

democratic in their personal views. And if the progressive Republican be a man of genuine democratic purposes (such as Lincoln was), of experience in political and legislative affairs, and independent, honest, courageous, tenacious and resourceful—as everyone who knows William Kent or his record well, knows him to be—there can be no choice in his district at this crisis by democratic Democrats and progressive Republicans alike, except in his favor. Just as we would urge progressive Republicans to vote for Mr. Kent if he were a democratic Democrat, so we urge democratic Democrats to vote for him as a progressive Republican.

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A LANDMARK IN THE HENRY GEORGE MOVEMENT.

Twenty-one years ago last June the first international conference of land reformers with a marked tendency to recognize the leadership of Henry George, was held in Paris. It was mentioned by Joseph Fels in a speech at a recent international single tax or land-values tax meeting at Antwerp. He characterized it as the first, and the Antwerp meeting as the second, "international conference on land value taxation in history."

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The circumstances of that historic Paris conference are recalled by a complaint to the effect that Mr. Fels was mistaken in referring to a *first* international "single tax conference" at Paris, and that in assuming the so-called *second* at Antwerp to be a "representative international single tax conference" he was unfair and "autocratic." The same complaint denounced The Public and Byron W. Holt as parties to Mr. Fels's offense, and Arthur W. Hoopes by implication, its allusion being to a recent editorial letter in The Public (p. 870) over the signatures of Mr. Hoopes and Mr. Holt, which embraced a brief report of Mr. Fels's obnoxious speech and which we had editorially entitled "Second International Single Tax Conference."

Such culpability as there may be in this matter attaches neither to Mr. Hoopes nor to Mr. Holt. They are not responsible for the title we gave their interesting and solicited letter, and as to the letter itself it is in harmony throughout with the opening paragraph, that those—

delegates to the Antwerp International Free Trade Congress who favor the taxation of land values, held a meeting at the Grand Hotel, Antwerp, on Thursday afternoon, August 11th, for the purpose of consider-

ing the attitude of land-value taxationists to the general purpose of the Congress, and the steps that might be properly taken to impress upon the Congress the vital importance of land-value taxation to the life of the free trade movement.

Mr. Holt and Mr. Hoopes did not say, nor did they "assume," that the Antwerp meeting was a *representative* conference. Neither did Mr. Fels in his speech. The title we shaped for the Hoopes-Holt letter was indeed suggested to us by that part of Mr. Fels's speech in which he said that the Antwerp meeting "was the second international conference on land value taxation in history, the first having been held in Paris in 1889." We used the term "single tax" instead of his term because it is more familiar in the United States and indicates the same kind of thing. But we see nothing in that title, nor in the Hoopes-Holt letter, nor in Mr. Fels's speech, nor in all together, to account for complaints (from any other persons than extremely captious fault finders) that The Public, or Mr. Fels, or Mr. Hoopes, or Mr. Holt, assumed or in any way stated or implied that either the Antwerp conference or the Paris conference was representative.

And except for the assertion that we did "assume" one or the other or both of those conferences to be *representative*, the complaint in question is too frivolous for further notice—as a complaint. To take it for granted that persons whom such a complaint may possibly reach, would think it "autocratic" or misleading or unfair on the part of anybody to refer in any American paper of the present time to the meeting of land reformers at Antwerp in 1910, or the one at Paris in 1889, as an "international single tax conference," would imply a greater doubt of their common sense than The Public is willing to entertain without proof.

But while the complaint here referred to is unworthy of further notice as such, it suggests the probable desirability of telling the story of the Paris meeting to which Mr. Fels alluded in his speech at Antwerp.

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The conference of land reformers at Paris in 1889 was not a "single tax" gathering in the narrow sense of "single taxers limited," as Thomas G. Shearman used to call those of his own type, but rather of "single taxers unlimited," as he distinguished those of Henry George's type. Probably the latter term, too, would have been too narrow; for the conference included not only single taxers, but land nationalizers, and land reformers of still other varieties. Yet Henry George,

who was honorary president, called it a "conference," and regarded it as an international gathering distinctly tending toward what has since come to be much better known than it was then, as "the single tax."

For it must be remembered that Henry George's message has borne many names since he delivered it in 1879—among them being "land nationalization," "land townshipization" (a term George used himself), "free soil," "anti-poverty," "land and labor," "Georgism," "the single tax," and "land values taxation." The term "single tax" came into general use through the organizing work conducted by William T. Croasdale, which began in 1888.

Not long before the Paris meeting, Henry George wrote of it in his letter of May 18, 1889, from Birmingham, England, to the Standard (June 1), of which he was then proprietor and editor. His son, Henry George, Jr., was in charge as managing editor during his father's absence. It was in mentioning Michael Flürscheim, its organizer, that Mr. George thus alluded in that letter to the Paris conference: "I suppose our friends who are coming to Europe this year are already informed that the conference is to be held in Paris on the 11th of June. I hope to meet some of them there."

In the following issue of the Standard (June 8, 1889), there was a lengthy prospectus of the proposed Paris meeting, written by Mr. Flürscheim, who sketched the different schools of land reform to be represented, including "the single tax army" headed by Henry George, "the great banner bearer" and leader of the land reform movement. The other schools he named and described were the Quesneyites of France ("pretty near" to the single tax, as he wrote), the German land reformers, and the Colinsian land nationalizers of Belgium.

In this issue of the Standard there was also an editorial notice that there would be a meeting on arrangements at the Continental Hotel, Paris, in the evening of June 10, and that "the conference" would "commence on the 11th." Announcing Mr. George's intended departure from London for Paris, the London Star of June 6 said that his object was "to attend a conference of land nationalizers;" and in the Standard of June 29, which reproduced this quotation from the Star, the editorial headlines of a Paris report of the meeting, by W. E. Hicks, called it a "world's conference of free soilers."

Those editorial headlines in full were as follows:

The Paris Conference; Report of the World's Conference of Free Soilers; Names of Delegates; Resume of the Speeches; Reports from Different Nations; The Peasant Proprietary Humbug; Resolutions Adopted; The Banquet.

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The body of Mr. Hicks's report described the evening meeting of June 10, 1889, at which Henry George was selected for honorary president, and Charles Longuet (a City Councillor of Paris) as permanent president.

The vice presidents were Messrs. Saunders of England, Flürscheim of Germany, Stoffel of Holland, Clarké of Scotland, De Potter of Belgium, Cyprani of Italy, Wallace of Ireland, Lindenberg of Denmark, and Simon of China.

The general secretary was Albert Toubeau of Paris, and the national secretaries were Verinder of England, Hicks of America, Carvalho of Portugal, Brouez of Belgium, and Delaporte of France.

Responding to the tribute of the permanent president in introducing him, Mr. George predicted an exceptionally great effect of this "congress on the land question"—greater, that is, than the effect of any of the other Paris congresses of that year in their respective fields.

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When the congress opened formally the next day, reports were made from different countries.

By Mr. Stoffel, land monopolists were reported to be the curse of Holland. William Saunders reported to the same effect for England, denouncing landlordism as "a breach of trust." From Belgium, Agathon de Potter, of the Colinsian cult, reported increasing "enslavement of laborers" under the Belgian peasant proprietary system. Michael Flürscheim reported for Germany, laying stress upon the question of interest. Bruce Wallace and Shaw Maxwell made impromptu reports for Ireland and Scotland respectively. Henry George's report for the United States traced land monopoly here from the settlers' days, and explained its influence in causing poverty.

The notion that "there are millions and millions of small peasant proprietors in France" was "utterly demolished" by Mr. Toubeau in a paper full of statistics endorsed by the finance minister. He showed that "nearly 75 per cent of the land proprietors possess only 10 per cent of the surface, while 12 per cent of the proprietors possess 77 per cent of the land," and "more generally 87 per cent of the proprietors possess only

23 per cent of the soil." Mr. Hicks quotes him literally as saying that "there is more land now in the hands of big proprietors than before the Revolution, and very few Frenchmen know this."

At the close of the session "the vice presidents and secretaries were constituted a permanent committee on time and place, and Henry George was chosen president."

Before adjourning, the conference adopted the following resolutions:

Whereas, land is not the product of labor but is the raw material or source from which all that is necessary for existence is drawn.

Whereas, labor is the only rational basis of property.

Whereas, the private ownership of land results in the enslavement or exploitation of labor.

Whereas, finally, this social condition begets dangers which, if neglected, will end in making all order impossible.

Therefore, this assembly declares that all private ownership of land should cease and give place to collective ownership for the common weal.

At the banquet, the following toasts were responded to: "Our Foreign Guests," by Charles Longuet, president of the conference, and a member of the Paris City Council. "The London City Council," by Mr. Furth. "Henry George," by Mr. Millerand, member of the Chamber of Deputies for the Seine—"a fine specimen of French eloquence, clear, musical and passionate," writes Mr. Hicks; followed by a response in which "Mr. George was equally warm, and his compliments to the French for their assistance to America in the past were eminently agreeable to the French representatives."

Continuing his Standard report of the banquet, Mr. Hicks wrote that—

M. Daumas, municipal Councilor, toasted Mr. Fürsheim, who, in his response, called on William Saunders of London. Mr. Torr of the London City Council, at the request of Mr. George, gave a brief review of the tax revision now going on in London. The final toasts were by M. Desmoulins on the "Knights of Labor" and M. Delaporte on the "Social Revolution."

The four column report by Mr. Hicks, in Henry George's "Standard"—much appreciated and doubtless well remembered by the American single taxers of that day,—from which our extracts and quotations are made, also mentions among the Americans at the conference, besides himself, John J. Hopper, representative of the Harlem (N. Y.) single tax club, and among those

at the banquet Mary P. Cranford. He closed his report with this paragraph:

After the banquet the delegates were introduced to the members of the Paris City Council present, and about midnight the last single tax man had passed out into the Rue de Rivoli to find his lodgings, near or far, and dream about the first International Congress of the Single Taxites.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

OREGON TAX AMENDMENTS.

Portland, Ore., Sept. 22.

History has no record of any horse-using people that "distributed" a 200-pound burden on a horse by putting 20 pounds on the horse's back, attaching 40 pounds to each leg, and hanging 20 pounds to the nose. How much wiser we are in the matter of taxation, for that's the way we "distribute and equalize" our tax burden. We put a few pounds on the horse's back, not as a burden, but to help the nose and legs carry their troubles; and in cases of emergency, we hang upon the nose an extra burden as a license to breathe, and tie an "occupation" burden to each leg. The Mad Hatter in "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" could think of nothing more absurd than that, so he said nothing about taxation; civilized man had beat him to the North Pole of absurdity.

Oregon voters have three tax amendments to the Constitution to vote on this year. At the request of the legislative committee of the State Grange, the legislature of 1909 submitted these two amendments:

No tax or duty shall be imposed without the consent of the people or their representatives in the Legislative Assembly. Taxes shall be levied and collected for public purposes only, and the power of taxation shall never be surrendered, suspended, or contracted away.

The Legislative Assembly shall, and the people through the Initiative may, provide by law a uniform rule of taxation, except on property specifically taxed. Taxes shall be levied on such property as shall be prescribed by law. The Legislature, or the people through the Initiative, may provide for the levy and collection of taxes for State purposes, and for county, and for other municipal purposes, upon different classes of property, and may provide for ascertainment, determination, and application of an average rate of levy and taxation upon property taxed for State purposes.

As is evident, those amendments do not go to the heart of the tax question, and therefore the following amendment was proposed through Initiative petition by the State Federation of Labor and the Central Labor Council of Portland and Vicinity:

No poll or head tax shall be levied or collected in Oregon; no bill regulating taxation or exemption throughout the State shall become a law until approved by the people of the State at a regular general election; none of the restrictions of the Constitution shall apply to measures approved by the people declaring what shall be subject to taxation or exemption and how it shall be taxed or exempted whether proposed by the Legislative Assembly or by Initiative petition; but the people of the several counties are hereby empowered and authorized to regulate taxation and exemptions within their several counties.