

Of the Great Primeval plan—
I behold the full fruition
Of the dreamed of new condition
In the Brotherhood of Man.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

MR. BOOKER T. WASHINGTON NOW DENIES IT.

In our last number we printed a declaration of Booker T. Washington, the distinguished Principal of Tuskegee College, in which he boldly advocated his belief in the Single Tax. Such declaration was reprinted from the *Johnstown Democrat*. Mr. Green, of Chicago, a good Single Taxer, being somewhat skeptical on the matter, wrote to Mr. Washington, and received word from Mr. Washington's private secretary that Mr. W. had made no such statement. We immediately wrote to Warren Worth Bailey, editor of the *Johnstown Democrat*. Here is what Mr. Bailey has to say:

"This raises a most surprising issue of veracity between the distinguished colored educator and myself, but happily I was not alone with Mr. Washington at the time the remark was made. The conversation took place in Mr. Washington's room at his hotel on a lecture visit to Johnstown. I had accompanied him from the hall to his hotel. We there met Robert E. Cresswell, a prominent attorney and politician of this city. We went from the lobby to Mr. Washington's room, and there a few minutes later were joined by Attorney Thomas J. Itell, another prominent lawyer and active politician. In the room a conversation which had been begun from the hall to the hotel was continued. I had challenged a position which Mr. Washington had taken in his lecture. I insisted that he had shown in the lecture itself that the race question, as it affected the south, was, in fact, a labor question, because he had demonstrated by individual illustrations that the ordinary race prejudice had disappeared, even at the South, where black men attained social independence through the acquisition of opportunity and the development of their powers where such opportunity invited and made possible. The conversation was animated and direct, and in the course of it Mr. Washington said with emphasis that the Single Tax was the only salvation of the South. He said in effect that land monopoly was the great bar to the progress not only of his race, but of the white race as well. There was no qualification of his statement. The only thing that struck me was that he pursued the line he was following only because he is receiving the support of the great plutocratic interests, and is doing in a small way a work that gives him personal satisfaction and practically world-wide fame. Were he to attempt bringing about a fundamental reform under which his race as a

whole would be lifted up, I am sure that many sources from which he now draws strength would be closed against him. That he realizes this I have no sort of doubt, nor have I any doubt that his reason for wishing now to deny the statement for which I vouch is that if allowed to go unchallenged would be to invite the suspicion and perhaps open hostility of those society saviours who are always ready to help along enterprises similar to that with which Mr. Washington is connected.

"I think myself any one can see a reason why Mr. Washington should deny this remark. Those who know me will find it difficult to conceive a reason why I should misrepresent the gentleman. As a matter of fact, the statement was made in a private conversation, and I did not feel at liberty to use it in my paper except incidentally long afterwards in an editorial. At one time I had thought of writing up the substance of the conversation and publishing it as a news item, but when I reflected that Mr. Washington had talked perhaps without thought of publication, although he knew I was a newspaper man, it would be wholly unfair to him to do so, because he knew the holding of such sentiments by him, if known by the general public, would render him unpopular among the dilettante philanthropists who take pleasure in spending some small part of their unearned gains in charitable undertakings."

In a later communication to the *Review* Mr. Bailey writes:

"Mr. Cresswell and Mr. Itell have both been out of the city for a week in attendance at court, and I am not able to obtain their corroborative statements. I am not quite sure that both gentlemen were present at the time this remark was made. One or the other of them certainly was. I recall that Mr. Itell joined us after we had gone to the room, and that he left some time before Mr. Cresswell and myself, who stayed with Mr. Washington until time for his train. It is possible that Mr. Itell did not hear the remark. It is certain that Mr. Cresswell did hear it, and doubtless he will not have forgotten it."

With the desire to be just to all parties the editor of the *Review* wrote to Mr. Washington. From the latter's private secretary came an answer that Mr. Washington was out of town, and the matter would be laid before him on his return. Here the controversy may be allowed temporarily to rest. We do not think it unlikely that Mr. Washington, on reflection, may be able to recall substantially what he did say in the interview with Mr. Bailey. It is of importance, of course, that if Mr. Washington entertains a genuine belief in the single tax he should become an outspoken advocate. There need be no denying the value to the cause of such a convert. In the meantime, until we can hear from Mr. Washington, it will be well to remember that Mr. Bailey is

a cautious newspaper man, whose personal integrity would not permit him to misrepresent the opinion of any individual. Among single taxers and in the wider newspaper world his statements of fact will carry conviction. And in this case it appears he is not without corroborative witnesses. Our readers may therefore be left for the present to draw their own conclusions.

THE GAINS IN THE ELECTIONS.

There have been many gains secured in the recent elections. Perhaps the most important of these is the election to Congress of our old and devoted single tax worker, Robert Baker, a sketch of whom appears on another page. But hardly less important is the election of Lucius F. C. Garvin, a veteran in the single tax ranks, to the governorship of Rhode Island. Dr. Garvin has been a member of the Rhode Island assembly for many years, and has come to be known as a man to be reckoned with. Unless we except the late Hazen S. Pingree, he is perhaps the first single tax executive we have had.

In California another single taxer, Franklin K. Lane, has been defeated for governorship, but only by the narrowest of margins. This, for California, a state where monopolistic forces control, is a substantial victory.

In West Virginia, Chas. M. Wetzel has been elected to the House of Delegates. He was formerly an Indiana man, is a forceful speaker, and has been a single taxer for many years. He will have an opportunity to expose the falacies in the measure now before the legislature of West Virginia, which, while proposing to abolish the system of personal property taxation, favors the substitution of license taxes, which is a proposition to jump from the frying pan into the fire. As the tax question is now an active one in West Virginia, we may expect that Mr. Wetzel will be heard from.

Clarence S. Darrow, a good enough single taxer for present purposes, is elected to the Illinois legislature.

Charles R. Eckert is defeated for Congress in Pennsylvania, as was anticipated. But this man, also a single taxer, is not cast down. When the news came that he was defeated, he wrote a friend: "The progress of reform is at best slow and tedious, and I have reached the point where I simply labor and wait in hope and faith."

In Colorado we appear to have won at the polls and lost in the count. In other words, a widespread and systematic scheme of fraud prevailed, by which the Bucklin amendment has been defeated.

In Ohio Mayor Johnson has received a temporary setback. But even here the defeat, if defeat it be, has its compensations. Johnson carries the city of Cleveland by the normal Johnson majority, and his re-election to the mayoralty of the city is assured.

Ohio will yet wake to the true greatness of the men who are fighting the battles for justice. As yet they distrust and doubt, and cannot be persuaded that Johnson is anything more than an ordinary politician, seeking his own political advantages for his own selfish purposes. But the time will come. Perhaps it is necessary that they should become a little more hungry, a little more needy.

On the whole, the results of the November elections are gratifying. The great cause moves on, and the truth that never yet lost a war loses now and then a battle. These are of small consequence.

When the dispiriting news came of the election of 1887, in which the splendid majority of 68,000 that Mr. George had secured for mayor a year before, had dwindled to something like half that number, the leader, whose faith saw the hand of God in so much that had occurred in his wonderfully eventful life, was asked by one whose lesser faith at the moment faltered, if he saw the hand of God in that, too. With his eyes thoughtfully fixed on the starry heavens, this man, in whom the spirit of the prophets of Israel lived again, answered solemnly, "I do not see it, but it is there."

COMMUNICATIONS.

SPOKANE, WASH.

Editor *Review*:

I have read with unusual interest your editorial in the last *Single Tax Review* concerning a national organization, which, in addition to other work, could assume management and publication of a national single tax paper. Such an organization is, in my judgment, greatly needed, and could be made to do immense good. It could assume management, also, of a lecture bureau, and in innumerable ways carry on propaganda work and enable single tax advocates throughout the country to come into closer touch with the movement and know better what others were doing.

The American Peace Society has such an organization, with headquarters in Boston. The payment of twenty dollars entitles one to a life membership, and all life members receive its national paper *The Advocate of Peace*, free. I trust you will push your suggestion and hope it may assume practical form. Certainly such an organization could do great good if conducted along right lines.

GEORGE DANA LINN.

This is the only communication called forth by our article in the last number on the necessity of a national organization. Whatever differences of opinion may exist as to the wisdom of political action, there ought not be two opinions as to the importance of a great national organization. The