

a new revelation of what is involved in its solution by the method of the Single Tax.

Hamlin Garland fittingly characterized Mr. Robbins' speech as one of the best statements of our principles which it had ever been his fortune to listen to in his many years acquaintance with the movement. As for himself he asked his audience to believe that though his name had not figured prominently of late years in the movement, he had not lost any of his interest in the cause and such talents as he possessed were always at its service.

At the conclusion of the meeting Frederick C. Leubuscher obtained the floor on recognition of the chairman and explained that the committee appointed to arrange the duties of the two days conference were in need of funds. A committee having been appointed to pass the hat \$156.00 were collected, after which the meeting adjourned.

The speeches follow:

ADDRESS OF HENRY GEORGE, JR.

In opening this public meeting under the auspices of the American Single Tax Conference it appears fitting to take note of present economic conditions.

Following a period of great business activity, which many fatuously believed could have no cessation, we have suddenly suffered a bank panic, credit has shrunk and the indications are many that the country is entering upon a season of hard times.

The immediate cause of the sudden change is to be sought in Wall Street. The Olympian gods there—the Morgan and the Rockefeller groups—appear to have concluded that the time had grown ripe for closing in on some rival banks and trust companies that were backing mineral, transportation and industrial corporations in rivalry to similar Morgan and Rockefeller companies. These Wall Street gods controlled the New York Clearing House, which, presumably at their bidding, suddenly refused to do business with the objectionable financial institutions unless their officers and directors should be changed for officers and directors of the Morgan-Rockefeller choosing.

Business credit had long been at a tension, and the public, taken unawares by this move, feared that a revelation of crooked banking was to be added to the long, sickening list of huge, stock-jobbing insurance, industrial and railroad inflations. Naturally depositors ran to the attacked institutions for their money, and, finding difficulty in getting it, spread the alarm. Thereupon the Morgan-Rockefeller depositors becoming frightened, joined in the demand.

Thus the great ones having gone forth silently, covertly to hunt, found themselves to be hunted, and that in the full flood of day. The general public was at their heels.

They grew alarmed. They cried aloud for help, and, as usual, their cry went Washingtonward, "Come and help us save the banks and the credit of the country," they called appealingly. The government heard this cry from Wall Street, as it generally does. The Secretary hurried up in person. He

placed millions, without interest, at the disposal of Mr. Morgan, who, assisted by the Rockefellers, now posed as the savior of the banking world!

With intrepid spirit, keen insight and splendid management this great man then proceeded to the business of saving. First, he saved his own and the Rockefeller institutions and all their dependencies; and next he saved the chain of banks and trust companies and dependent corporations which he and the Rockefellers had originally hunted.

But these rival financial and other institutions were saved only as the wolf saves the lamb—to be food. For in the height of the crisis the Morgans and Rockefellers absorbed not only the opposition banks and trust companies, but also copper, coal and iron, railroad and steamship companies which those financial institutions had backed. As a by-the-way transaction, Morgan made a loan of thirty or more millions to the city of New York, at a very high interest, and on an agreement that all or practically all of this money be deposited with two banks, one a Morgan, the other a Rockefeller; and be left untouched by the city authorities for some months to come!

But advantageous as all this was to the Wall Street Powers, in doing it they shocked the credit of the whole country. Runs or fears of runs had caused banks everywhere to check and call in loans. Great public and quasi-public works stopped, many large manufacturing establishments shut down, and a bewildering number of large and small commercial and industrial concerns quivered on the brink of ruin. The country had entered the black shadow of business or industrial depression that would mix blood with the tears of suffering millions.

Yet here in the very face of general disaster rise up the Morgans and the Rockefellers with imperturbable impudence to ask—for what? First, that they be given power to issue currency on their juggled railroad and other bonds. Also authority to re-establish, under a new name, that colossal iniquity, the United States bank, which, privately owned but governmentally backed, manipulated the nation's currency, exploited the nation's credit and corrupted the nation's politics until crushed and swept out of existence more than seven decades ago.

To this President Roosevelt made reply with an offer to the public of \$50,000,000 two per cent. Panama Canal bonds, and \$100,000,000 three per cent. one year Treasury loan certificates. These he offers for sale, presumably with the idea that they will be used in exchange as currency or by the National banks as a basis for currency. But how can that swell the volume of currency, if the amount to be issued by the banks on them is no greater than the amount of currency the banks will have to pay into the Treasury to get them? Perhaps the President proposes to meet this difficulty by depositing with the Morgan and Rockefeller banks the \$150,000,000 he gets from these sales, in which event the Morgans and Rockefellers will get the bonds and the money, too. Preposterous as it may seem, that is precisely what has just been done in the sale of \$30,000,000 of bonds by the City of New York to Morgan; and the Rockefellers made a similar agreement with the Federal government in the

sale of the Custom House building in Wall Street to the National City bank, the purchase money paid by the bank being left on deposit with the bank, and the Government paying rent to the bank for several years.

That there is necessity for a currency that will expand and contract with the varying, general needs is as obvious as it is easily supplied. Let the Government open savings branches in our post offices, as most of the first-class nations of the world have done, including Japan. While offering the maximum of convenience and safety to the public, these postal savings banks could issue deposit certificates which would have all the essentials of money, being immediately exchangeable for currency on presentation at a postal bank.

An extension of the same idea to the larger business uses was embodied in a bill introduced into Congress during the panic of 1893 by that distinguished Single Tax disciple, then Representative from Ohio, now Mayor of Cleveland—Tom L. Johnson. He proposed in place of a large part of the present issue of Federal bonds, which are redeemable practically only at fixed periods, to substitute bonds of small denomination, and redeemable in paper currency whenever offered at the United States Treasury or the Sub-Treasuries; these bonds being re-issuable to anyone on tender of their face value equivalent in currency. The interest on such bonds was to be low and was to run only while the bonds were out; and thus would follow an instant, constant, automatic, great or small flow of bonds or currency into or out of the Treasury, as individual advantage, consulting high or low market rates, should determine.

But the Johnson interconvertible bond plan was not at that time to be adopted. The gods of Wall Street had the ear of the man who then sat in the Presidential chair, Mr. Cleveland—and presumably has had it ever since—and the idea was ignored.

Yet supposing that idea now to be taken up and adopted, and an elastic, automatic, non-manipulatable currency established, would that prevent business depressions?

No, it would not. For the cause of such depressions goes deeper. It goes to the root of production—to the land.

The two fundamental primary factors in production are the natural factor, land, and the human factor, labor; and whatever touches either of these goes to the seat of business activity, because it reaches the foundation of all production.

Now in all times of prosperity, speculation is a-foot; and of all forms of speculation that which is most far reaching and important is in land. Let a bridge be built, streets be opened or paved, a water supply be established, a railroad be constructed or other general benefit be bestowed, and land in the vicinage will mount in value. So also will there be such a tendency in a region or country blessed by a succession of large crops and by expansion of commerce and manufactures—that is, by increased production of material things needed to satisfy human desire and promote social welfare. For when productive activity is general, speculation in land is general.

Witness the recent era of great prosperity and, as a consequence, behold

over the country to-day land speculation rampant ! In the greater and lesser cities, in the towns and villages ; in the farming and timber and mineral regions ; in the East, the West, the North, the South ; all through the great valley of the Mississippi—there has been marked increase in speculative rent.

This means—what ?

It means that land, the natural factor in production, is made increasingly harder to get. It demands and must obtain as the price of its use a larger and larger share of the fruits of production. Labor and capital—capital being in reality a form of labor, being produced by labor from land—labor and capital must be content to divide between them a less and less share of production, until suddenly somewhere in the chain of exchanges this circumstance or that, trifling at another time, snaps the strained general credit and banks call in outstanding loans and refuse new ones. Loans are the breath of industrial life, and being cut off, mills and factories stop, commercial enterprises fail, multitudes of workers are thrown into idleness and the country sinks in the grip of an industrial depression.

On the one hand are large stocks of commodities of all kinds, and the cry is that there has been an over-production ; but this seems to be true only because, on the other hand, a large mass of workers suffer enforced idleness and hence are unable to buy. Land speculation has produced the idle workman and the over-stocked merchant.

This is what we see enacting about us at this hour. The currency panic was only the small thing at the top that snapped general credit. At the base of all production monopoly has been making land, the natural factor, artificially scarce, until the starting of a pebble at the mountain crest was all that was needed to precipitate an avalanche into the valley below.

How prevent these depressions ? By preventing land speculation. How prevent land speculation ? By taxation. Lift all the tax burdens from labor and the fruits of production, and pile them on land values regardless of improvements—on ground or economic rent. That would destroy land speculations—kill land monopoly. The price of land would not then mount to eat out industrial prosperity ; and an industrial depression in what should be a country of plenty for all, would thenceforward be a thing of the past.

ADDRESS OF WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

It is a pleasure and refreshment to meet this gathering of friends, united in a great cause and alive with intelligent purpose.

The present apathy of the Single Taxers was the reason given for calling this convention, an apathy, it seems to me, more apparent than real, While no enthusiastic meetings like those of the days of the anti-poverty movement catch the public eye, the cause itself has neither slumbered nor slept. It has outgrown the kindergarten stage. It has political significance in all English-speaking countries and an indirect influence in other lands.

We can never return to that stage of exaltation when the new truth burst