

ing with anyone who presented himself, and now and then becoming obviously absorbed in the conversation.

At the Standard office there was a constant come and go of visitors. The late William Lloyd Garrison occasionally dropped in, and Tom L. Johnson was a frequent visitor. Associated in the editorship of the paper was Louis F. Post, now editor and proprietor of the Chicago Public. Post and Croasdale became the warmest of friends. They had in common much humor and great seriousness of thought and purpose. Mr. George himself enjoyed the humor of both Post and Croasdale. Another active man in the office was William McCabe, half Maori by blood, with the characteristically huge chest of that race, and a marked simplicity of character. Herbert Ward, who had seen much of Australia before he became a companion of Stanley in Africa, came to the Standard office once, and saw McCabe for only an instant, but immediately recognized him as a man of Maori blood. Still another of the Standard staff, connected with the business office, was George St. John Leavens, now dead to the incurable regret of his friends, a man of singular personal charm, with a deliciously sly humor expressed sometimes in audacious exaggeration, a voice that charmed all who heard it, and an infectious laugh. There were few dull days in that office.

Almost my last work for the Standard was to write an obituary sketch of Croasdale, after his sudden death at Merriewold, the Singletax summer park in Sullivan county, had left his friends dazed, and the cause for which he stood the poorer even to this day.

* * *

FIRST AMERICAN SINGLETAX CONFERENCE.*

Personal Reminiscences of the Chairman, Together With His Explanation Regarding the Second Conference and the Amended Platform.

On that table across the room is a jet black gavel—a parliamentary gavel which has just come of age. How old it is as a gavel, I don't know; much less do I know how far back its birth might be traced as wood, mere wood. But as the first national Singletax gavel, it is twenty-one years old precisely, on the day of the date of this issue of *The Public*—September 1, 1911. Around the center of its head there is wrapped a silver band, now as black almost as the gavel itself, and cherished so; and on that band there is this inscription: "First National Conference, Single Tax League

*The proceedings of the Conference are reported in full in Henry George's "The Standard" (September 10, 1890), which was published at New York from 1887 to 1892 inclusive, and is on file at the Crerar Library, Chicago, the University Library at Madison (Wis.), the Reform Club library at New York, and probably in some other collections.

of the United States, Cooper Union, New York City, September 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1890." The remainder of the inscription explains that the gavel was presented to the chairman by unanimous vote of the Conference; and this accounts for its spending its twenty-first birthday on the table yonder.

Conference Preliminaries.

The first intimation I had of the possibility of my being chairman of that Conference, of the origin of which I intend here to tell as I remember the circumstances, and also of its proceedings as they appeared from the acerie of the chair, was near midnight of the day before.

A preliminary meeting, very much of the nature of a caucus I suppose, had been held at the Reform Club that night, August 31st, upon the call of William T. Croasdale, the official organizer of the Conference. I had not been invited, and knew nothing whatever of the meeting until it was over; but Mr. Croasdale told me then that every other well known Singletaxer he had been able to find was notified, and that the attendance, although some important delegates from out of town had not been found, was thoroughly representative.

It seems that reports of my service as temporary chairman of the United Labor Party's convention for New York at Syracuse in 1887, had favorably impressed this meeting, and the meeting un-animously agreed upon me for chairman of the Conference. A list of other officers was also agreed upon, consisting of Henry F. Ring of Texas (author of the most popular Singletax tract, "The Case Plainly Stated"), William Lloyd Garrison of Massachusetts (son of the great Abolitionist), and Arthur H. Stephenson of Pennsylvania (a Philadelphia business man), for vice-chairmen; of Warren Edwin Brokaw, of South Dakota, for recording secretary; and of B. Gratz Brown of Tennessee and John Z. White of Illinois for assistant and reading secretaries.

Although this caucusing was severely rebuked by the Conference, Mr. Croasdale, who believed that those who go to deliberative meetings with a plan are likely to be more successful and certainly more useful than those who go aimlessly, got great enjoyment out of the result. But of that in its order.

Opening Session of the Conference.

The Conference organized in the middle of the afternoon, September 1st, 1890, having been delayed by the late arrival of the Servia, on which Mr. and Mrs. George were returning from their trip around the world.

The delegates had assembled informally at the Servia's dock to meet them; and one of the jokes of that occasion was the detention by customs officers of Warren Worth Bailey, now editor of the Johnstown Daily Democrat, but then a Chicago newspaper man and president of the Chicago

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First National Single Tax Conference.

The photograph of which this is the middle section was taken at New York, September 3, 1890, at the north side of Cooper Union. Henry George will be recognized as sitting at the table. To the left of Mr. George from the point of view of the reader is William T. Croasdale (organizer of the Conference); and opposite Mr. George at the table is Louis F. Post (chairman of the Conference). Sitting between Mr. George and the Chairman, from left to right, are Warren E. Brokaw (secretary of the Conference), Judge James G. Magulre, Henry F. Ring and H. Martin Williams. Continuing from left to right are L. A. Russell, B. Gratz Brown and John Z. White. Immediately behind Mr. White is Tom L. Johnson, and to the right of Mr. White is Richard F. George, with Robert Baker next him and then William McCabe. The second person directly above Richard F. George is Thomas J. Hastings. The two faces immediately below Mr. McCabe are, from right to left, E. Quincy Norton and Henry George, Jr. Next to the latter comes E. J. Shriver, with James Malcolm immediately in front of him, and E. J. Foord farther front and slightly to the left. Continuing to the left consecutively from Mr. Foord, are H. L. Pleace, the Rev. W. P. George, George White, J. J. Mahoney, Richard Passmore, the Rev. Dr. S. W. Thackeray, and George St. John Leavens (knees crossed). The child at the left is Bertie Huelst (the first financial contributor to the League organized at the Conference); and the man on whose arm he leans is Dr. John W. Dick. In succession from Dr. Dick to the right are Edward Osgood Brown, James Beggs, an unidentified man, Read Gordon, C. J. Buell, Charles Brinton, Fred Deverall, and Dan Cavanagh, the last sitting immediately behind the Rev. Mr. George and in front and slightly to the right of the Chairman. W. J. Gorsuch stands behind Tom L. Johnson slightly to the right; and in succession from Mr. Gorsuch, right to left, are George W. Kerr, George E. Bedell, James Semple, Cliff S. Walker, Billy Radcliffe, A. R. Wynn, Thomas Hunt, and C. B. Hemingway. In front of Mr. Hemingway and to left of Mr. Croasdale, continuing from right to left, are R. L. Atkinson, Willard D. Warren, W. J. Atkinson, George Adams, Dr. Henry S. Chase, James Hill and Mrs. James Hill. Above Mrs. Hill is George Dellsie Zimmerman. Charles Frederick Adams stands between but back of Mr. and Mrs. Hill, with W. A. Douglass, Charles S. Hopkins and Dr. J. J. Smythe next successively toward the right. Beginning above and slightly to right of Mr. Adams, from left to right are Adolph Pettinkofer, J. J. Faulkner, Charles H. Govan, Morris Van Veen and James R. Carret. Highest above Mr. Carret, to the right, is William Brittligan. Dr. W. N. Hill stands back of and between Mr. Faulkner and Mr. Govan, and W. J. Ogden back of and between Mr. Govan and Mr. Van Veen. Martin Battle, Charles S. Prizer, A. H. Stephenson, J. H. Scully and S. C. Rogers are in the middle doorway—Mr. Battle (full beard, without hat and between two ladies) at the left, Mr. Stephenson (mustache) third to the right, Mr. Prizer (full beard) slightly to the right of but above Mr. Stephenson, Mr. Scully (mustache) at the right of the doorway, and Mr. Rogers (mustache) just below and looking left. In the middle and deepest shadow of the doorway is James W. Bucklin. Second to right of Mr. Scully is S. H. Howes. High in left doorway, full-bearded and wearing hat, is Mr. Parrish, the reporter of the New York Times. The bearded man at extreme right, third in line below the left jamb of right doorway, is David Harrower. The complete group includes portraits also of W. E. Hicks, W. I. Boreman, Lee Meriwether, J. T. Altemus, A. M. Molina, Rev. J. B. Parmelee, E. F. Fellows, J. T. Ripley, W. O. Eastlake, E. L. Ryder, John M. Campbell, G. W. Everett, Joseph Dana Miller, O. T. Erickson, José Gros, Whidden Graham, S. H. Howes, Benjamin Dublin, W. L. Crosman, T. B. Preston, Dr. H. J. Woodhouse, L. E. Wilmarth, and several whom we are unable to identify. In regard to copies of the complete picture see advertisement in this Public.

Second National Single Tax Conference.

This Conference was held in the Art Institute, Chicago, August 29 to 31, 1893. The photograph of which the above is the middle section was taken in front of the Institute. Some of the persons may be distinguished with the aid of the following description: Henry George, right of table; the Rev. Edward McGlynn, left of table; Richard Spencer, Louis F. Post (chairman), Edward J. Shriver (secretary), and Leonora Beck, seated at side of table in the order named from Mr. George to Father McGlynn. Warren E. Brokaw stands between the chairman and Mr. Shriver, and Estella Bachman stands between Mr. Shriver and Miss Beck. The Rev. S. W. Sample stands between Miss Beck and Father McGlynn. At left of Father McGlynn, from right to left, in front row, are Robert Baker and Mrs. John Z. White; and diagonally to the left from Mrs. White are Silas M. Burroughs and Edward Osgood Brown. George R. Macey stands above Judge Brown but slightly to the right. At right of Henry George is John Z. White, and just above Mr. White is Simon Mendelson (profile). Diagonally upward to the left of Mr. Mendelson is Theodore J. Amberg. Dr. Walter Mendelson is to the left of Mr. Amberg. L. E. Wilmarth (full beard) is in the next row but one above Simon Mendelson (profile) and slightly to the right. Between the Chairman and Mr. Brokaw in the middle foreground is Herman V. Hetzel. Katharine Musson is above Mr. Brokaw, slightly to the left; to the left of her is Mrs. Florence A. Burleigh, and to the left of Mrs. Burleigh but above her is Dr. Edward D. Burleigh (full long beard). The man of full broad beard to the right of Dr. Burleigh is H. C. Lippincott. In the center of the upper row of the uppermost group directly above the table stands John Filmer (hands crossed); at the extreme left of the lower row of the same group is L. P. Custer, with L. S. Dickey at the extreme right of the same row. Standing in the extreme left of the right window is Arthur H. Stephenson; the next person but one farther right is Frank Stephens; and at the extreme right of the window is S. L. Moser. The smooth shaven man below the center of the window and above and slightly to the left of Mr. Spencer is Dr. B. F. Longstreet. In the complete photograph, outside of this section are H. W. Macfarlane, Chas. Edward Moore, Bolton Hall, Percy Pepon, George P. Hampton, J. B. Carroll, and several whom we are unable to identify. In regard to copies of the complete picture see advertisement in this Public.

Singletax Club. Having gone upon the pier with a small satchel packed with imports from Chicago, Mr. Bailey wasn't allowed to leave it until the customs officers had searched his "baggage" in turn, and its turn didn't come for more than two hours after everybody but the Servia's passengers had gone. To this incident there was an appropriate satirical flavor, since the Conference met in the midst of a Singletax campaign for free trade.

Late though the Conference was in assembling, it rushed its business through promptly enough when it got together. Mr. Croasdale brought it to order, with that same ebony gavel. He acted as chairman of "the enrollment committee," the origin and functions of which I will explain farther on. George St. John Leavens, secretary of that committee, read the formal call, and then Mr. Croasdale delivered his address of welcome. Three informal speeches in response were made

while the Conference awaited the report of the committee on credentials. One was by H. F. Ring of Texas, another by "Pa" Chase as he was affectionately called by his friends in St. Louis, and the other by H. Martin Williams of Missouri, now a reading clerk of the House in Congress—and a good one he must be unless these twenty-one years have narrowed the compass of his voice.

The committee on credentials having reported the names of delegates present from 26 States, Mr. Williams closed his speech with a motion for the appointment of committees on organization, rules, and order of business. His motion was delayed by objections necessitating a formal temporary organization, but this was speedily disposed of by electing the officers of "the enrollment committee," Croasdale and Leavens, as temporary chairman and secretary respectively of the Conference. Mr. Williams then renewed his motion.

So favorable of caucus custom was this motion that instantly there were vociferous democratic objections from all over that old cellar-hall of Cooper Union (the same wherein Abraham Lincoln had made his maiden Eastern speech thirty years before), and among the objectors was Carl J. Buell, of St. Paul, who was recognized by the temporary chairman. Mr. Buell had arrived in New York too late for the caucus, and might have gone to it only to move its dissolution had he arrived in time. His objection, like the others, was to the un-democracy of caucus rule, and he spoke so as to be distinctly heard and unmistakably understood.

In the midst of his vigorous speech Mr. Buell was interrupted by Edward Osgood Brown (now and for several years past a judge of the Circuit Court of Illinois, and, through assignment by the Supreme Court, one of the Appellate Court judges at Chicago), who had participated in the caucus of the night before and was now sitting close behind the earnest objector from St. Paul. Pulling Buell's coat sleeve and speaking in a confidential whisper that carried easily a distance of twenty-five or thirty feet in all directions, and therefore caught my own ear, Mr. Brown said: "I don't care what is done with this motion if you'll only elect Post chairman!"

"Oh! is that it?" Buell exclaimed. Turning then again toward the temporary chairman he resumed his oratory as vigorously as before; but it was along a new line now, and ended with his nominating me for chairman. There was no opposition. Neither was there any to Ring, Garrison, Brokaw, R. Gratz Brown, nor John Z. White. Each was nominated and unanimously elected from the floor. And this was what amused Croasdale. Although the caucus slate was broken to flinders, the caucus candidates were all unanimously elected by the Conference to the very places the caucus had chosen them for.

Origin of the Conference.

This conference, the first national Singletax conference of the United States, originated in efforts, managed by Mr. Croasdale, to organize Singletax sentiment for practical Singletax work. It sprang out of a situation of course, and also of course the situation had antecedents. In order therefore to understand the Conference, it is necessary that some account of earlier Singletax history be given. I shall attempt to do this briefly.

From the time of the publication of his "Progress and Poverty," which occurred in 1879, the agitation now best known as the Singletax movement revolved about the personal activities of Henry George. In New York it took on dramatic form in his first contest for Mayor. He was the candidate of trade unions which had collaterally and temporarily organized for political action as the United Labor party. This was in the fall of 1886. It immediately followed the outrageous sentence of imprisonment for three years at Sing-Sing for extortion (a high grade of robbery in New York), of several labor-strike committeemen. They were perfectly honest men, and their offense was not dishonest. Upon winning their strike they had exacted \$1,000 of the defeated employers, who had, as the result of open arbitration, agreed to pay it. It was to reimburse the unions in part for strike expenses, and was scrupulously so used. The conviction of the men on a trumped-up charge of robbery by extortion at a trial before Judge George C. Barrett, and the sentence he viciously imposed upon them—a species of class viciousness—solidified local labor sentiment for the time, and this caused the nomination of Henry George as Labor candidate for Mayor. George was defeated. His vote, however, was phenomenal—68,000.

His campaign having been frankly for "the land for the people" as the fundamental necessity for freeing labor, steps were taken by his supporters promptly after his defeat, to effect a national organization of the United Labor Party with "Land and Labor" clubs for units. Coincidentally, the Anti-Poverty Society was formed, representing the same economic doctrine as the party, but with a religious flavor. It was under the leadership of Father McGlynn, who had been expelled from the pastorate of the largest Roman Catholic parish in America and probably in the world, for disobeying Archbishop Corrigan by participating as a speaker in the Henry George campaign. At the first State convention of the United Labor Party, the Syracuse convention of 1887, where I was temporary chairman, George was nominated, against his will and his earnest protest, as the candidate for Secretary of State—the head of the ballot in that "off-year" of politics.

It was in this campaign that the Socialist Labor party, which had until then acted within the United Labor party, nominated candidates of its

own. It polled about 6,000 votes in New York City (now Manhattan borough). George polled about 37,000. George's vote was over 31,000 less in the city, and barely more in the whole State than in the city alone the year before. All who were at all weather-wise in politics knew that this was the virtual end of the party as a party, but others kept it faintly alive for nearly two years longer.

Within a month after this collapse of the United Labor party President Cleveland sent his famous tariff-reform message to Congress. George thereupon advised, in harmony with his book of two years before, "Protection or Free Trade," that Cleveland's timid free trade step be encouraged and strengthened by a rally of the "land and labor" people to his support. But just as differences between Socialism and what is now called the Singletax had separated Socialists from the United Labor party in 1887, so differences between Protectionists and Freetraders alienated these elements in it in 1888, each from the other, with Henry George at the head of the Freetrade element and Father McGlynn as nominal head of the Protectionists. The alienation took outward form and feeling was intensified, upon the discovery that Gaybert Barnes, who went with the Protection elements as their executive Secretary, and who was political manager in the United Labor party campaign of 1886 and 1887, had arranged with Thomas C. Platt, the Republican boss, to conduct United Labor party campaigns for the Presidency in the doubtful States of Indiana, Connecticut, New York and New Jersey, and only there. The meaning of this was obvious, and upon discovering it Mr. George and his Freetrade friends withdrew preemptorily from the United Labor party. The remnant of the party nominated Presidential candidates, however, and, supported with Republican money as was discovered long afterward, made an opera-bouffe campaign. If George's name had been drawn into it, as was the intention of Barnes and Platt, it would certainly have involved him in a humiliating political scandal.

Meanwhile, William T. Croasdale, with Henry George as leader and Thomas G. Shearman and Tom L. Johnson for financial supporters and principal advisers, organized the Freetrade elements of the United Labor party and their sympathizers for the support of Cleveland for re-election as President; but on the express ground that this was because they were opposed to all taxes except taxes on land values, and that Cleveland's tariff reform message faced in that direction. This action was decided upon by a conference of Singletaxers of New York and vicinity at Cooper Union, August 6, 1888.* The mixed sense of reluctance to sup-

port Grover Cleveland but of duty to give vitality and impulse to his timid Freetrade message, was illustrated in an extraordinary way. Perhaps I can tell it best by quoting from my acceptance speech as chairman of the Conference, as I find it in the report of Henry George's Standard of September 10, 1890. The part I quote followed a wave of spontaneous applause at my mention of Mr. Cleveland's name: "That spontaneous applause which we heard a little while ago for the name of Grover Cleveland reminds me of the very first meeting that was ever held in this particular Singletax movement, a meeting held upstairs in a little room that would not seat two hundred and fifty people. It must have been nearly half full on that occasion. It was a meeting called to endorse the plan of enrollment which has been carried on ever since, thanks very largely to Mr. Croasdale. It was called early in the campaign of 1888, and after we had performed the business that lay before us we were all of us somewhat doubtful as to the policy we were entering upon. It occurred to one of the men there, and he in a timid way moved, that we should give three cheers for Grover Cleveland. His motion was seconded in silence. I happened to be chairman of that meeting, and feeling as I always do that it is the business of the chairman to see to it that the sense of the meeting has expression, I put the motion; and by an almost unanimous vote, not quite—there were three or four votes in the negative—we decided to give three cheers for Grover Cleveland. And then someone relieved the Chair of his embarrassment by getting up and saying, 'Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!' and then somebody said, 'Tiger!' as they always do in New York. That was the first round of applause that Grover Cleveland ever got in a Singletax audience."

There came a time, however, when a motion would again have been necessary, and when the motion would probably have been defeated by as large a proportionate majority as that which carried it in 1888.

The plan of organization decided upon for supporting Mr. Cleveland's tariff reform message consisted merely in circularizing for signatures to a voting pledge.* About 11,000 were secured. As this was the first definite movement to adopt the name "Singletax," and the specific movement which developed the Conference of 1890, I shall take the space to quote that pledge:

I authorize the enrollment of my name on the list of voters who propose to support Cleveland and

elected secretary. Wm. T. Croasdale proposed the resolutions. The following enrollment committee was appointed: William T. Croasdale (chairman), Michael Murray, August Lewis, William H. Faulhaber, Jerome O'Neill, Edward J. Shriver, Charles O'Connor Hennessy, Benjamin Urner, and Thomas G. Shearman.

*The pledge appears on page 8 of The Standard of August 18, 1888, and regularly in subsequent issues until November 3.

*The meeting is reported in full in The Standard of August 11, 1888, at page 3. Henry George opened the meeting, Louis F. Post was elected chairman, and Henry George, Jr., now a Congressman from New York, was

Thurman in the coming election, on the ground that any step toward tariff reduction tends toward the abolition of all taxes on the products of labor, and the final transfer of such taxes to land values.

About a month after Cleveland's defeat in 1888, the Singletax "enrollment committee," of which Mr. Croasdale was chairman, met with sympathizers for consultation in a back-room of the same building on Union Square in which Henry George's "Standard" office was located. Their object was to consider work for the future. At this meeting* two plans were tentatively discussed, one proposed by Mr. Shearman and the other by Mr. Croasdale.

Mr. Shearman's plan related to work in New York State. Its main purpose was to secure local option in taxation, similar to that with which we are now familiar as the means whereby a measure of the Singletax has been secured in western Canada, and under which in Oregon (the only State in the Union that has it) county campaigns are now being made for local adoption of the Canadian land-value-tax policies. Out of Mr. Shearman's suggestion there came the New York Tax Reform Association, organized by Mr. Shearman, Bolton Hall, Robert Baker (afterwards Congressman) and others, and of which Lawson Purdy long was and A. C. Pleydell now is the managing secretary. Efforts to get the desired local option from the New York legislature were begun. They are as yet unsuccessful. But the separation of land values from other values in assessments for taxation was secured, as in use in Massachusetts and some other States previously, and this lays an excellent foundation for Singletax construction.

Mr. Croasdale's plan, not in opposition to Mr. Shearman's but correlative, was national in scope. It proposed a continuation of the simple method used in the Cleveland campaign, but with a different formula for signatures in place of the voting pledge. As it was Mr. Croasdale's plan that took the Singletax name and led on to the first Singletax conference in the United States, of which I am now recalling the circumstances, I shall confine myself to the fortunes of that plan. It developed in the course of 1889 into an agitation for signatures to the following petition† to Congress:

To the Honorable the House of Representatives of the United States: The undersigned respectfully prays for the appointment by your Honorable Body of a special committee for the purpose of making a full inquiry into and report upon the expediency of raising all public revenues by a single tax upon the value of land, irrespective of improvements, to the exclusion of all other taxes, whether in the form of

*One phase of it is reported in *The Standard* of December 8, 1888, at page 1.

†This petition first appears on page 2 of *The Standard* of December 15, 1888, in connection with a numerously signed address which begins on page 1 and explains the various objects hoped for from circulating the petition.

tariffs upon imports, taxes upon internal productions, or otherwise.

Favorable action by Congress was of course not expected. The object was Singletax organization and general propaganda. Soliciting signatures afforded many kinds of opportunity for propaganda—personal interviews, hall lectures, "soap-box" oratory, grocery store and railway discussion, distribution of literature, Singletax meetings, etc., etc. Singletax clubs grew also out of this agitation, and sympathetic clubs previously organized were changed to Singletax clubs. I am not sure whether the original Chicago Single Tax Club of which Warren Worth Bailey was long the president had already adopted this name, and I am in like doubt about the Manhattan Single Tax Club of New York and the Brooklyn Single Tax Club; but all three came heartily into the movement for that Singletax petition to Congress.

The propaganda incidental to the Congressional petition had more or less of an organizing tendency; but for this purpose "the enrollment committee," of which Mr. Croasdale was chairman, depended chiefly upon records of the petition work itself. A card index record of the sources of signatures was kept. Persons sending a certain number were indexed as "workers"; those who sent a larger number were "adjectived" as certain kinds of workers, according to the number of signatures they sent and the kind of letters they wrote; and through those who thus rose above the surface, information regarding the character, special abilities, local standing and influence, etc., etc., of other Singletaxers was obtained. Out of this work many men and women came to be noted for serviceableness, not a few of whom have since achieved distinction both as Singletaxers and in public life.

Mr. Croasdale did not live to see the petitions presented to Congress. He died August 9, 1891.* But they were sent to Congress by the Secretary, George St. John Leavens, in 1892,† and were presented by Congressman Tom L. Johnson. They were on cards indexed by States and placed in the drawers of a large cabinet especially constructed for the purpose. Unless some Congress has in the course of these 19 years made a burnt offering of that cabinet and those petition cards, they are there yet; but no investigating committee has up to this hour been appointed.

Though Mr. Croasdale did not live to see the petitions presented to Congress, he did live to see the realization of his prime purpose in collecting the petitions—the assembling in Cooper Union of the Singletax conference of 1890. And he left behind him a definition of a Singletaxer which long attached to his own name. "A Singletaxer," he said, "is a person who does something for the

*See *The Standard* of August 12, 19, 26, and September 2, 9, 16, 1891. Also this issue of *The Public* at page 942.
†See *The Standard* of March 20, 1892.

Singletax." Therefore a worker for the Singletax came to be known in those days as "a Croasdale."

Continuance of the Sessions of the Conference.

When I took that ebony gavel from William T. Croasdale and looked out from the chair upon the First National Singletax Conference, I recognized only four persons who had ever held an elective office of importance. One was James G. Maguire, ex-Judge of the Superior Court of San Francisco; another was Leonard W. Hoch, then the Mayor of Adrian, Michigan; the third was James W. Bucklin, an ex-member of the lower house in the Colorado legislature; the fourth was State Senator Hastings of Massachusetts. All the others save one were hardly known, so far as my memory serves me now, except to personal and business acquaintances and in Singletax or Labor circles. The exception was Henry George. Besides those already named there were Hamlin Garland, by no means so distinguished in literature then as now, though coming to distinction then; Alonzo J. Steers, who gave to Father McGlynn the copy of "Progress and Poverty" that converted him; Wm. McCabe, the foreman printer to whom I owe more directly than to anyone else my own conversion; Benjamin Urner, once Greenback candidate for Governor of New Jersey and the first treasurer of the Anti-Poverty Society; Read Gordon, an intimate friend of Croasdale's, who has but recently followed him; August Lewis, Tom L. Johnson's associate in making George's "Science of Political Economy" possible; Thomas Hunt, afterward a State Senator in Ohio; David Harrower, the veteran Singletaxer of Rhode Island; A. J. Moxham, who afterward helped lay the foundations for the work of Joseph Fels in western England; Richard F. George, whose sculptured bust of his father links their names by another than the ties of blood; Frank Stephens, H. D. Albright, Herman V. Hetzel and Arthur H. Stephenson, Philadelphia pioneers; Charles S. Prizer, already well to the front in business; W. I. Boreman, of West Virginia; John Z. White, who has since done continental service and achieved continental fame in the Singletax movement and its allied or supplementary causes; Louis Prang, the famous artist in chromo making; Lee Meriwether, who afterwards won the mayoralty of St. Louis at an election and lost it in the count; Joseph Dana Miller, poet then, editor of the Singletax Review now and poet still; John J. Hopper, the Independence League's candidate for Governor of New York a year ago; Robert Baker, who has since been in Congress, where he gave the railroad pass for Congressmen its death blow; Billy Radcliffe, s. t., whose fame was limited then to Youngstown and Singletaxers, but extends now over the State of Ohio; Dan Beard, the artist, naturalist and promoter of boy scouts for peace, and

Henry George, Jr., now a Congressman from New York.* Many well known Singletaxers of today were not in that conference because they were not yet Singletaxers; but few persons were absent who had "seen the cat" and were well known in the movement.

Work of the Conference.

After permanent organization, the Conference directed the appointment, on motion of Judge Maguire, of two committees, one on resolutions and one on platform, to consist respectively of seven and nine members. Upon the first I appointed Tom L. Johnson (chairman), and John Z. White, L. W. Hoch, W. J. Ogden, George White, Herbert Boggs and C. S. Walker; on the second, Henry George (chairman), James G. Maguire, L. A. Russell, Warren Worth Bailey, H. Martin Williams, Bolton Smith, C. J. Buell and Edward Osgood Brown. These appointments comprised a large proportion of the ablest and best known Singletaxers of that time in the United States. Thomas G. Shearman would have been upon the larger committee, but for his absence in Europe.

Another committee was ordered at the second day's session. Its function was to report upon proposals for a national league. This committee, consisting of Malcolm McDowell (chairman), Carl J. Buell, Wm. T. Croasdale, J. D. Ripley and William J. Atkinson, reported a plan which was adopted; but it called out one of the two most spirited debates of the Conference. The debate was over the question of organization on State lines or on club lines, and with particular reference to the religious element as a distinctive part of the movement.

More or less unconsciously, no doubt, the earlier McGlynn and the subsequent Pentecost defections gave color to the debate on both sides; but as a parliamentary incident it sprang out of a motion by the Rev. Dr. S. W. Thackeray (author of "The Land and the Community") to amend the committee's report by providing specifically for representation on the national committee of delegates from religious organizations of Singletaxers. Dr. Thackeray, who represented a delegation from the Singletax Brotherhood of Religious Teachers, was supported by all his clerical associates in attendance except the Rev. Dr. John Gregson of Massachusetts. Dr. Gregson spoke against the amendment.

Among those I recall as participants in that debate, besides Dr. Thackeray and Dr. Gregson, were the Rev. John Anketell, Carl J. Buell, the Rev. John W. Kramer, William J. Atkinson, John Filmer and William T. Croasdale. John Filmer, gentle of manner and speech, but rigid in purpose, stands out clearly in my memory as he rose to say for the New Churchmen's Singletax League, which had been expected to take opposite ground,

*The official roll of the Conference, arranged by States, will be found in this number of The Public at page 913.

that "no member of that League, be he man or woman, seeks recognition here on any other ground than manhood or womanhood." And Croasdale's speech in that debate, no one who heard it could ever forget. There was something in the manner, even more than in the matter perhaps, that made one of his points thrill the audience to applause and cheers till those historic cellar walls rang again. "We represent in this movement in America," he said, "what is understood by the word 'state'; they represent what is here understood by the word 'church.' The sound American doctrine and good common sense is to let the church stand on its own bottom and let the state stand on its own bottom, each doing the work for which it is appointed, without any danger of complication or other responsibility of one for the other."

The amendment being defeated, the national committee was ordered to consist of one member from each State and Territory and the District of Columbia, to be elected locally, and five members at large to be elected by the Conference. The name reported by the committee and adopted by the Conference was "The Singletax League of the United States."

When nominations were in progress for the five members at large,* Tom L. Johnson spoke. It was almost his only speech in the Conference, and one of the few he had at that time ever made in a public meeting. His subsequent career and recent death give it added interest. Noticing that the nominations were widely scattered geographically, he got the floor and said: "The object of having five men from the United States at large on this committee was that they act as an executive committee who could be got together quickly near its headquarters. New York is the only place for that headquarters. The men who have been doing the enrollment for the last two years are the best men we could possibly have. The five gentlemen who have steered us thus far, who brought this movement up to the point of calling this convention, these men can be trusted, and I say the wisest thing to do is to elect these five men as the members of the committee at large." H. Martin Williams seconded that motion and it was unanimously adopted.*

Of one especially spirited debate I have already

*The original national committee, was as follows: At large (chosen by the Conference), William T. Croasdale, G. St. John Leavens, Read Gordon, Louis F. Post and August Lewis. From States (chosen locally), Ala., E. Q. Norton; Cal., H. L. Pleace; Colo., James W. Bucklin; Conn., Lawrence Dunham; Del., George W. Kreer; D. of C., Robert J. Boyd; Ill., Warren Worth Bailey; Ind., Henry Rawie; Iowa, Richard Spencer; Ky., Samuel H. Edgar; La., James Middleton; Maine, F. D. Lyford; Md., Dr. W. N. Hill; Mass., James F. Carret; Mich., A. F. Wettlaufer; Minn., Oliver T. Erickson; Mo., H. Martin Williams; N. J., John W. Jakeway; N. Y., Thomas G. Shearman; Ohio, L. E. Slemmon; Pa., A. H. Stephenson; R. I., David Harrower; Tenn., Bolton Smith; Texas, H. F. Ring; Va., F. J. Conroy; and W. Va., W. F. Thayer.

told; the other came off at the third day's session and over the final clause of the platform—the clause making a declaration on the subject of public utilities. This clause as adopted at the first Conference was altered at the second, three years afterwards. I will tell about that farther on. Here I recur to the debate it evoked at the first Conference.

Henry George, as chairman of the platform committee, had read the platform unanimously recommended by his committee, in the form in which it is subjoined to these reminiscences.*

There was an objection by Mr. Ogden, of Maryland, to attributing land values to any other cause than the services of government. Mr. George replied on this point, not to the satisfaction of Mr. Ogden, whose views on the subject had been carefully thought out and were clearly presented, but entirely to the satisfaction of most of the delegates—reasonably so I think, as I read the speech after an interval of twenty-one years. It was J. Whidden Graham of Massachusetts, however, who brought on the public utilities debate. Mr. Graham moved to strike out the final paragraphs of the platform.

"I move this," he said, "as one who believes in the Singletax and does not believe in the government control of railroads and telegraphs." Mr. George explained that the committee were unanimous on the point, but that if there was much objection he thought the clause had better be left out. In reply, though, to Hamlin Garland, who asked if the Singletax does not cover the point. Mr. George said: "In my opinion it does not. Mr. Shearman thinks it does, but I am inclined to think that over and above all that would be accomplished in that way there still remains a residuum, still a tendency in some directions to proper extensions of the function of the state." But as to the details of such extensions Mr. George urged agreements to disagree. "Agreeing about the Singletax," he proceeded, "we can agree to disagree as to everything else; and that last paragraph is so drafted as to embody the essential idea, leaving matters of method and detail to personal opinions."

Others who participated in this debate were Tom L. Johnson, H. F. Ring, James G. Maguire, John Z. White, L. A. Russell and C. J. Buell, all of whom spoke for adoption of the clause as reported. Mr. Buell discussed the platform as a whole in order to show that the last clause was an essential part, covering one of the three great necessities of free society—the Singletax, Freetrade, and government control of monopolies. The amendment was defeated and the platform adopted. An attempt to make its adoption unanimous failed by a negative vote of perhaps five or six.

*See page 912.

There was no further business of importance, and in a little while the Conference adjourned.*

*Between the sessions of the Conference there were two large mass meetings in Cooper Union and a banquet at Coney Island.

At the mass meeting on the evening of September 1, James G. Maguire presided, and Henry George spoke in response to Judge Maguire's welcome-home address. Hamlin Garland read verses written for the occasion by Mrs. Frances M. Milne. Mr. George's eloquent address, in the nature of a report upon the progress of the cause in Australasia, Great Britain, Canada and the United States, was an appeal also for that peace of the world which only universal freedom of trade can secure.—See *The Standard* of September 10, 1890, page 14.

The second mass meeting, September 2, was presided over by Edward Osgood Brown. The other speakers were William Lloyd Garrison, Henry F. Ring, Judge Maguire, Lee Meriwether, H. Martin Williams, Tom L. Johnson, A. H. Stephenson, Bolton Smith, C. J. Buell, and Henry George. The chairman having introduced Mr. George with the statement that it was his 51st birthday, Mr. George said: "Yes, it is my birthday to-day,"—and he was interrupted with a voice of cheer from the audience, "Long may you live," followed by tremendous applause. When the applause subsided he went on, and his restrained manner appeared to tell even then of a consciousness of what may have seemed to him near by, but was in fact nearly seven years away. "But not too long," he said in acknowledgment of the greeting. "Life, long life, is not the best thing to wish for those you love. Not too long. But that in my day, whether it be long or short, I may do my duty and do my best."—See *The Standard*, September 10, 1890, pages 20, 21.

At the Coney Island banquet, given on the 3d by the Manhattan Singletax Club of New York and the Brooklyn Singletax Club, A. H. Stephenson presided. Henry George, Judge Maguire, H. Martin Williams, John Z. White, H. F. Ring, Bolton Smith, Louis F. Post, Major Calhoun, Thomas R. Fitch, W. A. Douglass, Dan Beard and L. A. Russell, were the other speakers. The latter (the lawyer whom Tom L. Johnson had consulted about the logic of "Progress and Poverty" when he himself first read it) spoke the last sentiment of the Conference occasion. "Remember the words," he said in closing, "of the great prophet when he said and truly said that the land belongs in usufruct to the living, and all governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed."—See *The Standard*, September 10, 1890.

Another conference on the Singletax, but otherwise wholly unrelated to the one at Cooper Union, was held at Saratoga on the day next but one after the close of the latter. Called by the American Social Science Association, it met on the 5th day of September, 1890. The acting secretary of the Association, John Graham Brooks, of Brockton, Mass., arranged for the debate, and the following persons participated, each with a special subject: Samuel B. Clarke (law partner of Elihu Root, now a Senator from New York), on "What the Singletax of Henry George Is"; Thomas Davidson (the philosopher), on "The Singletax"; William Lloyd Garrison, on "The Justice of the Singletax"; Professor J. B. Clarke (then of Smith College but now of Columbia University), on "The Moral Basis of Property in Land"; E. Benjamin Andrews (then president of Brown University), on "A Single Land Tax from the Point of View of Public Finance"; Professor Edwin R. A. Seligman (of Columbia), on "The Relation of the Singletax to the General Science of Finance"; Louis F. Post, in explanation of the Singletax with special reference to its incidence and fairness; Edward Atkinson (the statistician), in general opposition to the Singletax; Henry George, in a general exposition and in specific answer to criticisms and questions; James R. Carret (a distinguished conveyancer of Bos-

Meantime, however, with H. F. Ring in the chair, and on motion of Charles Frederick Adams (the first full-fledged Henry George convert that I had ever recognized as such after my own conversion save William McCabe and Alonzo J. Steers), that little black gavel over there was given me by vote of the Conference as a reminder, so Mr. Adams put it, that I was chairman of the first national Singletax conference of the United States.

Afterwards.

The accomplishments of the Singletax League of the United States, organized at that first Singletax conference, were disappointing. Financial contributions were small and contributors few. The aggregate was altogether inadequate. Local organizations tended toward segregating the Singletax movement and Singletaxers from the common interests of their communities. The lack of influence of the League in these and other respects soon went far to confirm the misgivings of Mr. George. While disinclined to discourage, he had not been very hopeful. At the time I attributed this to his distrust of Singletax organizations of the authoritative kind, but I have long since come to account for it more by his sensitiveness to the magnetic currents of democratic opinion. On the broad field of higher politics he was more "weather-wise" than some of his followers, or than they thought him.

It was with much lack of enthusiasm, therefore, that he contemplated the second Singletax conference, which met in the Art Institute at Chicago in 1893, upon a referendum call through the national committee. He was not far wrong, if wrong at all. Although the time and place coincided with the greatest Exposition ever held in this country, the Columbian, the attendance at the Conference was much smaller and much less representative than at that in New York three years before.

It is indeed to be credited with one great mass meeting, at which Henry George and Father McGlynn, though personally friends again for a year or more, met for the first time since Anti-Poverty days as speakers on the same platform; but this meeting could easily have been the same if there had been no conference. At another of its mass meetings John Turner White, of Springfield, Mo., made a most impressive address.

It is also to be credited with this resolution, recommended by the committee on platform and resolutions adopted by the Conference: "We favor

ton), in advocacy of the Singletax from the point of view of a conveyancer; W. T. Harris (U. S. Commissioner of Education), who made and elaborated some rather extraordinary objections to the Singletax. A report of this meeting was promptly prepared by the Secretary, F. B. Sanborn, of Concord, Mass., and published in a pamphlet of 127 pages for the American Social Science Association, by Durrell & Upham of Boston and G. P. Putnam's Sons of New York. The pamphlet is probably out of print.

local self-government, with the Initiative and Referendum, Proportional Representation, and Equal Suffrage for men and woman."

The most important action of the second Conference was the alteration of the final paragraph of the Singletax platform which Henry George had drawn and the first Conference had adopted. This marked one of the differences between two elements of the Singletax movement. For convenience rather than precision they may be called the "socialistic" and the "individualistic."* The concrete issue arose over the question of public ownership of railroads, the same that had caused one of the two most spirited discussions at the first Conference.

Mr. George opposed the drawing of any definite line between public and private functions. It was his contention that serviceable activities in human society shift back and forth between *private* and *public* functions, in response to invention and social evolution. For example, that the water supply, a private function on farms and in small vil-

lages, becomes a public function as reservoirs and distributing mains come in and highway as well as sanitary questions arise; or, that the lighting of a dwelling house, a private function when candles or portable lamps are used, but a public function when gas and electric power are supplied under highway franchises by pipes and wires, may become again a private function through the invention of portable lights of a kind as yet unknown. He also believed that in great aggregations of capital there may reside, and possibly over and above the aid of land-monopoly, powers of exploitation analogous to those which come from land monopoly.*

It was with a view to leaving these questions open until the mother monopoly of all shall be caught and caged, that he wrote the final paragraph of the platform adopted at the first Conference. The alterations made at the second Conference were against his protest and his vote.

L. F. P.

* *

The Singletax Platform.

Adopted by the National Conference of the Single Tax League of the United States at Cooper Union, New York, Sept. 3, 1890.

We assert as our fundamental principle the self-evident truth enunciated in the Declaration of American Independence, that all men are created equal, and are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights.

We hold that all men are equally entitled to the use and enjoyment of what God has created and of what is gained by the general growth and improvement of the community of which they are a part. Therefore, no one should be permitted to hold natural opportunities without a fair return to all for any special privilege thus accorded to him, and that value which the growth and improvement of the community attach to land should be taken for the use of the community.

We hold that each man is entitled to all that his labor produces. Therefore no tax should be levied on the products of labor.

To carry out these principles we are in favor of raising all public revenues for national, State, county and municipal purposes, by a single tax upon land values, irrespective of improvements, and of the abolition of all forms of direct and indirect taxation.

Since in all our States we now levy some tax on the value of land, the Singletax can be instituted by the simple and easy way of abolishing, one after another, all other taxes now levied, and commensurately increasing the tax on land values, until we draw upon that one source for all expenses of government, the revenue being divided between local governments, State governments and the general government, as the revenue from direct taxes is now divided between the local and State governments; or,

*See "Progress and Poverty," chapter IV of book III, pages 192, 193 and 194.

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*The following quotations from "Protection or Free Trade," written in 1885, define Henry George's attitude toward this difference: "In socialism as distinguished from individualism there is an unquestionable truth—and that a truth to which (especially by those most identified with free trade principles) too little attention has been paid. Man is primarily an individual—a separate entity, differing from his fellows in desires and powers, and requiring for the exercise of those powers and the gratification of those desires individual play and freedom. But he is also a social being, having desires that harmonize with those of his fellows, and powers that can only be brought out in concerted action. There is thus a domain of individual action and a domain of social action—some things which can best be done when each acts for himself, and some things which can best be done when society acts for all its members. And the natural tendency of advancing civilization is to make social conditions relatively more important, and more and more to enlarge the domain of social action. This has not been sufficiently regarded, and at the present time, evil unquestionably results from leaving to individual action functions that by reason of the growth of society and the development of the arts have passed into the domain of social action; just as on the other hand, evil unquestionably results from social interference with what properly belongs to the individual."—From the text of "Protection or Free Trade," chapter xxviii, at page 303.

"The term 'socialism' is used so loosely that it is hard to attach to it a definite meaning. I myself am classed as a socialist by those who denounce socialism, while those who profess themselves socialists declare me not to be one. For my own part, I neither claim nor repudiate the name; and realizing as I do the correlative truth of both principles, can no more call myself an individualist or a socialist than one who considers the forces by which the planets are held to their orbits could call himself a centrifugalist or a centripetalist. The German socialism of the school of Marx (of which the leading representative in England is Mr. H. M. Hyndman, and the best exposition in America has been given by Mr. Laurence Gronlund), seems to me a high-purposed but incoherent mixture of truth and fallacy, the defects of which may be summed up in its want of radicalism—that is to say, of going to the root."—From foot note in "Protection or Free Trade," chapter xxviii, at pages 302 and 303.