

which is close to the Rocky Mountains. Newspaper extras were screamed on the streets that morning and men gathered in little groups all over the city to discuss the momentous announcement that the Canadian Pacific railroad would establish its repair shops not in Medicine Hat, but in the much larger and still more ambitious Calgary. Next morning I read in one of the Calgary daily newspapers which had five whole-page real estate advertisements, besides three other pages of assorted real estate advertising, that the southeastern part of the city where said car shops were expected to be erected had suddenly shot up in price, and that within a few hours following the announcement of the advent of the shops a number of Calgary citizens of theretofore modest purses had become rich owing to the rise in the price of their land.

The telegraphic news from Medicine Hat which appeared in another column of the same Calgary newspaper was pathetic in the extreme; and the two cities from that one incident revealed something of the enormity of land speculation.

I was able to point my lectures with this story as I traveled west to Vancouver. There I found Mayor Taylor figuratively speaking with arms open to receive me. He paid me the great honor of a public luncheon, at which were present a large representation of the professional and active business men of the city. The Mayor also presided at my lecture in the evening. On both occasions he announced that Vancouver had only begun its Singletax policy. Lest anybody be in doubt as to precisely how much of a Singletax man Mayor Taylor is it will be sufficient to say that he has commenced the serial publication of "Progress and Poverty" in the Vancouver World, of which he is owner and editor.

I found Mayor Morely of Victoria, the capital city of British Columbia, in a like welcoming mood. He presided at my lecture and assured his audience that while Victoria now had entirely exempted houses and other improvements from taxation, it had still some taxes embarrassing industry; and that besides getting rid of them, it should increase taxation on land values. He publicly announced that Victoria had no thought of receding but would advance.

At Seattle, on our own side of the northern boundary line, I found a very lively appreciation of the strides forward already made by Vancouver and Victoria and the keenest of interest in the "Vancouver plan" for building up and not hampering a city's growth. Alderman Griffith had just got through the city council an ordinance making installment exemptions of improvements from taxation. This ordinance had gone to the Mayor. President Oliver T. Erickson of the Council, opposed to waiting five years for the full exemption, had begun the circulation of a petition under the Initiative clause of the Constitution for a change in the charter. This change will allow an immediate repeal of all taxes for local revenues save the tax on ground values, and the increase of that one tax.

At Portland I found those sleepless workers, U'ren, Eggleston and their associates, confident that the legal questions now being tried out will be satisfactorily met, and that the way will be clear for a victorious test of the Singletax issue at the polls next year.

At the Oregon State University in Eugene I found,

as I had shortly before found in the North Dakota University and as I later found in the California University, a very marked interest among the students in the question of the Singletax.

In and around San Francisco I had the honor of addressing a succession of splendid meetings fully alive to the meaning and consequences of the Singletax; and on my rush back to Washington to participate in the hearings of the committee investigating the Alaska scandal I was met at El Paso, carried, between trains, up to the chief hotel to take breakfast with the Mayor and all the members of the City Council, and later to the Chamber of Commerce to make a public address where President Taft and the then President Diaz so shortly ago met to publicly attest the concord between the two republics.

I was introduced by the Mayor at my Houston lecture and I made a mid-day speech before a crowded business men's luncheon at St. Louis and was assured that the Singletax was greeted with more demonstration than was the President of the United States when he addressed the same gathering in the same place not many days before.

I made on this tour close to a hundred addressees, and found everywhere audiences anxious to know the meaning and to hear of the progress of the Singletax.

HENRY GEORGE, JR.



POLITICS IN LOS ANGELES.*

Los Angeles, Nov. 10.

Three times judge of my election precinct, with a coming fourth, I have had an excellent opportunity to study the practical as well as the theoretical workings of the best bit of election machinery ever devised. Out of 90 names on the primary lists, all but two sets of candidates were eliminated—Mayor, City Attorney, City Assessor, City Auditor, seven members of the School Board and nine members of the City Council. This leaves us only 36 to choose 18 from on election day—December 5. Harriman got 19,816, Alexander, 16,712; Mushet about 8,000, Gregory, 381, and Becker (Socialist Labor), 51. There was about 60 per cent of the total vote at this primary, as compared with 20 per cent under the old plan.

Behind Harriman are all the Socialists—rationalist, impossibilist and Syndicalist—with the rationalists in the saddle. Also the most solid front of organized labor ever seen on the Pacific coast. Every element of discord has been subordinated. A deep seated, and apparently just belief that an unfair attack is being made on organized labor through the McNamara trial, is responsible for this solidarity, and nothing seems likely to break it. It has been strengthened by the hostility of the present administration as manifested in a drastic "anti-picketing" ordinance that sent 300 or 400 workmen to jail on charges that were never sustained.

Behind Socialists and Labor is a powerful contingent of well-to-do citizens who are not "belongers." They range from millionaires to the plain and simple disgusted fellow, thoroughly tired of the "unco guid" whose only cures for the ills of society

*See current volume pages 1163, 1172.

are anti-expectoration laws and "scatteration" of the social evil.

Every labor-baiting paper and other employer, every standpatter, every Big Business land-gambling interest, and all the political crooks and flunkies of the Plunderbund are gathering around Alexander and the "Good Government" people since Harriman "threw the scare into them." They gather around the "good government" forces like an anaconda around a fat pig—with the "goodness" inside. The "goodness" is now hobnobbing, hugging and conferring with all the crooked elements that they have been denouncing, fighting and reviling these many years. It is a remarkable sight, verifying what Francis J. Heney said a few weeks ago in his famous speech—not printed in full in any of the city papers, but delivered to the Los Angeles City Club to resounding applause—in effect: "All the Big Business goodness and churchly virtue join hands immediately with all the low down badness and virulent vice in a mutual fight against attack on their special privileges." And so it is in this case. The sight of Hearst, Otis and Earl of the "Examiner," "Times" and "Tribune," hugging one another for mutual protection would make Olympian laughter were it not for the tragedy and sorrow of it.

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For more than 10 years there has been developing here one of the most magnificent schemes of "civic engineering" for economic plunder on the face of the earth. Competent authority estimates that there is in sight from \$500,000,000 to \$2,000,000,000 of "unearned increment"—some \$50,000,000 of which is now being "creamed off" from the sheep pastures of the San Fernando valley—all due to the aqueduct, the municipal railroad and the harbor improvements.

For the aqueduct there has already been voted and partly expended \$23,000,000, and \$3,500,000, with \$5,500,000 more of bonds called for right away. Most of this is expended for improvements outside the city, which is bonded to pay for them.

To put it briefly: \$23,000,000 bonded debt was placed on the City, with more to follow, to go 240 miles from the City to bring a river down into the San Fernando Valley some 22 miles from the City. Up to the present time nothing has been decided on as to the manner of bringing the water any further. "The Narrows" of this valley, like a nick in a saucer rim, is about 9 miles from the City. The valley has an almost level floor, of some 180 square miles, with a water shed of 502 square miles within its rim. This great basin is chiefly composed of big estates—one of 50,000 acres and others scaling down. The "sheep ranch" of 30,000 acres, which runs across the valley from Santa Monica mountains to the San Fernando mountains in three squares of 10,000 acres each, and on which were three ranch houses and not more than 100 men employed the year round, is the center of attraction, next to the "San Fernando Land and Water Co." These lands, assessed at \$20 per acre, are now selling at from \$350 to \$1,000 per acre on the strength of the incoming water. Of course, there is no legal guarantee that they will have the water, but the buyers are not so informed unless they push the question to the limit. It is these valley lands that are estimated to have acquired an "unearned

increment" of \$50,000,000 to \$150,000,000. As they are beyond the taxing power of the city, they pay not one mill in taxes toward the cost of the aqueduct. Under the circumstances they present one of the most remarkable economic object lessons in the world today.

Similar increments are rising in the city itself; but as they are covered by buildings and other improvements and pay some tax they are invisible. The sheep pasture pays no tax. It is literally as bare as nature built it; yet scores of millions of unearned increment is attaching to the spot.

Even the Impossibleist is compelled to note this huge fact, and the Socialists have consequently passed the classic Singletax resolutions of their biggest leader, J. Stitt Wilson, which The Public reproduced some time ago. The "Citizen" (Labor) and the "Social Democrat" both published those resolutions, after which somebody got "cold feet" and left them out of the 150,000 platform circular which the party issued. Many of the ablest Socialist leaders resent this mistake, lightened only by a three-line plank favoring taxation of the "unearned increment;" for do what they will, like the heaving ocean beneath the foam-crests, the "unearned increment" of the San Fernando sheep pastures is ever coming uppermost.

Next in order come the harbor increments with \$3,000,000 bond appropriation made for its improvement twenty-two miles away. Again come the increments of the proposed municipal railway scattered over these twenty-two miles. Still more is the \$3,500,000 bonds for good roads (county) that is partly expended. Actual and prospective bond and other expenditures show a probable \$50,000,000, which, added to the normal growth of the city with the impetus of the coming Panama Canal, makes calculations vary from \$500,000,000 to \$2,000,000,000 as the economic loot in sight. Among the richest pickings of the world today.

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The spirit of Henry George and the Singletax broods over Southern California,—in fact, over the entire State. The Socialists have declared for it from Berkeley to Los Angeles. Their audiences rise to the greatest enthusiasm when their speakers expose the enormous fortunes thereby taken from the people. The State League of Municipalities (Santa Barbara, Oct. 25, 1911), after listening to J. Stitt Wilson's masterful address, voted unanimously for home rule in taxation as speedily as possible. There is already a League organized at Berkeley for its propagation and here is a report from the "Social-Democrat," (Socialist), Oct. 21, 1911 of action by the State Federation of Labor:

While Socialists and trade unionists in general throughout the State are celebrating the victory of direct legislation and equal suffrage, it may be interesting to observe that a Socialist attack upon the land monopolists of California has been launched through the Bakersfield convention of the State Federation of Labor and that this attack may be carried through by means of the new government machinery in our hands. Here is the resolution written by a member of Local San Francisco, presented by Andrew J. Gallagher, and adopted by the central labor body of the State:

"Whereas, The power of taxation is the fundamental power in organized government; and

"Whereas, The manipulation of this power by a privileged few for their own benefit has in all ages been a reason for their ability to keep the workers in poverty; and

"Whereas, California has particularly suffered by reason of the fact that the burden of taxation has fallen heavily upon the rank and file of the producers of wealth, while owners of enormous land holdings went almost free; therefore be it

"Resolved, by the California State Federation of Labor in convention assembled, that we urge upon the Assembly and Senate of this State, and upon Gov. Johnson, that they give their approval at the forthcoming special session of the State legislature to a proposed amendment to the State Constitution which shall provide a local 'home rule in taxation,' to the end that a majority of the people in each city and county of California may determine for themselves the methods by which they shall be taxed."

The report continues:

If the legislature fails to heed the demand of the State Federation of Labor for the submission of this measure, the Socialist organization can put it through by initiative petition. We will then have forced the issue on our first big constructive measure. To put into the hands of town and county that are coming into Socialist control the power to tax the "unearned increment" and thus legally confiscate the spoils of industrial robbery by getting hold of the land, will be revolutionary enough to call out our best fighting force. This tax amendment is just a starter. It will educate quite as much as it will assist the public treasury and strip the land baron. It is so simple and self-evident as a sensible thing that we shall have no trouble in adopting it at the polls. But it is important as a Socialist measure for undermining capitalism. And in getting it we are going shoulder to shoulder along with all organized labor.

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But I would not have you think that all the Single-tax work is being done by the Socialists. Far from it. The Good Government organization is full of Georgean philosophy and principle. Among the Good Government people it is principally intellectual; among the Socialists it is chiefly spiritual and emotional. These two forces are near fusion, and the tremendous meaning will not long remain covered.

The moral and religious enthusiasm of the Socialist movement is the most remarkable phenomenon here. "Not in thirty years," said a prominent District Attorney from an adjoining city, "have I witnessed such truly religious fervor in a political campaign as is here." I can repeat his statement for myself. At the Fiesta Park mass meeting, Sunday before the primary election, there were massed around the square platform in the center of the field some 6,000 to 10,000 people. On this platform came nine ex-ministers of the Gospel. "Down from God, through the Church, out to the people—as Jesus of Nazareth from the synagogues of the Jews to the multitudes on the shores of the Sea of Galilee," said my companion. Then we listened to an outpouring of Christian ethics, moral and social philosophy, such as I had not heard on the Pacific Coast in thirty years. It was a great religious revival, comparable to nothing that I can think of but the early meetings of the Anti-poverty Society when Henry George and Doctor McGlynn electrified New York. There was Duncan, Mayor of Butte; and Wilson, Mayor of Berkeley; and Harriman, hoping to be Mayor of Los Angeles; and Cantrell, Irvine, Williams and others.

On the evening before the primary a monster parade, reported to number 21,000, passed through the principal streets of the city. Men, women and children—some of the children trundled in go-carts by their mothers—marched to the music of bands. No disorder, no intemperance. In fact there is a large contingent of Prohibitionists here who have learned that poverty causes more drunkenness than drunkenness makes poverty.

It is impossible to tell it all.

We are here in the throes of a new French Revolution. It is modernized and Americanized for the Twentieth century, with its Girondins and Jacobins in their various clubs; with its new "Insurrection of Women," and snowing the city under with the products of the "pamphleteer." It may yet have its Mirabeau, Danton and Robespierre, while Marat may be somewhere in cellar or garret marking down the names; but up to the present time none of these are clearly seen. The Physiocrats are everywhere; and over the State, instead of the weak and pitiable Louis XVII, we have a strong man who is not afraid of the people.

Greater than all—the underlying land question is heaving heavily to the surface, while "the spirit of Henry George is riding the storm" as in England during the "Budget fight." The velocity is not as yet great, but momentum is gathering fast. The Singletaxers of the world should rejoice that, no matter which way our local fight goes, the greatest humanitarian revolution of modern times is nucleating in California, and with but one ultimate outcome—the Singletax.

EDMUND NORTON.

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THE HENRY GEORGE MOVEMENT IN DENMARK.

Copenhagen. The annual meeting of the Henry George Society held here September 10 was attended by 120 representatives from the whole country. In the past year the society has grown from 2,000 to 3,000 members. This growth is due partly to distribution of pamphlets, partly to lecture work, partly to the monthly journal "Ret" and to the society's own paper, "Den lige Vej." Business of the society took most of the afternoon and in the evening there was a reception at the Copenhagen headquarters, where the representatives were the guests of the local League.

The chairmen of the conference, which met in the High School in Fredericksborg on the 11th and lasted two days, were Dr. Villads Christensen and Mr. Carl Mortensen. The first day was occupied with speeches from Mr. S. Berthelsen, Mr. Johan Pedersen and Mr. Waage, on different problems of the Henry George movement. On the second day Mr. Folke-Rasmussen gave a speech on "Taxes and Earnings" which he was requested to have published. Mr. Lange then spoke on our relations to the laboring people and to High School pupils. Dr. Starcke lectured on "Morals and Economics," showing the demoralizing effect upon the people of a system from which the principle of social service is excluded by the sentiments approving of charity and aims. The conference closed on the evening of the 12th. Mr.

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