope.

It should be borne in mind that there is good ground for honest differences of opinion. Among our critics are Edward Quincy Norton and others, to whom gross injustice would be done by suspecting them of unworthy motives. There are honest differences in regard to the value of our land, to the wisdom of our policy in the use of the rents, and as to various details of administration.

Fairhope is growing, but not so rapidly as it was last winter, when the trouble came. Some projects for building were abandoned, but all that were begun have been completed, and some houses have been built since. There are not yet as many summer resorters as there were at this time last year, and I have heard it attributed to Fairhope's damaged reputation. The supply of houses appears to have caught up with the demand for the present.

REV. GEO. W. WOOD, Sec.
Fairhope, Ala.

FROM DANIEL KIEFER.

Editor *Single Tax Review* :

I had not gotten to your last issue, when one of our Single Taxers to whom I had given a copy, and who had read it, remarked, "It looks as though Miller is getting ready to get after Fairhope."

Since reading it, I can hardly see how in future issues of the *REVIEW*, you could do the colony any greater harm than it is plain you tried to do it in this issue; for he is dull who does not see in your claim of giving both sides a hearing, a mere pretense of fairness.

The Fairhope colonists have done better practical work in behalf of Single Tax than all Single Taxers outside of the colony put together. It is bad enough that a crowd of self-seekers, chronic breeders of