

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.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO LIBRARY

*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.

a direct assessment being made by the general government upon the State and paid by them from revenues collected in this manner.

The single tax we propose is not a tax on land, and therefore would not fall on the use of land and become a tax on labor.

It is a tax, not on land, but on the value of land. Thus it would not fall on all land, but only on valuable land, and on that not in proportion to the use made of it, but in proportion to its value—the premium which the user of land must pay to the owner, either in purchase money or rent, for permission to use valuable land. It would thus be a tax not on the use or improvement of land, but on the ownership of land, taking what would otherwise go to the owner as owner, and not as user.

In assessments under the Singletax all values created by individual use or improvement would be excluded, and the only value taken into consideration would be the value attaching to the bare land by reason of neighborhood, etc., to be determined by impartial periodical assessments. Thus the farmer would have no more taxes to pay than the speculator who held a similar piece of land idle, and the man who on a city lot erected a valuable building would be taxed no more than the man who held a similar lot vacant.

The Singletax, in short, would call upon men to contribute to the public revenues, not in proportion to what they produce or accumulate, but in proportion to the value of the natural opportunities they hold. It would compel them to pay just as much for holding land idle as for putting it to its fullest use.

The Singletax therefore would—

1. Take the weight of taxation off of the agricultural districts where land has little or no value irrespective of improvements, and put it on towns and cities where bare land rises to a value of millions of dollars per acre.
2. Dispense with a multiplicity of taxes and a horde of tax-gatherers, simplify government and greatly reduce its cost.
3. Do away with the fraud, corruption and gross inequality inseparable from our present methods of taxation, which allow the rich to escape while they grind the poor. Land cannot be hid or carried off, and its value can be ascertained with greater ease and certainty than any other.
4. Give us with all the world as perfect freedom of trade as now exists between the States of our Union, thus enabling our people to share, through free exchanges, in all the advantages which nature has given to other countries, or which the peculiar skill of other peoples has enabled them to attain. It would destroy the trusts, monopolies and corruptions which are the outgrowths of the tariff. It would do away with the fines and penalties now levied on anyone who improves a farm, erects a house, builds a machine, or in any way adds to the general stock of wealth. It would leave everyone free to apply labor or expend capital in production or exchange without fine or restriction, and would leave to each the full product of his exertion.
5. It would, on the other hand, by taking for public use that value which attaches to land by rea-

son of the growth and improvement of the community, make the holding of land unprofitable to the mere owner, and profitable only to the user. It would thus make it impossible for speculators and monopolists to hold natural opportunities unused or only half used, and would throw open to labor the illimitable field of employment which the earth offers to man. It would thus solve the labor problem, do away with involuntary poverty, raise wages in all occupations to the full earnings of labor, make overproduction impossible until all human wants are satisfied, render labor-saving inventions a blessing to all, and cause such an enormous production and such an equitable distribution of wealth as would give to all comfort, leisure and participation in the advantages of an advancing civilization.

With respect to monopolies other than the monopoly of land, we hold that where free competition becomes impossible, as in telegraphs, railroads, water and gas supplies, etc., such business becomes a proper social function, which should be controlled and managed by and for the whole people concerned, through their proper government, local, State or national, as may be.*

✦ ✦

Roll of First Singletax Conference.

Alabama—E. Q. Norton.

California—Hon. James G. Maguire, John A. Maynard, H. L. Pleace, Mrs. M. E. Rice, Miss Emmie Williams, John O'Gorman.

Colorado—G. Frank Otis, Oscar J. Frost, George Champion, John N. Lloyd, Jas. W. Bucklin.

Connecticut—W. C. Miner, David Wagner, Wm. H. Talmadge, Noah Pomeroy, John W. Lane, Willard D. Warren, Lawrence Dunham, J. J. Ryan, A. J. Bostwick, George St. John Leavens, Oliver Rule, Thos. Corscaden, J. N. Belden, W. J. Gorsuch.

Delaware—Geo. W. Kreer, Cornelia Kreer.

District of Columbia—Charles Frederick Adams, William Geddes, M. D., C. B. Hemingway.

Illinois—E. O. Brown, W. W. Bailey, J. T. Ripley, J. Z. White, Jas. Malcolm, E. J. Foord, Geo. J. Guenther.

Indiana—C. A. Kersey, M. D., C. S. Schneider, E. F. Fellows.

Iowa—Frank S. Churchill, A. O. Pitcher, M. D.

Louisiana—James Middleton.

Kentucky—Samuel H. Edgar.

Maine—A. C. Dunning, Thos. Marsden.

Maryland—Henry R. Hall, Wm. J. Ogden, John W. Jones, I. M. Pruzan, David Wassergug, W. N. Hill, M. D., George N. Numsen, James T. Kelly, J. G. Schonfarber, Charles Watson, J. Hicks Wrightson, David Bachrach.

*The second Singletax conference, held at the Columbian Exposition, in Chicago, affirmed August 30, 1893, the foregoing platform, except the last paragraph, "With respect to monopolies," etc. For this paragraph the Chicago Conference substituted the following: "In securing to each individual his equal right to the use of the earth, it is also a proper function of society to maintain and control all public ways for the transportation of persons and property and the transmission of intelligence; and also to maintain and control all public ways in cities for furnishing water, gas, and all other things that necessarily require the use of such common ways." Mr. George himself drafted the platform adopted in New York in 1890, including the final paragraph, and was chairman of the committee that reported it. As a member of the Conference at Chicago he opposed and voted against the alteration.