

was exceedingly cold. The result was a rather slim attendance—about one hundred. The interest of those who were there was gratifying. Some questions were asked, but most of the audience were seemingly satisfied with the presentation—one old man on shaking hands at the close of the lecture, said: "I am glad I came to-night. I know, now, what I am trying to do." This man was plainly a type of thousands, who know something is wrong and know the interests of workmen are common, but who have not been able clearly to perceive the true relation of economic forces. He said further: "I can work with better heart now." Words like these are cheering to those of us who see the dawn of a better day.

At nearly all meetings we meet the usual mental attitude of doubt toward anything new, followed, of course, by the very apparent fact that the landlord would shift the tax to tenants. And when vacant land is indicated and we ask which tenant is nearest, we are, of course, told that our plan would result in confiscation which honest men cannot defend. This, of course, forces the choice of confiscating the landlord's power or permitting him to continue confiscating the wages of labor. A few illustrations usually silence direct opposition—and the balance of the interview is generally a game of checkers.

The debate on December 27 between John Z. White and Col. W. A. Roberts was somewhat peculiar, for the reason that Col. Roberts is a Bryan Democrat. But it really was curious to hear him shout "confiscation" as lustily as a Southern slave owner, or a society saver of New York in 1886. He professed to be a free trader—that is, he wants trade freer than it is now—and obviously he was a currency reformer. The railroad monopoly might properly be curtailed; but the Single Tax—could it be possible that intelligent men advocated so crazy a proposition. Why, just one incident in his career illustrated the harm it would do. He at one time (so he told us) bought a tract of land, divided it into lots, and subsequently sold these on monthly payments—paying the taxes himself until the lot was cleared of debt by the buyer. Then he built a house for the owner—also on monthly payments—who, from the time the building was erected, began paying taxes. Now, we were asked, is it not perfectly clear that if the Single Tax were in operation this whole scheme would be impossible—and so these buyers could not have become the owners of the lots in question? The Colonel was perfectly serious. He really thought those poor people would never have been able to get those lots unless he or some other kind individual first sub-

divided the property. He was much like the prominent and dignified citizen who was perfectly sure in his own mind that owners of vacant land were merely holding it until such time as it may be needed, and who was very much offended when asked if, should the owner let go, he thought it would fall through? Meanwhile, he was precisely right when he said owners of vacant land were holding it until such time as it might be needed.

As met by us, the members of church men's clubs and members of trade unions are about equal in intelligent appreciation of our arguments. The very best appreciation that we have thus far encountered has been met with among these two sorts of organizations.

There are few men who are not aware that better conditions are possible, but they are afraid of each definite proposal. They advocate an altered condition, but object to each particular method proposed to that end—talk one way, vote another. The chief strength of conservatism is cowardice.

FAIRHOPE ON ITS NINTH ANNIVERSARY.

Fairhope celebrated its ninth anniversary on New Year's night with a very interesting and enjoyable programme. The Christian Church building, kindly tendered for the occasion, was crowded to its limit, emphasizing the need of a larger auditorium, which is one of the improvements talked of for the near future.

The Secretary's history of 1903 showed a net gain in population of thirteen families, the construction of sixteen dwellings, one store building and very extensive improvements of two other store buildings, and the completion by the Association of a warehouse, 82 by 74 feet, in connection with the wharf. The receipts from land rents were \$919.75, as against \$817.20 for 1902 and \$479.63 for 1901. The wharf receipts were \$986.05, as against \$708.84 for 1902 and \$533.54 for 1901.

A notable feature of the year was the accession to the membership of the Association of a number of well known Single Taxers, among them, Jno. S. Crosby, Ernest H. Crosby, August Lewis and George L. Rusby, of New York, C. F. Nesbit, of Washington, R. F. Powell, of Philadelphia, Robert Tyson, of Ontario, Chas. R. Eckert and Jos. C. Campbell, of Pennsylvania.

Prof. Bellangee returned from his extensive Northern tour in the interest of the Colony the day before New Year's to be present at the anniversary. His trip was of very great advantage to the Colony in many ways, and he will probably go out again in the Spring. It would be hardly possible to drive him North again during

the Winter months. New Year's at Fairhope was like a balmy Spring day.

The Executive Council of the Association made its appraisal of rental values for 1904, during December. A printed copy of the entire appraisal was furnished every lease-holder and complaints against the same heard on the evening of the sixteenth. The answers to complaints by the members of the Council and other Association members, made it a first-class Single Tax meeting, and were so satisfactory that after all had been said *pro* and *con*, the Council's judgment was sustained in general by an almost unanimous vote. The new appraisal will, on the basis of present holdings, bring a little over \$1,500 into the Association's treasury.

An interesting point in Professor Belangee's address at the anniversary was that he had found on his trip men of large affairs particularly interested in Fairhope, and most keenly appreciative of the possibilities of our community with the people in control of the land and the public utilities.

The prospects of the Colony for the year 1904 are of the brightest, and its members extend a hearty New Year's greeting to their fellow Single Taxers throughout the world. If arrangements are made for a Single Tax headquarters at Saint Louis during the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, we want to co operate and have a representative there continuously. E. B. GASTON.

THE SINGLE TAX IN PARTIAL OPERATION.

Guam, America's new possession in the Pacific, is not the only place in the world where the theories of Henry George are being applied. On the east coast of Vancouver Island, in British Columbia, the flourishing town of Nanaimo, with its 6,000 inhabitants, has no tax for municipal purposes save one on land values, levied alike on occupied and unoccupied land, according to the orthodox interpretation of the Single Tax theory. The town is a miners' town, where the doctrine of "three acres and a cow" is almost universally realized as well as that of "every man his own house owner." For this happy result the easy terms of the London syndicate which owns the coal and land in the neighborhood are largely responsible.—*The London Chronicle*.

A Plea for the Children, by Mina Price, published by Frank Vierth, at Cedar Rapids, Iowa, is No. 13 of *Junior Why*, and is a little vest pocket pamphlet that has been widely circulated by Single Tax and labor associations. It cannot be too generally circulated. It is an effective presentation of the evils of child labor, and is told with a woman's sympathetic pen.

SPEECH OF WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

(INTRODUCING GOVERNOR GARVIN AT Y. M. C. A. HALL IN BOSTON, MONDAY, DEC. 21ST.)

There is a popular belief that our democratic form of government is independent and self-working. However much its administrators may depart from fundamental principles the delusion that a special Providence is guiding the nation along its chosen path is all abounding. Therefore only fools and pessimists need worry. It is a cheap and easy philosophy hoary with age. National conceit and assurance of Divine favor have marked every previous republic or empire which has gone down in blood and shame.

We boast our seats of learning and the land is full of scholars; some, alas, in politics who have not only read but written history. But what has it taught them? As for the lessons it conveys, a blank page might represent the story of the years that are behind us. Although disaster and eclipse have overtaken the elder nations who tried to circumvent the moral law, undaunted our new fledgling sounds the same atheistic defiance and cherishes the same insane confidence that presages downfall.

On the last day of the Constitutional Convention, September 17, 1789, Benjamin Franklin with forecast and wisdom uttered these impressive words:

"I believe that this government is likely to be well administered; and believe further, that this is likely to be well administered for a course of years, and can only end in despotism, as other forms have done before it, when the people shall be so corrupted as to need despotic government, being incapable of any other."

No faith in government as a machine of perpetual motion deluded that clear brain. When people grow careless of freedom the despot comes. The gravity of the situation confronting democracy may serve for mirth to witless writers for the press or bring expressions of incredulity from cheerful optimists. But to serious historical students and lovers of freedom the present chapter of the country's record is full of anxious import. Is the point reached where the American people are so corrupted that they are only fitted for despotic rule?

There is a reason why nations in which civilization has reached its highest development should be brought to such a pass. We welcome, therefore, with eagerness whoever can throw intelligent light upon the problem, if problem be the proper name for self-made social tangles. If our heritage of freedom is to be preserved we cannot too soon understand its attacking forces of decay. Skilled machinery of administration, personal purity of officials are not enough when skill is exerted for wealth and power and personally pure men support organized