

THE SINGLE TAX BANQUET

Frank Stephens Prays Heaven to Smite Our Troops.

"TOM" L. JOHNSON ABSENT

He Sent a Telegram from Detroit Announcing that "Business" Kept Him Away.

The Manhattan Single Tax Club held its eleventh annual dinner last night at the Hotel Marlborough, in honor of the anniversary of the birth of Thomas Jefferson. Men and women adherents of the theory of single tax, to the number of 225, sat down to the feast.

The sensation of the night was when Frank Stephens, one of the last speakers, raised his hand to Heaven and prayed that the god of battles might smite our troops in the Philippines with disastrous defeat.

The members of the club pointed with pride to the fact that as a result of the strong competition a little further up the street, where the Tammany guests were consuming a ten-dollar dinner, 100 more Single-Taxers were seated at the two-dollar single-tax board than had ever before partaken of the feast. Men and women were present in about equal numbers to do honor to Thomas Jefferson, but it appeared subsequently that a greater idol was, "our prototype of Jefferson, Henry George," as Dr. McGlynn, the dead philosopher's friend, put it.

Bitter disappointment was caused at the outset of the dinner. A telegram from Tom L. Johnson, the street car magnate, single-taxer, and agitator, was read, in which he expressed his regrets at not being able to attend the dinner. "Business," he said, kept him in Detroit. Mr. Johnson was to have been one of the principal speakers. His declaration some weeks ago that he had retired from business and would devote his life henceforth to the single tax propaganda was recollected by many, and some sharp and rather unfriendly comments were made over his letter. It was hinted that Mr. Johnson's "business" referred to his bargaining with Gov. Pingree for the sale to the Detroit municipality of certain street railroads in that city owned by Mr. Johnson. Many diners openly complained of being "jollied" by Mr. Johnson.

In the absence of President Samuel Seabury, John J. Murphy presided, and at his suggestion a toast was drunk in silence to the memory of Henry George. Letters of regret were read from Thomas G. Shearman, Senator John Ford, Samuel M. Jones, Mayor of Toledo, Ohio; Charles W. Dayton, William R. Hearst, John P. Altgeld, James K. Maguire, Mayor of Syracuse; Ernest Howard Crosby, and Jerry Simpson.

Characteristic letters were received from Michael Davitt and A. Hedin, a member of the second chamber of Sweden.

Mr. Davitt, after outlining the policy and principles of the Irish Nationalist Party of the present, referred to the present policy of our own Government, and on the latter subject ended his comments with the following words:

"The British principle and practice of ruling by brute force, instead of by liberty, should never have seduced your country to follow an example so flagrantly opposed to the immortal doctrine of human freedom upon which the great author of the Declaration of Independence based the foundation of all just government, and all sincere lovers of liberty in Europe will earnestly pray for a speedy return to the principles of Jefferson and Washington. Yours for national liberty and against all imperialism,"

"MICHAEL DAVITT."

Mr. Hedin in his letter said he was unable to give a single indication of progress toward an era of greater human liberty, and that on the contrary he was compelled to bear testimony to a retrograde movement all along the line in the dual kingdom.

The first speaker of the evening was Henry George, Jr., who spoke to the toast, "Thomas Jefferson still lives."

Mr. George began with a reference to the simultaneous death of Adams and Jefferson in 1826, and to Adams's last words, "Thomas Jefferson Still Lives."

"The sentiments of Thomas Jefferson ruled the country for a time," said Mr. George "while society remained in a primitive condition. Then, our population was 5,000,000; now it is 80,000,000. Where are the old-time simplicity, the old-time virtue, the old-time imperial men and blameless gentlemen? Where is the delight in simple things, the brave old honesty of public life?"

"Is it Democracy when in National politics a man by unscrupulous methods makes a large fortune, spends it in corrupting the popular suffrage, and glories in cramming a bayonet down the throat of a poor Filipino who dares to open his lips to lisp the sacred word of liberty? It is for each one of us to determine whether in spirit and in truth it may be said that Thomas Jefferson still lives."

Mr. George's speech was followed by vocal renditions by Miss Alta Yolo, a young California singer, who created a sensation among the diners by a superb rendition of "The Flower Song" from "Faust," in a beautiful mezzo soprano. The singer was repeatedly encored.

Dr. Edward McGlynn was loudly applauded when he arose to speak. Dr. McGlynn's subject was: "We Hold These Truths." Speaking on this he enunciated with his usual eloquence the principles as laid down in "Progress and Poverty."

"Fortunately the right of all men to life, liberty, and the sense of freedom from chattel slavery is now pretty well established throughout the civilized world; although but a little while ago it was hardly safe to deny chattel slavery right here in the city of New York."

"We may therefore take heart and hope and confidently look forward to the day when the third great Jeffersonian demand shall be admitted throughout the world, namely, the demand for the equal enjoyment of all men of the right of the pursuit of happiness."

Frank Stephens then spoke. He raised his hand to Heaven and prayed that the God of Battles might smite our troops in the Philippines with a fearful and overwhelming defeat.

Mr. Stephens is one of the leading single taxers. John S. Crosby was called upon to respond to the toast "Our Country," but after he had made a few remarks he asked his hearers to allow him to retire in favor of Mr. Stephens, who, he said, would have much more to say than he could say.

Mr. Stephens then took the floor and began his speech by making a violent attack upon the Administration for its course in the Philippines. He declared that the man who cried for liberty in the Philippines was having a bayonet forced down his throat. He said that the country was in a state of decadence, that our boast of chivalry and love of freedom had practically passed away. Instead of chivalry we now had politics. Nothing more cruel than the war in the Philippines had ever been known; it was shameful, disgraceful, and scandalous, and deserving of a dreadful rebuke.

Then, halting for a second, the speaker raised his hand impressively and said: "I pray that the God of Battles will smite our soldiers in the Philippines with a fearful and overwhelming defeat."

For an instant his hearers gasped, and then broke out in tremendous applause. Apparently every single taxpayer in the room was with the speaker.