

beginning of the next year, more nearly self-supporting. And send in anything that you think will be suited to its columns—notes that indicate progress, examples of the working of present tax laws—anything, in short, that has a bearing upon the movement. It is *your* organ. The editor has no purpose to serve beyond making the REVIEW a power and help to the movement for industrial emancipation through the removal of restrictions. No personal grievances will be ventilated. We do not expect to please everybody. But we shall run the REVIEW in accordance with the wishes of the majority. But the minority will believe, too, that they do not lack a medium to present their side of a case when differences of interpretation arise. And there must be the widest charity. This, too, we ask for the REVIEW and for all its shortcomings.

It will be observed that this number is printed "leaded." The REVIEW consequently contains a little less matter. There is no saving in this, but it makes much easier reading. We fancy our readers will appreciate the change.

#### CLASS WARFARE.

The imminence of class warfare can no longer be blinked by any observant and thoughtful person. It is something which the socialists predict, upon which they have built their theory of class consciousness, and to which they look forward with hope for their cause. Their theory of class consciousness is false, but the facts upon which they build it are true.

It is the conflict of economy interests which a regime of privilege has generated that is producing this clash of classes. On the one side we have the "business" classes and their admiring and hopeful dependents. Some of these have privileges and some have not. The so-called "capital" of some is all privilege, that of others is part privilege and part legitimate capital, that of others consists only of expectations. But a common interest, and therefore a natural affiliation, holds them together. On the other side are the great masses of men and women, and God save the mark! of little children, upon whom the privileged class

preys or hopes to prey. These are the two classes that are coming into collision.

No one knows it better than the great interests. No one else is so culpable. Their organs protest against class politics, but it is they that made class politics. Class politics is inevitable unless politics turns upon human rights. But where do the interests and their organs stand when questions of human rights are mooted in politics? Whenever a principal of justice can be appealed to, to buttress their privileges, they appeal to it, but whenever it is appealed to in behalf of the disinherited upon whose heritage they fatten, they scout the principle and defiantly declare for might as right. This is their attitude however oily their words may be. And their attitude has been observed and made a note of. To nothing is the socialistic trend so much indebted for the impetus it is getting as to this attitude of the privileged class and their retainers and hangers on.

We Single Taxers have counted upon holding up the banner of righteousness and justice to clashing class interests. We have counted upon an overwhelming response from both sides, believing that the great majority of all classes are for justice. What has the response been? From the unprivileged it has been most abundantly encouraging. But wherever privilege has a foothold, how weak the response! Here and there a lonesome beneficiary of privilege has answered our cry for justice. There are also some Nicodemuses. But for the most part this class scorns the plea for justice and makes little concealment of its conscienceless lust of plunder and power.

And who are this class? If it consisted only of the great privileged, it might be ignored. But the great privileged, few though they are, hold master keys. They cooperate with those of minor privileges; they bargain with politicians and command pulpits; they own newspapers and judges and prosecuting attorneys, and they intimidate right and left, they dictate the public opinion of business centers, they coerce the timid, they befuddle the confiding and they bribe the sordid. Not by stimulating class consciousness, but by exciting individual selfishness they draw to their support a great social force and divide opposition. Thus they perpetuate their own privilege in

industry and their own power in affairs. These are the methods whereby a class war is being precipitated, and this is the class that is bringing the classes into collision.

Let us not be blind to the perilous situation. Let us recognize it for what it is. Political lines are already forming, not on the issue of right and justice as we would have them form, but on that of power and self interest irrespective of right and justice. Is this the political storm the American people would really invite? If it is not, let them speak and speak quickly, for it is the storm that is brewing.

The word of conciliation must come from the employer class. The working class has shown often enough its disposition to try conclusions on the basis of a square deal, and it has been repulsed. Working men are consequently beginning to feel that the question is not one for a square deal but for a square fight. To be effective then the overtures for a righteous adjustment must come from the employer class. What have they to say? Shall the so-called issue between capital and hired labor, the issue which at bottom is an issue between privilege and all labor—shall this issue be “tried out” on the basis of might, or on the basis of right? Will the employer class go into the elections of the future clamoring for the sacredness of privilege and thereby risking the sacredness of all property, or will they stand frankly for the conservation of just property through the unconditional extinction of unjust privilege?

LOUIS F. POST.

#### A CHAPTER OF FORGOTTEN HISTORY

When, in 1892 the Commissioners of Hyattsville struck off personal property and improvements from the tax list, we believed that for the first time the Single Tax was being applied for municipal purposes in the United States. Such action was, in fact, a first fruit of the agitation having Henry George as its leader. But it is a singular fact that fifty years previously, and even before the birth of Henry George, the town of Alton, Illinois, had pursued the same course and equally with the town of Hyattsville, met defeat at the hands of a hostile Court. With the struggle of so many years

ago, perhaps no one now living was then old enough to be familiar, and I cannot turn to any journals describing it. We get an inkling, however, of what took place from the decision of the case of *Filch et al. vs. Pinckard et al.*, 4 Scammon (Illinois Reports), page 69.

The plaintiffs relying upon the tax deed given by the town of Alton brought suit and ejection against the defendants for certain lots of ground. The defendants set up several defects in the tax proceedings, and one was that in violation of the Constitutional rule regarding all property to be taxed, the Board of Trustees of Alton had provided for assessment of the lots and lands, having “no regard to the improvements thereon.”

For the plaintiffs appeared several lawyers whose names are forgotten by the present generation, and for the defendants, among other lawyers, John J. Hardin, a well-known name in Illinois history, and “A. Lincoln.” Our later President replied upon several points not pertinent to our present discussion, while Hardin’s argument rested largely upon the proposition that, “the ordinance requiring the lots to be valued without regard to improvements is a violation of the Constitution.” That the arguments now made by Single Taxers in favor of their theory were not unknown to the people of that time is evident from the brief of N. D. Strong and Julius Hall, who responded to Colonel Hardin’s suggestion, as appears by their report, as follows:

“Nor is the Constitution contravened by any of the provisions of this act or incorporation or ordinance. That was a principle of Magna Charta. Its object was to protect against arbitrary seizures of government. Its history shows its inapplicability here. 1 Blanc. Com., 100.

“Nor did the act of incorporation require that improvements should be included in the assessment of lots. It had reference to the naked soil, and *did not intend to interfere with that liberal policy which protects and encourages improvements.*”

The opinion of the Court was delivered by Judge Scates, who in the course of his remarks, referring to the charter of the town of Alton, said:

“The sixth section provides for a special tax for the improvements of the streets, etc.;