

ness, of monopoly, but in fields of competition; in which case any suspicion of corporate manipulation would operate against a particular corporation precisely as would suspicion of honesty in any of its head officials.

Judge Grosscup's proposal does not lessen, it conserves, privilege. But perhaps it is because he has been one of the chief molders of the deadly injunction principles used by Privilege against labor unions, that he is blind to this, and that he uses his large abilities and commanding position to advocate not what will simplify, but what will complicate, social problems, and make more desperate the struggle to restore the Republic to its natal principle of equal rights.

HENRY GEORGE, Jr.

IS THE SINGLE TAX MOVEMENT MAKING PROGRESS?

Many of its good friends share the not uncommon notion that the Single Tax movement is decadent. But those who have been active in it from the beginning know that this notion is erroneous.

Since the inspiring days of the Henry George campaign, out of which the *Standard* and Anti-Poverty Society came, the Single Tax movement has grown immensely; and at the present moment it is larger and more influential than the socialist movement, with which its progress is sometimes disparagingly contrasted.

This statement depends, of course, upon one's standards. If the present state of the particular form the movement took in 1886-87 is the test, then the Single Tax movement is indeed decadent. So, also, if the test is the number and condition of its distinctive organs and organizations. For the fine ebullitions of those early days have passed away, and outside of the *REVIEW* in America, *Land Values* in Great Britain, and the *Volkstimme* in Germany, there is hardly a distinctive organ of the movement anywhere.

But the question is not whether those forms of the movement are decadent; it is whether such is the condition of the movement itself.

As to that question the reasons for believing in substantial progress are abundant. Though there is no longer a Single Tax party, and all efforts to organize one are futile, the movement in politics is more influential than ever, even if less exhilarating than when it was in its infancy. One of the two great parties is honeycombed with Single Tax principles, and in the other the same principles are not uncommonly discussed with favor. What is true in this respect of the United States is true in greater degree of Great Britain, where the parliamentary electioneering over free trade and land values taxation is now surging about the Single Tax idea; and in Australasia, before

the same rising wave of free trade and land values taxation, socialism is receding. These are but indications of the progress that may be observed on all hands, if one look for substantial growth instead of looking for spectacular demonstrations.

Who is there that would surrender the advances of the Single Tax movement as indicated by these conditions, for the Single Tax movement as it was in the '80's? If those who were thoughtfully active in the movement then, could have foreseen the movement as it is now—a vital force unobtrusively but steadily influencing the trend of affairs—they would have thought of the seed of their sewing well planted then—and well grown now.

If we have few organs, the accession of papers of the general press has reduced the necessity for organs. Probably no other movement of our time is so well represented by papers of the general press. Many daily and weekly papers, both in Great Britain and the United States, are under Single Tax control, and many more are responsive to Single Tax influences. They preach Single Tax doctrines, not only academically, but, better yet, in practical connection with the municipal, national and world movements, and as part of them.

These things mean progress such as no degree of party success, no extent of distinctive organization, and no possible number of organs could mean. They imply progress in the minds and hearts of the masses of the people; not so deep nor so clear as to apprehension of principles as in the isolated Single Tax groups of the earlier days, to be sure, but deep enough and clear enough for practical purposes, and vastly more extensive than ever.

Working among ourselves in the ebullient times of George and McGlynn, we favorably affected only the few outsiders who touched the edges of our groups, and astounded the masses by what they mistook for insanity. To-day our movement has so far progressed that its influence permeates public opinion and gives hopeful and wholesome direction to municipal reforms and national politics.

LOUIS F. POST.

THE SHORT-CUT OF THE SINGLE TAX.

It is a sign of the times that the *Denver Republican* should devote an editorial to the "Growth of Socialism" and state its conviction that a socialist tidal wave is among the possibilities of politics. Incidentally it declares that Socialists and Single Taxers are at one on the land question. This is a common error, for clearly the management of the land from a central office as the common property of the people (as Socialists propose), and the mere raising of the tax on land to its full annual value, after deducting all improvements, are very

different things. The just aim of doing away with the private absorption of land values would be common to both systems, but the first would call for a complicated arrangement for administering a great national estate, while the second would require much less machinery than we have now for collecting taxes. The land value tax would simply be increased in amount under the Single Tax, and this would call for no increase in the number of collectors, while the whole cumbersome mechanism of custom houses and personal and indirect taxation would be swept away.

And this difference in form involves a difference in principle. Socialists and Single Taxers unite in criticising unfavorably present economic conditions. Both desire to secure a just distribution of the product of labor. But the socialist believes that the present unsatisfactory state of industry proves that the natural laws of labor and exchange are defective, while the Single Taxer asserts that natural laws have never had a fair chance to operate. After his house has burned down, it is natural for a man to find fault with the laws of combustion, and, in a moment of resentment, he might wish to do away with them. Just after a bad fall we are inclined to curse the law of gravitation. But to do away with these laws would leave us in a worse plight than ever, and the wise thing is to study them and adjust ourselves to them, and to make them our useful servants and not our tyrannical masters. The socialists would throw the natural laws of trade overboard and provide a special Providence at the center which should take the place of these laws. The Single Taxer pronounces such an attempt unnatural and impossible of execution. He has faith in the laws of nature, and would only ask to let them have free play, as they never have had up to the present time. He claims that it is unnatural that the mere possession of valuable land should give the power to individuals to exact tribute from the community. Abolish this injustice and all other monopolies, and the much-decried law of supply and demand, and the other beautiful laws of natural human intercourse, would begin to operate as benignly as do the laws of gravity and combustion when man makes proper use of them.

It is a beautiful sight in a laboratory to watch gases and liquids and solids obey the laws of their being—to see water rise to its own level, however indirect the connection between its various surfaces—and to note how vacuums are always filled if the pressure of the air is given a fair opportunity. And just so it would be a delightful thing to open our eyes to the world around us, if the beneficent laws of social life were not interfered with at every turn. By laws of the same character the product would seek the consumer, the laborer would seek his work, the reward would adapt itself to the service. Where there was a tendency to pro-

duce too much of a given article, the demand would diminish, the price would drop and the manufacture of it be discouraged, and at the same time the producing class, receiving the full value of its product (for there would exist no monopolistic method of depriving them of it), would be able to consume all that they produced, after making such provision for the repairing and extension of plants as their savings might justify. Socialism means a lack of faith in natural laws. It believes in an artificial, machine-made justice. The Single Tax, on the other hand, is based on faith in natural law and would secure justice by removing the artificial obstacles to it which man has created.

The *Denver Republican* is right in dwelling upon the growing unrest of the public. Some great crisis will arise before long when the people will have to decide what form of change they prefer to enter upon. Will they select a vast and impracticable system of universal interference with individual activity, or will they take the wiser course of putting an end to the unjust privileges which are operating before their eyes to their injury? The former course would lead to disastrous experiments, bring in again the Man-on-Horseback and postpone for a century or two the final triumph of justice and freedom. But even then the Single Taxer can afford to abide his time in patience, for eventually his simple plan of preventing all sorts of graft will have to be adopted. By our present campaign of education, however, we hope to persuade our fellow-countrymen, when the time comes, to take the short-cut to the Promised Land and not waste golden years in wandering through the Wilderness.

ERNEST CROSBY.

SINGLE TAX PROGRESS IN GREAT BRITAIN.

Great and far-reaching as the political changes that are pending in the United States, and of which 1906 is likely, at least, to see the preliminaries, it is probable that those destined to happen in Great Britain will be not less portentous.

There is much of truth in the claim that the ferment now so apparent in American political life, is due to the work of Ida Tarbell, Lincoln Steffens, Ray Stannard Baker, Chas. E. Russell, and especially of Thomas W. Lawson, during the past two years, but it is almost as certain that it had its initial impulse in the Bryan campaigns of 1896 and 1900, and in the even earlier and since continued propaganda of Henry George and his disciples.

So in Great Britain the conditions which have produced the Campbell-Bannerman ministry had their origin in the "red-van" and other propaganda work carried on there by equally loyal followers. There, as here, the missionaries of the gospel of "the