

every now and then, but they go right ahead. The only disciples of Henry George who are not betrayed, and refuse to be betrayed, are our good friends of the Commonwealth Land Party of England.

WE are glad to welcome the appearance of the third anniversary number of the *Forum*, edited and published by L. D. Beckwith, of Stockton, California. The *Forum* is a unique publication. It is distinctively a people's paper in a very real sense. Its opinions are those of its contributors who are also its advertising patrons. Anybody can advertise his opinions at cost—no more. That is, the cost of printing and press work. The subscriptions alone constitute the editor's salary. His income is therefore not made conditional on his advertisements, nor are the paper's opinions determined, as in so many cases they are, by the advertisers. Altogether it constitutes an adventure in journalism that will be watched with interest in influential circles. Letters from well known Single Taxers appear in the columns of the anniversary number, among them being an enthusiastic endorsement from William J. Wallace, candidate of the Commonwealth Land Party for president, and many others.

## Real Teachers of Political Economy

DO our readers peruse the real estate advertisements of the daily press? From time to time we have given sample extracts. These real estate advertisers are the great teachers of political economy. They have the economic professors in our colleges and universities "beaten to a frazzle." The latter always have reservations; they qualify, they state principles and then proceed to note what they think are important exceptions to the principles, so that no conclusion is arrived at and only doubt is left in the student's mind whether there are any principles at all or not. Everything is a jumble.

Not so your real estate advertisers. Now and then they leave a word to be supplied, and "real estate" is sometimes used when only land is meant. But on the whole they are, when read understandingly, very impressive lessons in political economy.

Here, for example, is a page in the *Kansas City (Mo.) Times*. One sentence reads: "Kansas City is owned by the men and women who hold title to its real estate. Theirs is a participating partnership resulting from the growth and development of the city." Here is, too, we may add, a participating partnership in every drive of every wheel of production, in the movement of every piece of machinery, in every stroke of the hammer, in every dollar of wealth that comes from the union of labor and capital. That is, of course, if by real estate is meant land. It cannot mean houses and other improvements

since these do not increase in value by reason of population and the industrial growth of the city.

It is made clear in the next sentence that land and not improvements is meant, for it says:

"Where ground for business future is offered at lower prices than similarly situated property (by which is meant land again) in cities of equal size, where leaseholds can be purchased on a lower basis, where adequately protected freeholds offer safe and profitable estate building investments \*\*\*\*\* opportunity beckons."

Then this advertisement goes on to say, "Lots that sold for a few hundred dollars after the Civil War today earn over \$50,000 a year net. But the rise of such centers as at Thirty-first street and Troost Avenue are of the last two years."

But this advertisement has a touch of humor. We have seen nothing quite so good as this:

"The man who will study in the classified columns the property offered for sale, making independent investigations, in a few months will have a good foundation in real estate values. Merchants and professional men have thus found in real estate not only a chance to make money, but a field of recreation. The subject of real estate, followed as a leisurely sideline, has the fascination, minus much of the risk, of games of chance. It strengthens the imagination and leads to a sympathetic understanding of the basic structure of the city."

The humor of this is in the words, "sympathetic understanding," "leisurely sideline," "strengthens the imagination," etc.

The advertiser is right, however, in the statement that this kind of investment has the fascination minus the risk of games of chance. For only one side can win; the producer must lose, for the dice is loaded against him.

## The Political Chaos

COMPARED with the political situation in the United States Chaos is a quiet and orderly arrangement.

Compared with the political insanity that rages Bedlam is a sanctuary for the reasonable and sane.

A great party met in this city to nominate a candidate for president and succeeded after taking over a hundred ballots, which broke all known records. Cheering to the echo the denunciation of one man placed in nomination as representative of the privileged interests, it thereafter selected him as its candidate amid loud cheering. The man who had denounced him, placated by the nomination of his brother as this man's running mate, said the nomination was perfectly satisfactory! He is now heartily for the man he denounced.

Then another convention met and nominated La Follette. Though a platform was adopted it was declared that "La Follette is a platform in himself." The communistic element had already broken away and nominated a ticket of their own. But what is particularly amusing,

the Committee of 48, which had worked for La Follette's nomination, watched their forces drift away and nominate another ticket! That delightful amateur politician, J. A. H. Hopkins, saw his famous set of principles, embodied in three planks, on which he fatuously believed that the "reform" forces of the country could be united under La Follette or Borah, or almost anybody, utterly ignored, and a new platform submitted to the voters. La Follette being "a platform in himself"—which fact Mr. Hopkins had forgotten in his laborious modelling of a platform for La Follette to run upon!—statements of principles need not concern him. In fact, any old principles will do, if they are sufficiently vague. Mr. Hopkins made a wry face, but stood up bravely and said, "I am for La Follette." All was lost save honor, so it did not greatly matter.

What was left of actual following of the Committee of 48 from the awful fiasco at Chicago four years ago, and the wreckage of which movement had been gathered together for the construction of a hastily improvised raft for the shipwrecked, had now finally drifted out to sea, and Captain Hopkins was marooned. The Committee of 48 has now probably disappeared forever.

In all this there is a lesson. No coalition of the electorate is possible where attempts are made to satisfy everybody. In this way nobody is satisfied. The most any party can do is to state its principles, and if these principles be sound, wait for recognition which will come in the fullness of time. There is no virtue in third party making, and no reason why we should form a third party in order just to have one. Nothing is needed less than a party if it have no better reason for being than the desire of certain people to form it. But it has seemed a passion with Mr. Hopkins. He dreamed a vision of the discontented and disaffected affiliated into one great party that should threaten the existence of both old parties. But to what end? How to do it, and what to do with it when he got it, would puzzle more sagacious politicians than the leader of the now defunct 48ers.

## The Party Platforms

THE Platforms of the parties are the usual kind of platforms. They mean nothing and are meant to mean nothing. Herbert Quick says of the two parties: "There is no issue between them. No matter what either of them say, they are exactly of the same piece."

Small wonder William Allen White is impelled to say in the *New York World*:

"The party system in this country is merely a mechanical device by which we hold our elections and cast our vote in two receptacles of about the same size and character. The fact that a great National Convention could hold itself in session for thirteen days without raising an economic issue shows what a joke the party system is. It will persist because we have no other device."

The Republican platform is non-committal on everything that might be made an issue. But under the head of Conservation it says:

"The natural resources of the country belong to all the people and are a part of an estate belonging to generations yet unborn."

We wonder where they got this. It is a good Single Tax doctrine. It applies in this case, of course, to natural resources not yet given away. But it will do even if the framers of the plank didn't know what it meant; and they probably didn't.

The La Follette platform is not a whit better than the others. Heywood Broun, the brilliant columnist of the *New York World*, pokes good natured fun at it. Its phrases are "glittering generalities," the applications of which are lacking. It was in anticipation of what would happen at the Cleveland convention that W. J. Wallace, leader of the Commonwealth Land Party and its candidate for president, recommended that none of the members of the party attend or take part in that convention. And he added:

"No really important issue will be discussed at this convention. These are the same men who in the past have favored the income tax and socialistic schemes for the regeneration of society. They are as much to be shunned by the voter who looks for any real economic reform as the two old and discredited parties. The Cleveland convention, judging from its component parts and the character of its leaders, is certain to repeat the fiasco we witnessed in Chicago in 1920, when the Committee of Forty-eight was swallowed up by the Communist element."

## War and Its Prevention

WARS between nations are the manifestations of the civil war which, due to unnatural causes, rages in society. The divorcement of man from the land produces a suppressed state of civil war within the nations which overleaps the national boundaries. With the natural opportunities monopolized or held out of use, men's minds are rendered anti-social by the struggle for the means of livelihood. They are prone to look upon the more fortunate of their fellows as their enemies, hence the encouragement of predatory nationalism by those who have nothing to gain from aggression, but everything to lose. Man is naturally a cooperative, not a warring animal, but unjust institutions conflict with this instinct and prevent its beneficent operations.

Today we find the whole world in upheaval; we are witnessing the failure of what we call civilization. Why blink the fact? We must build anew, and on new foundations. Our institutions are worn out; they no longer answer the purpose of human happiness and human progress. Indeed, what is threatened is the utter collapse of all we hold most precious and the relapse of mankind into hopeless barbarism.