

and rabid against the principles of the Single Tax as to be incapable of reasoning on any thing connected with the term.

The great weakness of the opposition to the idea of land value taxation is that they have to defend the present system. This they are endeavoring to get around by proposing through the State tax commission four measures, one of which will exempt a limited amount of household furniture, and perhaps tools and machinery.

When the opponents of the Single Tax get to submitting exemption measures we have only to keep up the fight to get them to enlarge the exemptions. A few years ago the proposal to exempt household furniture and farm machinery was opposed as an insidious scheme to slip in Single Tax. Now it is being considered as a splendid thing to head it off with. And thus we move.—

ALFRED D. CRIDGE, Portland, Oregon.

THE MOVEMENT IN PITTSBURG.

The purpose of this communication is to lend encouragement to Single Taxers in other localities who may be inclined to feel discouraged at times over the results they are accomplishing. Pittsburg is a peculiar city for propaganda work of this kind. There are, to be sure, just as clear minded and progressive citizens in Pittsburg as can be found in any other city. The fact that this industrial center is regarded as reactionary in political and economic matters is not due to any inherent fault in its human equipment. Pittsburg is receiving a constant stream of boys and girls from the country, and they are made of the same material as the boys and girls that help make up the population of other cities. Moreover, this city has just as many big and public spirited men as can be found in any American city of like size. This has been proven on several occasions when disasters such as the Johnstown Flood and the San Francisco Earthquake have visited other cities. At such times Pittsburg is always to the front with the most substantial kinds of

aid. Charitable institutions, too, fare as well if not better here than in most cities. All this goes to show that the human material of Pittsburg in the rough is much the same as in other places, and that if the surface is scratched the individuals will be found to be about the same as they are elsewhere.

Why is it then that Pittsburg, which moves so fast industrially, is so slow to advance politically? Why is it that we see economic advantages only after they are tried by others? My answer is—Pittsburg newspapers. It is my firm conviction that in no city of the United States are the newspapers so completely and abjectly under the domination of the great corporations. Reporters complain that they are not allowed to tell the truth on matters that are in the least unfavorable to the Interests. They are taught that corporations are sacred and must not be criticized adversely, lest "business" be disturbed. And unrelenting are these corporations in their punishment of a local newspaper that gives the least indication of insurgency. For example, only a few months ago the newspapers began to complain bitterly about the street car service. The Street Car Company gave their "orders" and every paper hushed up at once, except one. That newspaper, however, discovered in a few days that the Street Car Company would not carry its papers. The case was carried into court where it was decided that the Street Car Company was not a "common carrier," and therefore could not be compelled to carry the papers in question. The newspaper then bought automobiles and delivered its own papers, but after several months trial this proved too expensive, so it decided to cease its attacks on the Street Car Company, and as a result their papers are again hauled on street cars. It might also be interesting to know that since then not a word of complaint has appeared in any of our newspapers about our intolerable street car service.

Of course this same condition exists to a certain degree in every city, but the point I wish to make is that in no other city are the columns of the newspapers so thoroughly antagonistic to fundamental economic

ideas as they are in Pittsburgh. They do, to be sure, deal with economic subjects morning and evening, but in the most superficial kind of way, always very careful never to go to the meat. This kind of news poured into the readers' minds daily could have but one effect, and that is to produce a crop of superficial economic thinkers.

In such a community with the columns of the newspapers closed to Single Tax ideas, missionary work does not offer a rosy path. But, in spite of all such obstacles Single Tax has, and is, making progress in the "Smoky City." It is now my purpose to tell how this is being done. On account of the press being antagonistic, it was necessary to reach the people through other channels. The Boards of Trade, Chamber of Commerce, and other civic organizations seemed to offer the best alternative avenue. The few original Single Taxers, ever filled with enthusiasm in their cause, set out to induce every such club and organization in the city to listen to Single Tax orators of national reputation. After no little effort they persuaded a few of these organizations to engage such men as John Z. White, Henry George Jr., Chas. Frederick Adams, Herbert S. Bigelow, and Peter Witt, of the Henry George Lecture Association. Some of these men were secured for a week at a time and thereby reached several hundred of the most representative citizens on each visit. At first these speakers were admitted to the civic organizations not because the members had any faith in what the lecturers advocated, but simply because they preached something new, and for this reason would entertain and relieve the monotony of the regular programmes. But when these men address an audience of fairly rational beings they rarely leave without compelling them to think. They do more than amuse; they instruct and somehow leave a desire with their audiences to be heard again. This of course renders the next engagement easier to arrange. Nearly every civic organization has heard several of these men and the results have been effective in placing the entering wedge for a more general education on the subject of taxation.

But it requires more than a week of

campaigning now and then to further a great cause. It is necessary that the battle be continuous, without the slightest disposition to recede. Just this very thing is being done by a local band of young workers and orators who never fail to expound the Single Tax theory on the slightest provocation. Sometimes it is in the men's clubs, in the Y. M. C. A. meetings, in the Bible classes; at other times on the street corner or the political platform. These young men believe in Single Tax as they do in a great religion. There are about 40 of them and their number is growing. Some day, not far off, if not already, they will exert a potent influence in the economic affairs of the city. Even now results of their incessant campaigning augmented by the help of men with national reputations, are being felt. They never fail to impress their ideas on the city officials and men of influence whenever the opportunity permits, and they even force the subject when perhaps the etiquette of the occasion does not require it. The constant hammering of their arguments has produced returns. It could first be discerned in the public reports of the city officials, although few if any of them realized that they were leaning toward the Single Tax. The mayor, who has all along been regarded as a reactionary, succeeded, because of his political influence in the State, in getting a most salutary law on taxation through the last legislature. Previous to that time Real Estate in Pittsburgh and all second class cities in the State, was classed for the purpose of local taxes as "Built up," on which a full assessment was levied: "Rural," on which an assessment of $\frac{3}{4}$ its value was made, and "Agricultural," which was assessed at $\frac{1}{2}$ its value. Because of the Single Tax ideas which had been so persistently urged upon the mayor, he saw the injustice of such an iniquitous system of taxation and how serious a block it was to the progress of Pittsburgh. The new law abolishes this classification and provides that all real estate in cities of the second class be assessed at its full value. This has caused a howl from the vacant land holders, but it can be observed already that they are more desirous to dispose of

Some of their vacant lots. The Mayor also succeeded in having the last Legislature enact a law exempting machinery from local taxation in cities of the second class. These two laws increasing the taxes on vacant land and exempting machinery, is a promising step toward the Single Tax plan, and is convincing proof that the campaign in Pittsburgh is bearing fruit. In addition to this the Keystone party, the most dangerous rival of the great Republican machine in the State, had a plank in its platform last fall providing that assessments on all improvements in cities of the second class for local purposes be reduced 10% annually for five years, and that a corresponding increase be made on land value assessments. This afforded the Single Tax spellbinder a splendid opportunity to explain the advantages of his reform at every political gathering, whether it was on the street corner, in the school house, or the public hall. The Pittsburgh Civic Commission, a non-partisan organization, has since approved a plan for a gradual decrease of assessments on improvements and a corresponding increase on land values, until the assessment on land equals twice that on improvements.

All this campaign of education is being done by members of the Single Tax Association. This organization is growing gradually and systematically. Each ward has a Chairman, whose principal duty is to locate an active Single Taxer in every voting precinct of his ward. If no such man can be found the Chairman sets about to explain the Single Tax to some open minded voter in such precinct. When he is "converted" he is assigned to propagate the doctrine in his precinct. The ward chairmen meet weekly and report new converts or any Single Taxers "discovered" in their wards. These names with addresses are recorded on a large sheet showing every ward and voting precinct in the city. This force, distributed so systematically through the city, produces a powerful working machine; a force that is active continually and easily mobilized whenever needed for any concentrated effort. It will therefore be seen that the doctrine can be spread in a great city, even when

the press refuses its aid. All that is needed are a few young men who are imbued with the great truth revealed by this system of taxation. I say young men, because I believe they preach more earnestly and with greater vigor and convictions than older men. I heard a great political leader say not long ago, "Give me 40 young men of the right kind of stuff and I can sweep the Political Boss out of any city in the United States." We have that many young men in Pittsburgh who are Single Taxers, and what is more they are made of the right stuff. They are fighting with all the intensity of soldiers in a just cause and they will never halt until Pittsburgh has been converted to Single Tax, for they are imbued with the spirit revealed by Henry George in these words:

"The truth that I have tried to make clear will not find easy acceptance. If that could be, it would never have been obscured. But it will find friends—those who will toil for it; suffer for it: if need be, die for it. This is the power of Truth."

—BERNARD B. MCGUINNIS.

HIGH PRAISE OF HERBERT BIGELOW FROM W. J. BRYAN.

President Bigelow is not under any misapprehension as to the responsibilities of leadership. When in recognition of his long fight for the initiative and referendum, he was made President of the Ohio constitutional convention, he did not deem it his duty to quit fighting.

On the contrary, he fights the harder. He takes the floor whenever necessary to carry out the policies which gave him the Presidency. He leads, and this leadership will be a tower of strength to the progressive cause.

If Ohio were urging him for the presidential nomination, the Democratic Party might think it wise to turn to that State for leadership. Bigelow would make not only a strong candidate, but an admirable executive.—The *Commoner*.

THE more charity the longer deferred is justice.