

suggestion he proposes a plan of organization for State leagues to secure the enactment, by pledging legislative candidates, of the Texas law in every State of the Union. The referendum has proved so useful in Chicago, though only advisory, that movements for its extension in mandatory form to party organizations as well as to legislatures, deserve all possible encouragement. If party conventions were brought in this manner under the direct control of the party membership, and legislatures under the direct control of the body of the people, the grafter would be out of business. Grafters know this, even if the people they despoil have yet to learn it.

Promotion of the single tax idea.

Under the efficient management of Frederick H. Monroe, "the Henry George Lecture Association" (with headquarters at 610 Steinway Hall, Chicago), which is conducted in behalf of the single tax idea, has grown within the past three years into an institution of national importance, and its influence has more than kept pace with its geographical development. Its first lecturer, John Z. White, is now concluding a tour of the Pacific coast and the Rocky Mountain region, after having spent two years in the most exacting kind of lecture work from the Mississippi to the Atlantic coast; and Herbert S. Bigelow, who has done occasional lecturing under the same auspices, is to join Mr. White as a general lecturer, as are Ernest Crosby, Jerry Simpson and John W. Bengough, all under Mr. Monroe's management, for the coming lecture year. As Mr. Monroe describes the work, it is a campaign of education before established associations—commercial, social, educational, labor, political and religious. The craving for creating new political parties, so common with men of reform ideas, is not fostered by Mr. Monroe and his associates. He declares that they have "no desire whatever to organize a political party." Doubtless he might have added that they have no desire, either, to agitate or organize along

class lines. It is one of the virtues of the single tax idea that what it offers is for men, simply as men. It appeals to no class instinct, if there be such a thing, but to the human sense of equal rights and reciprocal duties.

Another movement in behalf of the same cause, but more explicitly for the purpose of getting the ear of people who are commonly distinguished as "the working classes," has been undertaken by John Weiler and L. P. Straube, both of whom are active and well known labor unionists in the printing trades. They have organized "The People's Single Tax Propaganda Movement," (headquarters at 508 Schiller Building, Chicago), with a view to distributing literature and holding meetings in populous residence districts, the meetings to be made attractive by entertainments and then to be utilized for explanatory talks. The first tract issued for this movement is peculiarly well adapted for its purpose. Written by Mr. Weiler, its argument is addressed to labor unionists,—most effectively, we should suppose, and certainly with irrefutable truth. The question propounded is whether the single tax would prove a better remedy for labor's ills than labor unions, and the answer is a brief elaboration of this succinct statement: "The price of land determines the price of labor. When land is cheap, labor is dear, and vice versa. Dear land causes a surplus in the supply of labor, and thus depresses wages; cheap land causes a scarcity in the supply of labor, and thus raises wages." As the single tax would make land cheap, Mr. Weiler truly argues that "wages would go sky-high, not at the expense of consumers, but at the expense of land rent. What land would lose in value, labor would gain. The cities would be deserted by large numbers who preferred working on their own hook upon the land abandoned by speculative dogs in the manger. This would cause a scarcity in the supply of wage slaves. The wage slave would

become valuable. His services would then command a high price. He would be enabled to dictate what hours he preferred to work. He would have money to burn. He could lay off whenever he pleased without fear—in a word, it would make him free in reality as well as in name. The young men growing up would find things easier. It would no longer be necessary for labor unions to place restrictions upon them. The young man who wanted to learn a trade or profession would then have all the opportunity he wanted. Labor would, under the single tax, be so scarce and hard to get that no new hand would displace an old one, as is often the case now, but every newcomer would fill a want for help."

These are only some among many instances of effective work in promotion of principles which, without flourish of trumpets, or display of organization, or muster-roll of converts, are influencing the common thought of English-speaking countries to a degree little suspected by observers who estimate the progress of a cause by its statistics. There are prophecies in plenty that social forces are lining up for a battle royal between socialism and plutocracy; but if we were to venture an utterance prophetic, we should say that the battle royal will be in different array. Plutocracy is too decadent for any battle royal. Aristocracy might fight a prolonged battle, but plutocracy never. And aristocracy is effete. When the battle royal comes it will not be between socialism on one side and either plutocracy or aristocracy on the other. It will be between the principles of the socialist and those of the single taxer; not necessarily or probably under their names or banners, but certainly over their issues. And in that battle royal the principles of the socialist will go down. For while socialism readily appeals to the materialist and the paternalist, to the man who believes that human rights and duties and liberties are only names without substance, that moral right and moral wrong are

nothing but historical flotsam and jetsam, and that the individual is merged in the collectivity.—although socialism readily appeals to such as these, and so makes headway while its principles are not generally discussed, it does not appeal to the great common thought, which is neither materialistic nor paternalistic, but is now, as it always has been and always will be, sensitive to considerations of right and wrong and averse to individual submergence. To prophesy this is not to imply that in this battle all who think themselves socialists will be found on the socialistic side, nor that all who think themselves opposed to socialism will be on the other side. Socialism is as yet a somewhat indefinite term, and many who call themselves socialists because they oppose plutocracy, revolt with the rest of us at the distinctive doctrines of the cult that claims the name of socialism and is best entitled to it both historically and by dominance in the organized socialist movement.

THE MISTAKES OF TRADES UNIONISM.

In a country of vast resources like the United States, abounding in prosperity, or at all events, potential prosperity, and where, as Carlyle grimly put it, every male biped that does not grow feathers can share in the making of the laws by which industry is regulated and wealth distributed, it is remarkable that our organized laborers should have found no better remedy for their economic grievances than the old-fashioned and barbarous strike. One can understand the working masses of St. Petersburg and Moscow, whose souls and bodies practically belong to the autocracy, ceasing work en masse because political power is denied them; but where political power is so plentifully distributed as it is in the United States, the continued existence of the strike can only be explained on the supposition that the workers have not yet learned to use the weapons placed in their hands.

Advocates of trades-unionism would have us believe that the strike, the boycott, the union la-

bel, the closed shop, and such like remedies, have brought great good to the workers. Of the 22,000 odd strikes which have occurred in the United States in the twenty years from 1881 to 1901, it is claimed that fully one-half were successful. They may have been successful in the sense of achieving the immediate object desired by the strikers, but whether they have left the workers substantially better off permanently may well be doubted. Apparently they have not prevented the generally admitted fact that in recent years the prices of the necessities of life have risen faster than have the wages of the workers. If there is one thing which the history of the strikes has demonstrated, it is this: that there is always a large supply of unemployed labor in the country ready to work for the wages rejected by the strikers and to frustrate the efforts of the latter, except where powerful moral, legal or other barriers intervene. Whatever direct advantage trades-unionism may have brought to special interests, it has not made much impression upon the volume of poverty as a whole, judging by the existence of the ten millions of people whom Mr. Robert Hunter, after an exhaustive study of the subject, estimates to be underfed, under-clothed and underhoused in this country.

That the trades-unionist movement is very strong numerically is undeniable. One-third of the workers in our leading trades and industries are computed to belong to it—probably nearly 3,000,000 of workers altogether. This is a big proportion of the country's voting power. But power without intelligence will not avail much—except to the enemy, and unfortunately trades-unionism seems at present to have more power than intelligence.

In order to fight our enemy with any chance of success we must know his weak points. It matters not whether we are fighting a single enemy—a burglar who comes to rob our house, for example, or a whole army in the field, a knowledge of our opponent's vulnerable points is most essential. One blow intelligently aimed at the right spot and at the right time may send him staggering; whereas, striking at him right and left, without scientific method or pur-

pose, will probably exhaust us sooner than it will him. And furthermore, if we are honorable and fair-minded, we will take care not to hit the wrong man; we will respect the rights of neutrals, and try to see that nobody suffers from the quarrel who is not an active participator in it.

Now, surely these principles are applicable to economic and industrial quarrels. How far are they carried out by the trades-unions? Let us see. The men strike against the capitalists. They think of the capitalist only as the owner of the machinery and tools of production. But the capitalist is generally something more than that. He is the monopolist of natural resources and of means of transport. He occupies all the important passes, so to speak; he controls the bases of supply and has possession of all the economic strongholds. Arising out of his mastery of these advantages there is, at the very threshold of the field of production, a reservoir of idle labor, which he can tap at any moment to enable him to work his machinery and thus dispense with his regular hands. Now a wise labor leader, after a careful survey of the ground, could not help but see that a bold, open, frontal attack in the face of such odds, would be useless. It might be brilliant like the Balaklava charge, but it would not be war. He would see that the true method of attack is to dislodge the enemy from the passes, cut off his base of supply, and prevent the hungry reserve enemy from rushing to his assistance, by making common cause with them and absorbing them in the ranks of the employed. Instead of conducting labor's campaigns on broad, comprehensive lines such as these, the labor-leaders fight, not monopoly, but capital proper; that is they attack their natural ally and partner, leaving their real foe in undisturbed possession of his unfair advantages. Is it any wonder that they so often fail?

Another charge to be brought against the labor unions is that in their struggle with the capitalists they do not sufficiently respect the rights of neutrals. Of the thousand strikes a year which