

## CRAIG RALSTON

(See frontispiece)

Craig Ralston, author of the "Shovelcrats," the famous satirical Single Tax pamphlet, is a political writer on the *Milwaukee Journal*. The "Shovelcrats" is the outgrowth of fifteen years observation in newspaper work, beginning when Mr. Ralston was a police reporter on the *Denver News*. The police station harvested the fruits of the social system; the Shovelcrats pictures the logic of schools of statecraft which are attempting to deal with the social problems without taking monopoly into account.

In a discussion with a friend one day, Mr. Ralston tried to illustrate the viewpoint of the Single Taxers by citing a theoretical situation in a railroad construction camp. The point he made was that no section gang could be made wealthy or prosperous were the supply of shovels monopolized, so that each workman would have to pay several hundred, or several thousand dollars, for the privilege of using a shovel. A little later he elaborated this idea in the "Shovelcrats."

Mr. Ralston was born in Kentucky, but was reared in Colorado, on what was then the frontier. He returned to Kentucky to go to school, served six months with the volunteers of that State in the Spanish war, chose journalism as a profession, and has been employed in Louisville, Denver, Pueblo, El Paso, Milwaukee and other points.

## DEATH OF H. F. RING.

Henry Franklin Ring died Dec. 14, at Houston, Texas. The news was a shock to his friends far and wide. He is survived by his widow and two sons.

There have been famous pamphleters, but it is seldom that a man becomes famous by reason of a single pamphlet. Yet the ability to express clear thinking in language surpassingly clear is a rarer distinction than those who follow the trade of a writer

suspect. The pamphlet that made H. F. Ring famous was "The Case Plainly Stated," the substance of an address on the Single Tax given before a gathering of the Knights of Labor in 1888. Mr. Ring was at this time an attorney in the city of Houston, a city more conservative at that time than it has since grown to be under the influence of such men as Ring and Pastoriza, and his bold avowal of the entire gospel of Henry George was a shock to the community.

Mr. Ring was a native of Mass., where he was born in 1852. He attended Cornell University from which he graduated. He studied later in Texas and was admitted to the bar in 1876. He soon became one of the most prominent attorneys in the State. He was elected to the presidency of the Texas Bar Asso.

Mr. Ring had completed shortly before his death a work entitled, "The Problem of the Unemployed." Efforts were being made to give this work a large circulation under a plan conceived by Mr. Ring. This work must now be undertaken by other hands. This volume of nearly 300 pages has all the characteristics of "The Case Plainly Stated," and is the finished work of a really great master of simple exposition.

Following is a tribute to his memory from his friend and co-worker in the cause, Joseph J. Pastoriza:

"H. F. Ring's whole life goes to show that he cared nothing about himself. He cared nothing about his personal financial affairs if the things he advocated could be of service to humanity. His whole heart was wrapped up in the Single Tax cause. He didn't let his finances and his friendship interfere with his free thought. He was fearless in his opinions regardless of whom it affected."

The *Houston Press* said of him editorially:

"The death of H. F. Ring takes away a force from the community. No more devout disciple of right and justice lived. The beacon stars of his life were truth and liberty. Without them, he often said, life would not be worth while to him. He possessed that rare gift of discernment

which enabled him to tear the mask off of shams and to think in terms of undisguised fact. In his convictions he had absolute faith and resolute courage. He did mankind a great service by expressing them clearly, logically and forcefully in his writings. Fortunate it is that a thinker such as he did not fail to put into the enduring form of printed books some of his life's philosophies."

The Executive Committee of the Houston Single Tax League passed appropriate resolutions. But the tribute in a letter just received and not intended for publication, from one who knew him only by his work has the quality of spontaneity and will be echoed wherever the name H. F. Ring is known. It is from George Lloyd, of the Manhattan Single Tax Club, of this city.

"Well, the fight must be nearly won, or he would not be called away. All honor to our comrade who was an honor to our cause!"

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#### A POLITICAL ECONOMIST ON HIS FELLOW PROFESSORS.

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In political economy not even the definition of a single important term—political economy itself—is settled. In 1844 De Quincy said of political economy: "Nothing can be postulated, nothing can be demonstrated, for anarchy even as to the earliest principles is predominant."

The professors are not even agreed as to whether it is a science or an art, or a combination of both, or upon the proper and legitimate range of the subject.—HENRY CARBY BAIRD, in a lecture in Brooklyn, in 1883.

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#### ARE HOME RULE CONTESTS WORTH WHILE?

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Messrs. Bolton Hall and Luke North in the columns of *Everyman* voice their impatience with the Home Rule in Taxation campaigns that have been fought in California. Their contentions are that

such campaigns must be based on arguments addressed primarily to the pocket books of the voters; that they lose sight of the greater issue, which is to restore the land to the people; that they do little to open the eyes of the masses to the extortions of which they are the victims. To this they might add the necessary emasculation of Single Tax teachings inseparable from the desire to win men to the local option policy who may fear the adoption of our reform as a consequence.

How much of this impatience arises from a disappointment at what seems to us the necessarily slow growth of Single Tax sentiment, we shall not pretend to say. But we incline to the view that Mr. Hall is right, that our energy should be expended chiefly on issues which permit us to appear before the people as advocates of a policy of land restoration. The tax question, the mere mechanistic side of the Single Tax, has had a tendency to be-devil this great issue of the right of the people to their natural inheritance of forests, coals, minerals and the land values of cities. Man has need of these things, not because there is a vexatious tax question intimately related to a great human need, but because they are his by right, and because social salvation, life and civilization itself, depend upon the rightful adjustment of the question of their ownership.

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#### ITS UNUTTERABLE MEANNESS.

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Seligman, E. R. A., is millionaire professor of Political Economy at Columbia. The Professor is working for a state income tax. Here is his plan of taxation of incomes:

Married men—No tax on the first \$1,600 of their salaries or income; 1 per cent. tax where incomes range between \$1,600 and \$2,600; 1½ per cent. tax between \$2,600 and \$3,600; 2 per cent. flat tax for all incomes in excess of \$3,600. An exemption of \$200 should be granted for each child in a family.

Single Men—No tax on the first \$1,200 of their salaries or incomes; 1 per cent.