

A Great Convention

SEPTEMBER 25, 26, 27

THE Eighth Annual Convention of the Henry George Congress at Chicago was a great success both in point of numbers and enthusiasm. The attendance was larger than that of any previous convention of the Henry George Foundation. And those who attended seemed to feel that great events were looming, that while the clouds were darkest, while Washington is groping in doubt and perplexity, the rising tide of thought everywhere will soon ventuate in a realization of the truth when the vast experimentation in government socialism breaks down and its utter futility becomes apparent. The feeling was general that our opportunity is now, and that feeling was voiced by a number of the speakers.

A few of the "high lights" of the convention may be briefly noted. Clarence Darrow was in fine fettle as he faced a great audience at the public meeting in the auditorium, every seat being filled. It was a treat to hear him as he pounded away at the economic programme being carried out at Washington, its pig-killing, its plowing under and its monstrous wealth-destruction. One needs not wonder at his power over juries, the success of which has made him the best known lawyer in the United States. Here he tore into the weak defences of the National Recovery Act, and if its absurdities are not already disclosed to the disillusioned public this speech of the great advocate would be all that is required to convince them.

Among other high lights should be mentioned the great speech of Hon. M. H. Harrison, State Senator from Cleveland, O., the fine address of Hon. Abe D. Waldauer, the speeches of Will Atkinson and J. P. Kohler. Nor must we neglect to name Victor A. Rule with his stereoptican views of Chicago, contrasting its great buildings and its slum areas, all of his talk being punctuated with keen, incisive humor and scores of pointed lessons for those who could learn how our crazy taxation system works.

The name of Anna George de Mille must not be omitted from those among the speakers worth hearing. Personality counted here in what she said, but more perhaps in the way she said it.

It was a great pleasure to meet a number whom we have known only by correspondence. Here was W. A. Warren, now living at Beaver Falls, Pa., and recently returned from Russia where he had served for a number of years as an engineer under the Soviet government.

But perhaps we found our chief delight in the delegation of twelve husky farmers from Milk River, Alberta, a near-Single Tax town, of which we hope to give some future account.

The day following the adjournment of the convention was Henry George Day at the World's Fair grounds, and there was both an afternoon and evening session for the public, addresses being given by Will Atkinson, George I. Strachan, J. P. Kohler, Clayton J. Ewing, Thomas

Rhodus and others. These meetings were held at the "Illinois Host House."

Chicago has no press. There are two morning papers, but these are published for the satisfaction, so far as we can see, of the official staff and the lovers of crime news. These are the *Chicago Tribune*, once a free trade or low tariff Republican paper of high character, the other a Hearst-paper of the usual sort. When the last Henry George Congress was held in Chicago we got very little publicity, and the same was true this time. Some day Chicago will have a newspaper worthy of the greatest of Western cities. But not yet.

A word should be said of the Medinah Club and its management. Nothing was left undone to facilitate the proceedings of the convention and to secure the comfort and convenience of the members who were guests at the hotel. We regret that the usual thanks to the management were omitted from the resolutions presented, but that was due wholly to forgetfulness, and so they are given here on behalf of all those who attended.

The convention was called to order on Monday morning by Clayton J. Ewing, chairman of the convention committee, who stated the object and value of these conventions. On the question of resolutions he stated that if a resolution had the support of ninety-five per cent of the delegates it should be submitted, but if it provoked serious opposition of a minority should not be presented for a vote of the conference. In this way a spirit of harmony was established that prevailed throughout.

Chairman Ewing reviewed the Single Tax convention of forty years ago—1893. He said we have had our Moses; we are looking now for a Joshua. Every argument has been presented; the country has arrived at a crisis, and out of this conference it was hoped a spirit would go forth that would resolve for the world its difficulties and establish economic justice.

Another speaker at the opening session was Mr. Wiley Wright Mills, former member of the Chicago city council, who delivered the address of welcome, to which Mr. George Evans, president of the Henry George Foundation, responded, speaking in a hopeful vein.

P. R. Williams, secretary of the Foundation, reviewed the political situation in Pittsburgh where William N. McNair is the Democratic candidate for Mayor. He said that twenty years ago Pittsburgh adopted the graded tax law, and Mayor McNair if elected would be influential in aiding to extend that system. Francis Maguire, assistant secretary of the Foundation, now read his report and it was fine to hear this splendid veteran of the cause express his faith in its early triumph.

Mr. Miller moved the appointment of a committee on resolutions.

A telegram was read announcing the death of Robert C. Macauley on his way to the Chicago convention. On motion of Mr. Williams the convention arose and paid a silent tribute to the memory of our departed friend. The

news had a depressing effect on the session, for Mr. Macauley had been, we believe, an attendant at every one of the congresses from the beginning.

The luncheon of the first day was presided over by Mr. Otto Cullman, who introduced Mr. McNair. The Democratic candidate for Mayor of Pittsburgh said that the contest for political life was not, as he saw it, between two parties but between two schools of thought. He talked interestingly of Spinoza and Franklin. He said Henry George went to the legislature of Pennsylvania and told them that taxes on machinery and stock should be abolished. They saw no objection, so now if a man buys a piece of machinery in Pittsburgh we don't tax him for it. Mr. McNair said his task in Pennsylvania would be to teach the people to get rid of more taxes. His speech was enlivened by playful humor and sound economic sense, but failed to convince Mr. Reiter of Rochester, Minn., who took issue with him. Messrs. Ellert, Waldauer and Kohler endeavored to show Mr. Reiter where he was wrong, for he seemed to believe that the farmer needs other remedies for his ills. This session was interesting since it was the first opportunity to listen to one of the delegates from Milk River, Alberta, J. B. Ellert.

In the afternoon of this day Will Atkinson took the platform, his subject being "Abolish All Taxes." He told of his success in embodying "Progress and Poverty" in the *Congressional Record*. Mr. Atkinson reviewed the story of Dr. McGlynn's excommunication, the Pope's Encyclical, and the answer to the Pope, which George undertook, and for which task he laid aside his work on the "Science of Political Economy." The Condition of Labor, he said, is as fine a piece of English as exists in the language.

Chairman Ewing now announced the meetings at the World's Fair grounds on Thursday, and Mr. Waldauer read the message from the special conference number of the *Collierville Herald*. Emil Jorgensen read a paper by Prof. Harry Gunnison Brown. On motion of Judge Pittman the discussion of Prof. Brown's paper was postponed in order to hear from others on the programme. Mrs. de Mille then addressed the conference, and Dr. Mark Millikin read a remarkable paper which appears elsewhere in this issue.

In the evening of this day Clarence Darrow spoke. In inimitable phrase he scored the Industrial Recovery Act. There was humor and wit in what he said and also a profound sympathy. He was bitter in his invective against the plan of destroying hogs and wheat when people are hungry. Laughter and applause greeted him throughout, and Henry H. Hardinge's talk that followed was no less interesting.

At the opening session on Tuesday John Lawrence Monroe spoke. He read a letter from a German emigrant of many years ago, in which the writer told how every one could find work for himself in America and where good land could be bought for from five to ten dollars an acre.

Then followed a general discussion of Prof. Brown's paper, the speakers being limited to three minutes. Those taking part in the discussion were Messrs. Platt, Waldauer, Hardinge, Rule, Ewing, Allan Thompson, Watson, Atkinson and others.

The reading of Mr. Benjamin Burger's paper by Mr. Rule was listened to with interest. Mr. Rule is a practised elocutionist and it was a treat to listen to him.

Tuesday's luncheon was devoted to a board meeting. On motion of Mr. Miller Mrs. Benjamin Burger was elected to the advisory board, and other vacancies were filled.

At the afternoon session Miss Charlotte O. Schetter presided, and the speakers were Alan Thompson and Thomas Rhodus. A member present asked why we had not made greater progress and Miss Schetter replied that that was what we had convened to find out. Mr. Waldauer offered to explain the reason, and instanced the fact that Christianity has been preached for nearly two thousand years and there were probably fewer Christians in the world than ever.

Mr. Henry L. Tideman, answering a question of his own propounding as to why young people do not join the movement, said the answer is they do, and he then talked of the "youth movement" which has been started by forty young people in Chicago. This movement was destined to spread.

The reading of a paper from Charles H. Ingersoll and the recitation of an original poem by Mr. Hensen concluded the session.

The banquet held on the evening of this day was notable for the high character of the speeches. Addresses were made by Anna George de Mille, Hon. Abe D. Waldauer, Frank Stephens, Henry Hardinge, Clayton J. Ewing, and last but not least, Hon. M. C. Harrison, State Senator from Cleveland, whom right here we nominate for Governor of Ohio.

A handsome silver bracelet was presented to Mrs. de Mille by Mr. Fred J. Bahni, of Peoria, the few words of presentation being made by Henry Hardinge.

Mr. Waldauer told how he became a Single Taxer. That prominent event in the history of our movement occurred when he was thirteen years old. His teacher told him to write something about each of a list of prominent Americans named. One was Henry George. So young Waldauer went to the proprietor of a drug store he knew and asked his friend to tell him who Henry George was. He was told that Henry George was a cigar salesman. His teacher congratulated him. He then went to a very learned lady who told him that Henry George was the savior of mankind. She told him he had written a book called "Progress and Poverty." She had no copy to lend him, but she gave him Elbert Hubbard's "Little Journeys," and he became interested. He got all the George books and shortly afterwards made his first Single Tax speech.

Mr. Waldauer, speaking of the enclaves and especial

of Collierville, said that despite the foolish things that are being done man was still a land animal. Men are not capable of abstract reasoning and most men have the minds of children of twelve. What they need is a working model and the enclave supplies it. He then analyzed the Collierville act and detailed something of its history. With this our readers are familiar.

On Wednesday morning Hon. Abe D. Waldauer presided and Mr. Green of Hannibal, Mo., spoke on "The Light that Must Not Fail."

Mr. J. P. Kohler told of his first visit to Henry George and his work in the campaign of 1886. There was a debate arranged between Theodore Roosevelt and Mr. Kohler but Teddy failed to show up, so Mr. Kohler was compelled to go it alone.

Young Kohler at this time was a clerk in a bank, but he threw himself into the campaign, speaking night after night. His fellow clerks warned him of the consequences. The vice-president of the bank was George F. Baker who was gathering votes for Abram S. Hewitt, the Democratic candidate for Mayor against Henry George. Mr. Kohler had spoken for Henry George the night before as he now stepped into the office. On taking his seat at his desk he was notified that Mr. Baker wanted to see him. With fear and trepidation he crossed the floor to meet the vice-president.

"I hear you are interested in the labor party and the candidacy of Henry George," said Mr. Baker. Young Kohler expected nothing less than instant discharge. But Mr. Baker continued: "When I raised salaries last week I overlooked you," he said. "Now I want to say that if you do your work efficiently as you have done there is no complaint. Go back to your work."

Mr. Kohler explained that Mr. Baker was a big hearted Republican who had himself worked as a grocery clerk. It was interesting to note that a little later Mr. Baker was active in agitating for the removal of the personal property tax.

Other speakers following Mr. Kohler were E. B. Gaston and Fiske Warren. At the noon luncheon of this day Mr. Miller spoke on the Henry George School of Social Science. His talk on the School appears on another page. Before adverting to the School Mr. Miller talked of the activities being carried on in New York, the work of Charles H. Ingersoll, the Manhattan Single Tax Club and the Schalkenbach Foundation.

He said that there seemed to be an opinion current that the Foundation had unlimited money. He wished to correct this impression. As a matter of fact it had but \$7,000 a year, and with these meagre resources had accomplished a wonderful work. On the Foundation has devolved the publication of Henry George's works which, astounding as it may seem, had passed out of print when the Schalkenbach Foundation took charge seven years ago. No one seemed willing to undertake the publication of a book written fifty years ago for which there

was little demand. During the years of its existence the Foundation has published and distributed over 40,000 of Henry George's books, 250,000 pamphlets and over 700,000 circulars and leaflets. This work officially presided over by Hon. Charles O'Connor Hennessy seems quite wonderful. Credit should also be given for the very efficient work of the secretary, Miss Antoinette Kaufmann, who is known to many of those present through correspondence.

The diners now listened to the speakers of the Milk River delegation, Messrs. Pease, Ellert and Moir.

The afternoon session listened to A. W. Falvey of Omaha, who spoke on organization. He was appointed chairman of a committee to formulate plans for organization in cities and states.

The evening session concluding the three days conference was held in the auditorium and was well attended. Geo. M. Strachan presided. Among the speakers were J. Edward Jones, Victor A. Rule and Western Starr. Mr. Rule's address is mentioned elsewhere.

Those present seemed loath to leave and lingered until midnight for handshakings and farewells. Thus closed what in many ways was the greatest convention ever held in the history of the movement.

Resolutions Adopted by The Henry George Congress

THE production of wealth is purely a mechanical process and is governed by natural laws. We have carefully adjusted all our processes to these natural laws, the study of which and their application are universal, as a result. This generation has solved the problem of production to an extent undreamed of by our fathers.

The distribution of wealth is a moral problem and answers the question who ought to have it. Here we have ignored the natural laws of distribution and social justice and by special privileges, unjust taxation and monopoly of the earth, we have created a class of multi-millionaires and deprived millions of the chance to earn a living. A society so constructed is doomed and even now is tottering; and only by a return to justice can it be saved.

Submitted by A. C. Thompson.

COLLIERVILLE

Resolved, that the Henry George Foundation express its appreciation of the action of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen of Collierville, Tenn., in securing the adoption of the amendment to the Charter of Collierville, giving it authority to operate a municipal enclave of economic rent; and to the Legislature of Tennessee and the Governor for approving the law. This legislation will go far to place Tennessee in the forefront of progressive States.

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Whereas, the Governor and the Legislature of the State of Tennessee have made it possible for the town of Collierville to become a Single Tax enclave,

Therefore be it resolved, that the members of the Henry George Foundation now in session in Chicago endorse their action and urge them to extend such a plan so as to include the whole State.

Submitted by Mark Millikin.