

Not only is political economy *not* defined, but (such is the melancholy outlook) it *never* will be defined. Bonamy Price, of Oxford, in reply to the question, "What is Economics," replied, "A precise answer will never be given." Think of professors of a science that will never be defined. But again we ask why should they get real money for it?

These teachers in universities endowed by privilege are cautious to a fault. Their attitude resembles somewhat that of the Indian teacher on a reservation, who, when asked by the school board if the earth was round or flat, replied: "Some teach that it is round, and some teach that it is flat, but as for me I teach as the parents prefer."

But these professors and writers on economics keep up the pretence of dealing with problems that are of interest to society, and take themselves very seriously. They pay each other compliments that confer philosophic distinction. Thus we read that Professor Clark is "rational and monistic," while Professor Patten is "pragmatic and pluralistic." (Review of Professor Patten's *Reconstruction of Economic Thought, Political Science Quarterly*, March 1913.) They make extravagant claims for one another: Thus Professor Patten actually thinks that the rise of Socialism in this country is due "in large part" to Professor Seligman's "Economic Interpretation of History," calling it the "Bible of Socialism." This in view of the fact that there are, perhaps, more Socialists in Oshkosh than the total number of readers of Professor Seligman's combined works. Professor Seligman himself hands out compliments of this kind, *ad libitum ad nauseum*. Note these few paragraphs among many: "Newman is well known as one of the most prominent writers on finance." Seligman's *Essay on Taxation*, page 545.

"The first volume of this great work (Adolph Wagner's *Science of Finance*) 'is familiar to all students.'" Ibid, page 546. "Pierson's treatment is characterized by broad touches; he is one of the

first to attempt a comprehensive theory of incidence combining Schaffles's amortization theory with some more eclectic views." Ibid 565.

In the name of the Prophet, Figs!

THIRD ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE NEW YORK STATE SINGLE TAX LEAGUE

The Third Annual Conference of the New York State League met in the parlors of the Union Square Hotel of this city on Saturday, Nov. 6, and the morning session was called to order by President Sague at ten o'clock. A letter was read from General Gorgas, and another from Chancellor Day, of the Syracuse University, offering accommodations in the university for next year's Conference.

Reports of activities in various counties of the State were read from Mr. E. C. Clarke, who reported for Otsego; Mr. Hutton, who reported for Schenectady; Prof. Lewis H. Clark, who reported for Wayne; and Mr. H. A. Jackson, of Tonawanda, who reported for Niagara County.

Mr. F. D. Silvernail, who was present in person, read a report of the activities in Buffalo by Thos. H. Work. Mrs. Katharine E. Bradley gave an account of the work in Olean, which included mention of the several lectures of James R. Brown. A local organization in Olean is under way, some forty-eight persons having interested themselves in the preliminary organization.

Dr. Thos E. Bullard, of Schuylerville, reported for Saratoga County, and Mr. F. D. Silvernail spoke briefly of activities in Lockport.

Mr. William McCabe addressed the Conference in a speech full of happy humor. He has issued a little paper in his home town in Suffolk County to arouse the voters and taxpayers of that county to the deplorable condition in the matter of assessments. Land in Suffolk County is notoriously under-assessed.

Mr. E. H. Underhill reported for the

activities of the Manhattan Single Tax Club, and Mr. William Lustgarten addressed the Conference on assessment conditions in Rockland County, which he called the second crookedest county in the State, yielding the palm in that respect to the County of Suffolk only.

A motion was unanimously carried to send a message of greeting to Henry George, Jr.

At the afternoon session Mr. James R. Brown gave an interesting account of his work in the rural communities.

"The Single Tax and Some of the Problems of the Day" was the topic of Miss Grace Isabel Colbron's address; "The work of the Single Tax Writing Corps" was treated by DeWitt Clinton, Jr.; Miss Mary Boise Ely, "Single Tax Intercollegiate Work." Other speakers were Mrs. Mary Ware Dennett, Will Atkinson, and Joseph Dana Miller, who read an essay entitled "Our Problem."

The banquet in the evening, which closed the convention, was very successful in point of numbers and enthusiasm. Mr. William Lustgarten presided and the three speakers were William Lloyd Garrison, Mrs. Mary Fels and Hon. Francis Neilson, M. P.; and Hon. John J. Murphy gave a brief explanation of the Single Tax.

The success of the Conference reflects perhaps the greatest credit on Mr. Benjamin Doblin, who has worked assiduously during the past two months to perfect arrangements. To Mr. Mark M. Dintenfass is due the thanks of the Conference for a moving picture of the gathering to be shown on the films of the *Universal Weekly* in moving picture houses all over the world.

THE SINGLE TAX

The following outline of Single Tax by Joseph Danziger was inserted last week in all the Washington city papers as a news item. This is probably the first time that such a comprehensive statement of Single Tax principles has been published by the papers of a large city simply as a matter of news and without solicitation.

DEFINITION: The Single Tax means the raising of all public revenue for national, State and local purposes, through taxation of the *value* of land irrespective of improvements in or on it. This excludes all tariffs, licenses, excise taxes, personal property taxes, improvement taxes and all other forms of direct and indirect taxes on labor or its products.

WHY ADVOCATED: Its adoption is urged because the taxes which it would abolish tend to check and hamper industry and enterprise. It is neither just nor expedient that a man who puts land to use should be taxed more than one who holds an equally valuable piece of land out of use; yet that is what the present system of taxation actually requires.

RESULTS OF PRESENT SYSTEM: The result is seen in:—

- (a) an enormous amount of valuable land withheld from use on speculation;
- (b) in land but poorly used;
- (c) in old, unsanitary buildings where better ones should be;
- (d) in a lack of proper housing causing congestion in cities;
- (e) and in an army of unemployed in a country with sufficient natural resources to support a greater population than exists in the whole world.

RESULTS OF SINGLE TAX: The Single Tax would force those now withholding valuable land from use to either use it themselves or let others do so. This would open to labor the natural resources of the country and give opportunities for employment to all who would want it.

JUSTICE OF SINGLE TAX: On the ethical side it is urged that what is produced by individual labor rightfully belongs to individuals. In taxing labor products the government commits robbery. Land, however, is not produced by human labor, and what value it has, aside from the value of improvements, is produced through the presence, industry and enterprise of the whole community. In taxing land values therefore there is taken for public use what the public has created, and to whom it consequently belongs by