

relations; but that the "republican form of government" would divest the people of their right to instruct their agents by Initiative, to veto their action by Referendum, or to dismiss them by Recall, is a plutocratic "pipe dream."

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

SECOND INTERNATIONAL SINGLE TAX CONFERENCE.

Antwerp, Belgium.

Those delegates to the Antwerp International Free Trade Congress who favor the taxation of land values, held a meeting at the Grand Hotel, Antwerp, on Thursday afternoon, August 11th, for the purpose of considering the attitude of land-value tax-ationists to the general purpose of the Congress, and the steps that might be properly taken to impress upon the Congress the vital importance of land value taxation to the life of the free-trade movement.*

Forty-two persons were present, including seven ladies, and C. H. Smithson, of Halifax, England, was elected chairman.

Joseph Fels explained the object of the Conference. He stated that it was the second international conference on land value taxation in history, the first having been held in Paris in 1889, when Henry George was present. Proceeding, he said that the world is at the beginning of a great historical movement; that we need have no fear of the result in England; and that there can be no free-trade without the single-tax. He urged vigorously that the Conference agree to demand that the Free Trade Congress permit at least a half hour's discussion of the only single-tax paper presented to the Congress, viz., that of Frederick Verinder on "The Taxation of Land Values in Its Relation to Free Trade." It was evident, he thought, that the Congress not only intended to suppress attempts at such discussion, but also to prevent Mr. Verinder from publicly explaining his paper. If such permission should not be granted, Mr. Fels thought that the Single Tax delegates should leave the Free Trade Congress in a body.

J. C. Durant of England and Louis Rosenthal of Antwerp urged that these demands upon the Congress be made with moderation, whereupon Mr. Fels explained that he had spoken emphatically for the purpose of provoking discussion, and that maybe the Conference would find his "bark worse than his bite."

The author of the paper, Mr. Verinder, who is general secretary of the English League for the Taxation of Land Values, discussed the land-value tax with reference to its effect in different countries, and expressed the opinion that the future relations of Single Taxers with the Free Trade Congress ought not to be jeopardized for the sake of a mere half-hour's discussion at this time. Continental Europe is not yet ripe for the single tax, he thought; and its advocates should not break the heads of those they want to convert.

*See last week's Public, page 845.

On motion, it was unanimously decided to appoint Joseph Fels, Louis Rosenthal and John Paul a committee to visit President Strauss of the Free Trade Congress and make the best arrangements possible for having Mr. Verinder's paper read and discussed.

Then Mr. Paul proposed a resolution explaining the single-tax principle and policy and referring to the well proved fact that Cobden before he died realized its great importance.

Johan Hansson of Filipstad (Sweden) and Olstykke (Denmark) spoke for Sweden and Denmark.

George N. Barnes, M. P., Parliamentary leader of the British Labor parties, told of the improved condition of workingmen in Scotland since the tenant laws were abolished. He said that as a Socialist he thought all social values should be taken for public use, which meant to him more than the taxation of land-values; but so far as the single-tax went, he was thoroughly in accord with its advocates. J. M. Robertson, M. P., spoke along similar lines.

George Darien of Paris spoke long and earnestly on behalf of France. He said, among other things, that the history of the French Revolution has never been properly written, the Physiocrats and their work not having been understood by historians. The French, he said, are overburdened with a multitude of heavy taxes. He thought such an emotional people could be reached by plays and graphic methods better than by appeals to reason.

Stephen Collins, M. P., England, desired that the meeting should understand that while he was a free-trader and favored the taxation of land-values, he could not endorse the full single-tax.

Byron W. Holt, New York, spoke optimistically of the outlook in the United States, especially in Oregon and other States where the initiative and referendum are in force.

Mrs. Fels and Mrs. David McLardy (the latter representing the Scottish League) spoke briefly and in harmony with the object of the Conference, Mrs. McLardy emphasizing the importance of having the wives and daughters of Single Taxers join the single tax movement.

Mr. Paul's resolution was then unanimously adopted as follows:

Resolution Passed at a Meeting of Advocates of Land Value Taxation, attending the Free Trade Congress: "This meeting declares its unflinching adherence to the principle of free trade, meaning thereby the complete freedom of trade from all taxes and restrictions, whether imposed for protective or for revenue purposes; further, that the true principle of free trade must be carried out to its fullest extent, both as affects agriculture and manufactures, by the removal not only of protective taxes, but also of all existing obstacles to the unrestricted employment of industry and capital; and further declares that the only just and expedient method of effecting this policy and of destroying the protective system is by the exemption of all improvements and all the processes of industry from rates and taxes, and the substitution for them of the direct taxation of the value of all land, a value which is due entirely to the presence, growth, industry, and expenditure of the community."

Following are the signers of the resolution:

Reinhold Ockel and Louis Rosenthal (Antwerp), Belgium; Sophus Berthelson (Höng), Y. L. Bjojner (Copenhagen), and Johan Hansson (Olstykke), Denmark; Mr. and Mrs. George Darien (Paris), France; G. S. Büsche

(Zurich), Switzerland; Mr. and Mrs. Louis R. Ehrlich (New York), Byron W. Holt (New York), Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Hoopes (Coatesville, Pa), U. S. A.; Frederick Verinder, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Fels, J. C. Durant, John Paul, Sam Dugdale, R. C. Orr, and A. W. Metcalfe (United Committee for Taxation of Land Values, London), C. R. Smithson and Fred Skirrow (Yorkshire Branch of English League for the Taxation of Land Values), James Busby, David Cassels, Mr. and Mrs. James Stewart, and Mr. and Mrs. David McLardy (Scottish League for the Taxation of Land Values), Great Britain.

Upon the passing of the Paul resolution, the Conference adjourned.

+

On Friday morning, the 12th, the committee from this Conference was informed by officials of the Congress that time could not be allowed either for the reading or for the discussion of Mr. Verinder's paper or any part of it. The intention of the authorities to suppress all reference to the single tax was made still more pointed by the omission from the printed minutes of the first two days' proceedings of the Congress of remarks on the subject by three separate speakers.

The Single Tax delegates retired at once to an adjoining room, where they were advised that the French delegates under the leadership of Yves Guyot, had announced their intention of leaving the Congress if the subject of land-value taxation were recognized, and that the managers of the Congress purposed suppressing all reference to the question. They thereupon decided promptly to demand a hearing, appointing Mr. Paul and Mr. Fels to present their case, and agreed unanimously to leave the Congress in a body if their demand were rejected.

The demand being made, President Strauss allowed Mr. Verinder five minutes to present the subject to the Congress, and Mr. Verinder utilized this brief time with great tact and skill, and so forcefully and logically that he must have carried conviction to the minds of some and aroused the interest of more.

What he impressed upon the Congress was (1) that the abolition of protection is not the same thing as the establishment of free-trade; (2) that the revenues now supplied by custom-houses must be replaced by something, and that a practical free-trade congress must face this problem; (3) that theory and experience both prove that any increase of national wealth from free trade will be entirely absorbed by the consequent rise in land-values without reaching the worker whom it is desired to benefit; and (4) that Cobden himself regarded "free-trade in land" as absolutely essential to the accomplishment of his great purpose. In other words Mr. Verinder showed that the "freedom of trade," which embraces only freedom of exchange, ignoring freedom of production, is only a half-way measure unworthy the attention of serious men.

The liberal applause at the close of his address indicated that a large proportion of the audience appreciated favorably the value of what Mr. Verinder had said, and his way of saying it.

+

While perhaps nothing of great immediate importance was accomplished by this International Conference on Land-Value Taxation, yet it will be

remembered with satisfaction and pleasure by those who participated in it.

The opportunity to meet leading Single-Taxers of many countries and to get a bird's-eye view of the movement in those countries, was well worth while. Especially appreciated by some, at least, was the opportunity to become acquainted with the world's great Single-Tax dynamo and financial promoter, Joseph Fels, and with that land-value tax Encyclopedia Britannica, John Paul.

ARTHUR HOOPES.
BYRON W. HOLT.

+ + +

PROTECTIONIST SMUGGLERS.

New York, Sept. 9.

Now is the season of the year when our plutocratic—and would-be plutocratic—society falls into one of its most delightful inconsistencies. The columns of our dailies are full of the trials and tribulations of returning European voyagers in the unavoidable clash with custom-house regulations. Theater, restaurant and home drawing-room thrill with tales of indignities suffered alike by the innocent and the would-be smuggler of high degree.

"In no other country is the public treated so shamefully." "It's enough to make one regret ever coming home again." "They treat you like a liar and a thief; they ask for your sworn statement as to what you have, and then they take for granted you are lying and go through your trunks anyway." "It's disgraceful—shameful—disgusting!" One hears these remarks on all sides now; mainly from women of course, although sometimes the lord and master of the fair complainer, if he be a man of weight in the business world, lends his name to a signed protest in the newspapers.

Now the joke of it all is that most of these good people are staunch and true protection Republicans, or plutocratic Democrats, and never for one moment do they seem to see that the thing they uphold politically is the chief reason for the other thing which arouses their ire.

The U. S. Government desires no more than any other to harass its citizens needlessly, or to make their vacation home-coming a thing to be dreaded, as it certainly is now. But if the majority of its citizens vote for a ridiculous tariff system, they ought to have decency enough not to complain about a necessary consequence.

It's the height of absurdity. But if one mildly suggests the connection between the Republican tariff and the custom-house rules, one is met by an uncomprehending stare, and the outraged citizen passes on to complain about his (or her) wrongs to someone more sympathetic.

It seems as if someone ought to "see the cat" in this matter. Among the names signed to recent journalistic protests against indignities suffered on the steamship piers are names of men high up in the ranks of those most benefited by the tariff. One would expect them to know better, even if their womenkind do not. Do they expect to build up a tariff wall for everyone else, and then slip through it unscathed themselves?

Even the conservative New York Times hinted at the connection between the tariff and the custom