

It is certain that we have given too long and received nothing, or but little in return. The election of single taxers to office is a "sop to Cerebus." It is indicative only of the respect in which the leaders of the movement are held. It is something, it is true, but little after all. To make one strong man a convert to the great gospel of industrial freedom is worth a dozen single taxers elected to office. How best to make converts is the question, and it is just here that there is room for difference of opinion. Do we make more converts by working through the party that stands, though feebly, blindly, and blunderingly against monopoly, or would independent political action offer us a freer, more persuasive and, therefore, more effective means of propaganda? We confess that we do not know; there is much to be said on both sides, and we purpose in our next issue to give opportunity, so far as we can, to all those who desire to be heard. In the meantime, the article of Mr. Weeks is worthy of all the consideration that can be paid it.

There is one point, however, on which Mr. Weeks is clearly wrong, though it does not affect the validity of his argument. That is the assertion that the reduction of the tariff to a revenue basis would not raise wages, because land values would absorb the gain. Ultimately they would, but for a long time wages would rise and would continue to rise until finally arrested by the inevitable increase in land values. Mr. Weeks need only take into consideration the little island of England where the reduction of the tariff to a revenue basis has been followed by a real increase in wages there and in other parts of Great Britain. Land values have not entirely absorbed such wage increase after fifty years. How much greater would such increase be, how much more difficult of absorption by rising land values in a country such as ours!

OUR NEW CONGRESSMAN.

Robert Baker, (Democrat), elected to the 58th Congress from the 6th New York District (Brooklyn), was born in 1862, and is one of the most active single tax men in the country. For six years he was National Committeeman from New York State, and Secretary of the Single Tax League of the U. S., Tom Johnson being the chairman. He has always been active in efforts to bring about much needed changes in the tax laws of the state and nation, for four years being the Secretary of the New York Tax Reform Association, and of the Brooklyn Revenue Reform Club, conducting the campaign of those organizations in New York State for the Home Rule in Taxation Bill, which was drawn by the late Thomas G. Shearman, the author of "Natural Taxation." He has also been Secretary of the Albany Single Tax Club, and both secretary

and president of the Brooklyn Single Tax League.

Although he supported Grover Cleveland in 1884, it was not until three years later that he took an active part in political affairs.

Residing in Albany in 1886, he was one of those who viewed with consternation and dismay the candidacy of Henry George for Mayor of the City of New York, and breathed a sigh of intense relief when the "saviors of society" who were Republican joined hands with Democratic "saviors" to avert what he then regarded as an impending irreparable calamity. Ten months later he was one of an audience that Henry George addressed, and was so impressed with the evident sincerity of the man, and the apparent truth of his statements, that he determined to thoroughly investigate the whole subject of taxation, and forthwith purchased a complete set of Henry George's books. Soon after he announced himself as a convert, and was elected Secretary of the Albany Single Tax Club. Moving to Brooklyn two years later, he was soon chosen Secretary of the Brooklyn Single Tax League, and later its president, in the meantime industriously circulating the petition for a congressional investigation of the single tax, securing 1,800 signatures. He was the secretary of the Brooklyn Ballot Reform League, and aided materially in securing the present modified Australian Ballot Law.

He was one of the delegates of the Brooklyn Single Tax Club to the National Single Tax Convention at Cooper Union, August, 1890, and also to the International Convention, held during the World's Fair at Chicago, in September, 1893, on which occasion he was chairman of the special committee, consisting of C. G. Buell, of Minneapolis; John Z. White, of Chicago; Jackson Ralston, of Hyattsville, Md.; Helene, of Adrian, Mich.; and Robert Baker, of New York, appointed during the second day's proceedings to draw up a plank covering the question of the attitude of the movement to the nationalization of the railroads, telegraphs, etc., and which reported the plank as adopted, such plank becoming the concluding paragraph of the platform then promulgated.

In 1892 he determined to take the fullest advantage of the general discontent with McKinleyism, and urged upon the Democratic leaders in Brooklyn the wisdom of enlisting the enthusiastic support of the free traders and single taxers by nominating a Henry George man for the Assembly. This was done, and Alfred J. Wolf was named, and Mr. Baker conducted his campaign, the single tax men holding open-air cart-tail meetings all over the district, inviting questions from their audiences and challenging opponents to speak at their meetings. The result was a reduction of the Republican plurality from 2,400 to 426.

Early in the following year he again brought the single taxers together and they organized the Citizens Union, electing Mr. Baker as secretary and later chairman of the Executive Committee, which was made up almost entirely of single tax men. Their object was to bring about the nomination and election of William J. Gaynor for Mayor and the election of several of their number to the Legislature. This was frustrated by the Republicans nominating Schieren for Mayor and Gaynor for Supreme Court Judge. Later in the summer Robert Baker was one of ten men, including Thomas G. Shearman and Edward M. Grout, who selected the Committee of One Hundred, and Mr. Baker was chosen its secretary.

In 1894 he was a candidate of the Shepard organization for the Assembly, in the present Eleventh Assembly District, which is part of the Sixth Congressional District, conducting the same kind of campaign that had been made for Wolf two years before.

1896 found him earnestly supporting Bryan and Sewall, not for Free Silver, but for free men, being convinced that the forces which had brought about Bryan's nomination were imbued with the true spirit of Democracy and would if successful do much to curb the arrogance of plutocracy and open the eyes of the masses of the people, in part at least, to the causes through which monopoly obtains its power to oppress and rob the people. He insisted that it was the first real cleavage between those who in the party were animated by Democratic ideals, and that it was clearly the duty of those who desired to secure equality of opportunity for all to throw their influence for the new forces in the party. In pursuance of this policy he vigorously opposed the attempt of Edward M. Shepard to secure unanimous endorsement of Palmer and Buckner by his organization, and single handed and alone was able to master thirty-two votes against such action. It was on this occasion that Shepard made his attack on the single tax men of the country, declaring it would be years before they would recover from their association with Bryan and his heresies and policy of national dishonor.

Mr. Baker took an active part in the campaign that year, speaking not only throughout Brooklyn, but also in the largest towns of Long Island. The next year he actively supported Henry George in his second Mayoralty canvass, having charge of the work of securing the necessary signatures to the nominating petitions required to place his name on the official ballot, and he also addressed numerous single tax meetings.

He spent most of the two following years in Canada and Europe, and therefore took no part in the campaigns of 1898 and 1899. In 1900 he spoke under the auspices of the

Democratic State Committee in Cohoes, Syracuse and other places in central New York. Immediately after the election that year he undertook the task of organizing the Citizens' Union in Brooklyn, having been urged to do this several months before by prominent and conservative citizens, but refusing so long as great national questions were at stake. He made it perfectly clear that if he undertook this it would be for the purpose of enlisting the radicals and particularly the single taxers. Apparently he succeeded beyond anything the aforesaid influential citizens expected or desired. For on an attempt being made to displace him they were overwhelmingly beaten, and in the Borough Convention in Brooklyn the radicals routed the mossbacks by over four to one, and nominated Robert Baker for Sheriff. The Republican organization, however, refused to accept him, declaring that he did not "measure up" to that office. Baker then withdrew and the fusion forces nominated one of the leading radicals (a Henry George man), M. J. Flaherty, for Coroner, while the Republicans secured the nomination of one of their men, Charles A. Guden, for Sheriff. That the latter fully "measured up" to the office was soon shown, for he had scarcely been elected when a faction in his own organization brought charges of corrupt anti-election bargaining against him, which, on being tried before Governor Odell—a Republican—resulted in his being removed from office.

Early in 1902 Robert Baker was the most active force in bringing into existence the Radical Democracy of Brooklyn, composed largely of Henry George men—those who had been active and influential in the Citizens' Union the previous year. It was hoped that with such an organization they could induce the Democratic party there to not only nominate their choice for Governor of the State—Bird S. Coler—but also secure the nomination of several of their members, either for Congress, Senate or Assembly.

On September 19 he drafted and secured the adoption of a series of planks for presentation to the Democratic State Convention and was appointed chairman of a committee of five to proceed to Saratoga and urge their incorporation in the State platform. The whole committee waited on ex-Senator Hill and advocated this course, and the next day Mr. Baker went before the Committee on Resolutions and urged the particular inclusion in the platform of the planks favoring the election of United States Senators by popular vote and the demand for the acquirement and operation of the railroads and anthracite coal mines, contending there was no hope of relief for the people in any other way, as Pennsylvania was entirely dominated and controlled by the very railroads that owned the anthracite coal deposits. Both of these planks were finally included in the State platform.

Returning to Brooklyn the Radical Democracy renewed its demand for the nomination of some of its members by the Democrats, and presented a list of names from which selections were asked. The request was complied with to the extent of nominating Robert Baker for Congress and Edwin J. Chapman and Edward A. Miller, two other single taxers, for the Assembly. An active campaign of the single tax kind—open air truck meetings, etc.—was at once inaugurated, and the “old guard” of the Henry George movement threw themselves into the fight with all their old time energy and enthusiasm, despite what to some appeared as a hopeless up hill fight, but Baker insisted from the first that he would win, and despite the bitter attacks made upon him by some of E. M. Shephard’s chief lieutenants and particularly by the Brooklyn *Eagle*, which honored no other Democratic candidate for Congress with its opposition, and which took advantage of every opportunity to draw an unfavorable comparison with the other Democratic Congressional candidates, insisting that “decent” Democrats would resent such a nomination, and that in any event the district was so overwhelmingly Republican that he would be beaten by a large plurality, yet the despised Henry George man carried a district which as at present constituted gave McKinley 4,577 plurality, by a plurality of 466.

Not the least gratifying feature of the situation is found in the fact that not alone did Baker get a larger proportionate vote than any other Democratic Congressional candidate—with the exception of Fitzgerald, one of the sitting members who had no opposition—but he ran ahead of Coler, the gubernatorial candidate, in nearly every election district where the Republicans are in the majority, the very sections in which the *Eagle* has its largest circulation, as it is a 3 cent paper. This is an indication of the magnificent and effective campaign made by the single tax men, and clearly shows that Baker’s radical views, so far from being a handicap, were a source of strength when explained as they were from the tail end of trucks.

FATHER TOM.

AN APPRECIATION OF THE LATE REV. THOMAS M’LOUGHLIN, OF NEW ROCHELLE, BY A PROTESTANT IN THE PARISH.

It would be sacrilege to head this short sketch other than it is, as he was “Father Tom” to everybody—rich and poor—and to those of all creeds and politics. This is a key to the lovability of his character. He was always near the heart of all the people. He had his foibles and his fancies, but he was always true to his Maker and just with his neighbors. A vigorous, whole-

some body and mentality were his chief characteristics.

He belonged to a school of priests, probably extinct in this country, possibly plenty still in Ireland—forceful and crude, but always sincere. If one should describe his life as something between Ian McLaren’s, Dr. McLure and Father Phil in “Handy Andy,” one would not be wide of the mark.

His fifty years of priesthood led him within the line of his duty, away from home and comfort in all weathers, for the cure of his parishioners’ souls, and he hated hypocrisy and always called a spade a spade, even if policy dictated it should be termed a fire shovel.

In the short space allotted me I may only indulge in a few sketches and stories of the man—for he was a man first and a priest afterwards. The story most often told is the story of the building of his new church. Imagine the fire of the old church—the controversy with those who would have built him a new one, and the resulting struggle of triumphant effort, in the erection of the magnificent new edifice, which his parishioners have finally made his monument, by depositing his body at its side, by itself, alone. And this was accomplished *after he was seventy years old*, and in spite of opposition within his own church family. It is true, the Protestants, as in Father Phil’s old time with the thatched roof, contributed to the cause, but their financial help was really infinitesimal, although their moral support may easily have been a source of a strength to an old man, who had passed the allotted span of life, and who should have been resting rather than struggling. And when the labor was accomplished, the edifice finished, the pride of Father Tom was the pride of all old New Rochelle, no matter what its creed. A monument it stands to New Rochelle and to Father Tom, and an example to posterity of what industry, will, frugality and administrative ability will accomplish for any man, endowed with the qualities of this country priest, no matter how late in life the effort may be made.

Father Tom was a man of the strongest convictions always. In war time he was a loyal Union man and became a Republican. From that political faith he never wavered until Henry George became a positive force in the thought of the nation. The writer recalls how he was loaned book after book of the apostle of single tax by Father Tom, and how he skimmed through them, much to his later discomfiture, as Father McLoughlin invariably questioned the writer, until the carelessness of my reading was laid naked before him. Then, and only then, for very shame, the writer read the books through, and while never converted to their theories he understood them, believed in the honesty of conviction of those who believed in them and recognized, what everyone must, their mag-