

THEY WANT THE SINGLE TAX

FOLLOWERS OF HENRY GEORGE IN CONVENTION.

ENTHUSIASM AT THE MENTION OF EX- PRESIDENT CLEVELAND'S NAME— SPEECHES BY THE DELEGATES.

The National Conference of the Single-Tax Clubs of the United States, to which the single-tax enthusiasts of the country have been eagerly looking forward for months, met yesterday afternoon in the large hall of Cooper Union, for a three days' session. About five hundred delegates were present. They came from nearly every State and Territory in the Union. There was present also a large number of people not delegates.

High above all the other characteristics of the delegates was their enthusiasm. Cheers broke out on the slightest pretext. Henry George was not present during the session. He was resting after his voyage and preparing for the evening's reception tendered to him. But every mention of his name excited applause. Following close upon him in popularity with the delegates came ex-President Cleveland, for whom three times three were given when his name was first spoken, and for whom thereafter there was frequent applause.

William T. Croasdale, Chairman of the Enrollment Committee of the Manhattan Single-Tax Club of this city, called the conference to order and acted as temporary Chairman. He immediately appointed a Committee on Credentials, to which the delegates were instructed to send their names.

Secretary G. St. J. Leavens of the Enrollment Committee read the call which that committee issued June 24 last to the clubs of the country with a view to ascertaining their wishes concerning the holding of the present conference. Out of fifty-nine clubs that responded forty-eight favored the conference. The call refers to the newly-awakened popular interest in economic questions caused by the fact that the tariff question has become the vital issue between the two great parties, and states that the Republican Party is engaged in a desperate struggle to prolong the protective system and to increase the burdens that inordinate and unjust tariff taxes impose on the vast body of consumers in the interests of a comparatively small number of "protected" manufacturers, while the Democratic Party is being forced to attack the protective system. It was a recognition of the necessity for taking advantage of these circumstances, said the call, that caused Henry George and the great body of those who accepted the principles of "Progress and Poverty" to support Grover Cleveland (loud cheering) for the Presidency in 1888.

The conference was ordered, the call says, to consider the best means of securing united action in behalf of free trade in the coming Congressional elections; to consult as to the best means of promoting the single-tax movement in the several States; to name a Single-Tax National Committee, and to transact such other business pertinent thereto as to such conference may seem meet and proper.

Pending the report of the Committee on Credentials, Mr. Croasdale made a speech. The conference was not one of dreamers, he said; it was one of men drawn together to work in a definite direction. After the disastrous campaign of 1887 the cause headed by George had languished and weakened. But then came the remarkable message of Grover Cleveland. [Here wild cheering broke out, and the delegates stood up and waved their handkerchiefs and hats.] That message came to what had been the Democratic Party precisely as came the fiat from God to the clay of which Adam was made, saying, "Rise up and be a man." [Applause.]

H. F. Ring, who is the single-tax leader in Texas, in a brief address, said that with Texans there could be no benefit otherwise than in the lines of the Democratic Party, but that party had taken kindly to single-tax ideas, and there were many Democrats who had embraced that cause.

The audience called for Dr. Henry S. Chase, of St. Louis, who is widely known as "Pa" Chase. (Missourians call him "Paw" Chase). He talked of the "abolitions" which he said the single-tax movement would insist upon, such as national banks, Government bonds, Custom Houses, etc.

H. Martin Williams of St. Louis said that the single tax was no more of a bar to association with Democrats in Missouri than it was in Texas. He said the leaven was at work all over Missouri. He found men, in going over the State, who had seen the light who, he had thought, never would see it. Even in the Osage region there were single-tax clubs having 500 members in all, and every member was a farmer.

The Committee on Credentials then reported. The roll showed that among the prominent delegates were Judge James J. Maguire and Miss Emma Williams of California, Thomas L. Johnson and "Billy" Radcliffe of Ohio, Dr. William Geddes, Charles F. Adams, and C. E. Hemingway of the District of Columbia; W. W. Bailey, J. T. Ripley, and E. O. Brown of Illinois; Samuel W. Williams of Indiana, the Rev. R. Whittingham and W. J. Ogden of Maryland, William Lloyd Garrison, L. Frang, and E. M. Chamberlain of Massachusetts; H. Martin Williams, H. H. Hoffman, B. C. Keeler, and Dr. Henry S. Chase of Missouri; Herbert Boggs, of New-Jersey; A. H. Stephenson, George E. Chase, A. J. Moxham, Horace Schlemm, and the Rev. G. W. Kent of Pennsylvania; W. E. Brokaw of South Dakota, Bolton Smith and R. G. Brown of Tennessee, William McCabe, A. J. Wolf, A. J. Steers, the Rev. S. M. Thackeray, L. L. D., Joseph O'Neill, W. E. Hicks, E. J. Shriver, Morris Van Veen, and Lindley Vinton of New-York.

Some discussion ensued as to the method to be pursued in organizing permanently. It was settled by a suggestion from Mr. Buell of Minnesota that the conference itself proceed to the work of permanent organization. He nominated Louis F. Post of this city for permanent Chairman, and he was elected unanimously. Mr. Post told a little bit of entertaining history. The spontaneous applause, he said, which had greeted Mr. Cleveland's name reminded him of a meeting called to indorse the plan of enrollment in 1888. It was held up stairs in a little room.

"After the conclusion of business," said Mr. Post, "we were somewhat doubtful about our future policy. After a moment of silence a man timidly moved that three cheers should be given for Grover Cleveland. I, being Chairman, put the motion, and by an almost unanimous vote—there were three negatives—it was decided to give the cheers. A gentleman arose and said 'Hurrah' three times and some one else said 'Tiger,' in a subdued tone. That was the first cheer Grover Cleveland got from single-tax men. It didn't require a motion to-day."

H. F. Ring of Texas, William Lloyd Garrison of Massachusetts, and A. H. Stephenson of Pennsylvania were unanimously elected Vice Chairmen; William E. Brokaw of South Dakota Recording Secretary and R. G. Brown of Tennessee and John Z. White of Illinois Assistant Secretaries.

It was decided to take up the matter of the appointment of a National Committee to consider the plan of future operation at 10:30 o'clock this morning, and the conference then adjourned for the day.

An audience that filled every seat in the hall gathered to greet Mr. George last night. Many ladies were present. The platform was occupied by the more prominent of the delegates. Judge Maguire of California, who presided, spoke at some length, detailing the progress of the single-tax idea in California. Then he introduced Mr. George. Everybody rose, ladies and all, and cheered.

"Greatest land is this of ours," Mr. George said, "but is it the freest land? Think of it. I landed to-day and waited two hours to have my baggage searched. I have been sailing on seas that are unfurrowed by an American keel. Why? Because Americans are not free to build ships and sail them. I have been traveling over the greatest route of the world's commerce, but I have hardly seen an American passenger, and an American merchant—never.

"Greatest and freest! Look at the spectacle presented by Congress; in session in the dog days to pay by grants of spoliation from us the money raised by bribe and buy a Presidential election. (Applause.) What is the Republican Party now? The trusts go to Washington to claim as though by right the power of fettering industry, of taking the proceeds of free laborers, as though they were theirs to take. No, I am not proud of the American Republic. But I am as never before hopeful for the American Republic. Freedom is not here yet. But she is coming; aye, she is coming for the men whom you represent and the men who to-day stand for the principles of the Thomas Jefferson. [Applause.]

"At last we have reached the American farmer, and he is beginning to ask, and with some intelligent idea as to the answer, whether he is as prosperous as he ought to be in such a well-protected country. [Applause.] I feel to-night more clearly than I ever felt before that there is now no power on earth that can keep back this movement." [Applause.]

Before the adjournment, Judge Maguire announced the following committees:

On Platform and Resolutions—Henry George, (Chairman,) James G. Maguire, L. A. Russell, Warren

Worth Bailey, H. Martin Williams, Bolton Smith, H. F. Ring, C. J. Buell, and Edward Osgood Brown. On Resolutions—T. L. Johnson, (Chairman,) John Z. White, L. M. Hoch, W. J. Ogden, George White, Herbert Boggs, and C. S. Walker.

A TALK WITH HENRY GEORGE.

Some of the delegates to the conference were at the dock when Henry George landed from the steamship Servia yesterday morning. They cheered him loudly when they caught sight of him. He came down the gangplank with Mrs. George, and as soon as the handshakings were over went to his hotel.

Mr. George has been away from New-York for seven months. He has been around the world. In a talk with a TIMES reporter he said that single-tax clubs had sprung up all along the line of his tour, and the issue had already entered into Australian politics.

"I had, of course," said Mr. George, "the opposition of the landed interest and of the protectionists, who, particularly in New South Wales, now realize that it is not the revenue-tariff men that they really have to fight, but single-tax men. But I had everywhere the most attentive audiences, even in Melbourne, a hotbed of protectionism, and was throughout treated in the kindest manner."

Mr. George said he did not think there was any probability of a separate single-tax party here. He was asked if he would again run for Mayor, and replied that he would not run for any office.

Concerning the report that the Salvation Army was inclined to assist the single-tax movement, Mr. George said that Mrs. Booth, who had been the sharer of all Gen. Booth's labors, had been for years what he would call a single-tax woman. He could not say, however, that the army would directly agitate for the single tax.