

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.

To save mankind, to end wars, to steady this tottering civilization of ours, one thing must be done as the first necessary step. Let each nation declare that on a given date the values attaching to land be appropriated in lieu of most of the taxes now levied. The details of this change in the system of land tenure need not trouble us here, since the method would differ in different countries.

Is the solution of this world problem indeed so simple? asks the inquiring reader. Simple as Justice; but amazingly complex in the results that would ensue.

Let us try to picture it. The settlement of all foreign debts and indemnities, not immediately, of course, but in a measurable period—the end at least in sight for final settlement out of an enormous social fund, increasing rather than diminishing, adding not a tittle to Labor's burdens, but on the contrary relieving it of all taxes that now hamper its operations. Capital alike free and finding a tremendously new strength in freedom. All natural opportunities made free to use on the payment only of an annual rental measured by site or content value. Wages mounting, and mankind free at last from the exactions of landed privilege, and all those subsidiary privileges which rest on land monopoly.

Here at last is removed every incentive to war—for every natural resource in every country is now people-owned, and the absence of tariffs now enables all mankind to share in the bounties of the Creator—"the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

With this new civilization would rise a new concept of political democracy born of economic democracy. The old diplomacy would then be at an end. No longer could the workers be organized and massed for war—slaves, no longer they could not be thrown en masse by Kings, Kaisers and Presidents against the peoples of other nationalities similarly free and enfranchised. The old order would have disappeared, never to be restored. With it would go the old animosities, the international jealousies over foreign possessions, the quarrels over the bounties of the earth that were meant from the time of creation to be shared by all mankind.

Nations would continue, nor would the spirit of nationality be deadened. Mr. G. Lowes Dickenson is mistaken in attributing wars to the spirit of nationality, though right in the derivative notion that they spring from the greed of territory. Nationalism would live and thrive—the so-called "internationalists" are as far afield as others who fail to recognize fundamental causes. Patriotism is an indestructible quality of the human mind. Most men love their country and they are right in so doing.

Nor are we disposed to condemn the patriots of a country who scheme for territorial advantages for their own people. While the system continues it is idle to ask them to do anything else. In a world where the great natural resources are held out as prizes for a general scramble, he who, placed in a position of power, should let these prizes fall

into the hands of other nations, would be recreant to his duty. So we have all the evils of modern diplomacy culminating in wars, and a world in chaos.

That the masses of the people of a nation profit very little by any addition to territory as a result of conquest is a phase of the question only dimly perceived. No one benefits in the end by this denial of justice, since it is the nature of injustice that it profits no one. The prizes are for the Lords of Privilege whom the masses serve, and the workers profit only as they can wring concessions from capital, which in turn is also at the mercy of Privilege. And even for Privilege there is no security, for with the growing unrest internal revolutions are bred which menace those in high places. Government is corrupted, society enervated, and individual probity weakened by this stream of unearned wealth flowing into the coffers of Privilege as the fruits of civilized pillage.

Patriotism under a system in which the God-given bounties of Nature are the property of mankind would resolve itself into a spirit of emulation altogether beneficent. Who among us would not wish, if the remedy for a distracted world advocated by Georgians is the solution of the last great social problem of mankind, that it should be America, *our* country, that might lead the world? How the soul is thrilled at the thought that America, the hope of mankind, might be the first to proclaim that a new civilization is at hand, that this earth of ours, over which men war and kill one another, is the common property of us all, and that the solution of war, of all the world problems now darkening the horizon, and sorely perplexing governments and rulers, may be solved by the simple and sovereign remedy:

THE APPROPRIATION OF THE ENTIRE RENT OF LAND FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES BY THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH.

SPEAKING of the "capital levy" proposed by the British Labor Party Theo. H. Price says in that excellent periodical, *Commerce and Finance*:

"As in Great Britain the rich are enormously outnumbered by the poor there can be little doubt as to how the question will be decided if it is submitted to a popular referendum. Therefore it is not surprising that the statement quoted has caused great concern among the more thoughtful members of the capitalistic minority on both sides of the Atlantic.

Its import is not generally appreciated as yet but that it is destined to become a major factor in the economic complex of all democratic communities there is little doubt. The same thing may be said of the Single Tax movement in this country. Recently reorganized as the "Commonwealth Land Party" it is finding its opportunity in the growing dissatisfaction with the income tax and it is announced that its candidates for president and vice-president will be on the ballots of thirty states at the coming election."