

renew his adhesion to the principle of party organization to carry out our principles, though he deprecated the attitude of some of the Land Value Tax party members in their attitude of hostility to other methods of propaganda. We may be very confident of the correctness of our own view as to the need of political party organization, but we have at least failed to convince more than one per cent. of Single Taxers, and this ought to lead us at all times to re-examine our conclusions very modestly in the light of what is being accomplished by other methods.

Mr. Bastida spoke of the wide-spread suspicion that when Single Taxers started anything it was with some political purpose in view. He said this was sincerely to be regretted. Single Taxers were all divided at election time. Some went into Tammany, some into the Republican Party, some into the Progressive Party, and some of the more consistent voted with the Socialists, as that party did constitute a party of protest. This division caused people to question our motives, and to look upon us as a house divided against itself.

Other speakers were Alexandre Law, Dan Cavanagh, C. Reis and Charles Frederick Adams.

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#### THE SPANISH SINGLE TAX CONFERENCE.

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(See Frontispiece.)

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There took place at Ronda, Spain, on May 26, 27 and 28 the first National Single Tax Conference ever held in that country. And both the convention and the reception accorded the foreign delegates at Ronda were worthy of the occasion. When Mr. Joseph Fels, M. J. Stewart and others stepped from the train at Ronda they were greeted by a crowd of fully one thousand persons, including the local trades unions, with handsome banners and the town band of 36 performers. It was a reception which evidenced the fruits of the splendid agitation which has been carried on by Antonio Albendin, Fransisco Rubio, Baldemero Argente—recently appointed Parliamentary Under-

Secretary to the Premier—and many others.

The meeting was called to order on the morning of the 26th, and Dr. Felix Vitale, of Montevideo, delegate from Uruguay, was chosen president as a compliment to South American Single Taxers. Mr. Fels was made Hon. President. About 700 were in attendance. The subjects discussed at the first day's session were: (1) Means to unite the efforts of the Single Tax movement throughout the world and (2) Means to unite the Spanish movement with the movement in South America. On the following day the subjects for discussion were (1) The Single Tax movement in Spain; how to make it tangible in acts of Parliament; and (2) Municipal budgets and the municipalization of natural monopolies. On Wednesday the topics were: (1) Best way to propagate the Single Tax; and (2) Best way to interest official organizations in the Single Tax. In the report of these proceedings prepared by M. J. Stewart and appearing in *Land Values*, of London, we find such well known names as Dr. W. Schrameier, Berlin; M. Georges Darien, Paris; Johan Hansson, Sweden.

The various resolutions adopted are splendid, uncompromising declarations of principle; one calls for the celebration by Georgists all over the world of the 2nd of September, that being the birthday of the prophet; another declares for the municipalization of natural monopolies such as tramways, and the supply of light, water, etc.; another petitions Parliament for the freedom of municipalities in matters of taxation, and a resolution offered by Mr. Fels calls upon "the democracies of old and new Spain" to break down the tariff walls and derive all necessary revenue from the value of land.

The Spanish press gave generous reports of the Conference. The principal illustrated weekly, *Mundo Grafico*, gave a page to the Congress, with portraits of Messrs. Fels, Darien, Dundas White, Albendin, and Post.

In no country in the world has our movement progressed so rapidly from small beginnings to splendid proportions. A few years ago Antonio Albendin was working almost alone. Now he is sur-

rounded by a splendid company of university men, officials, publicists, and citizens. Twenty-six Spanish provinces were represented in this Congress. It is significant that a well known Spanish Republican, Senor Azcarrate, told a Madrid Single Taxer that nothing but the apathy of the Single Taxers themselves could prevent an early victory for the movement. And of such apathy there is no sign and little apprehension. The Congress at Ronda has demonstrated that our movement is a living force in Spanish affairs.

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### CORRESPONDENCE.

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#### COMMENDATION FROM ENGLAND.

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EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

I am very pleased with your enterprise and the excellence of your special numbers that result from it; and yet more with the sanity and practical tone of your editorial comments, of which the last number is only one case. Your advice as to the Fels fund would have been of great value, and your dignified suggestions on page 69-72 deserve the most serious consideration. A more flamboyant style seems to appeal to taste in U. S. A., for a time; but serious consistent work gets as good a result there as elsewhere in the long run when the stampede has passed "like a motor car, with a noise of clanking machinery, a cloud of blinding dust, and a faint offence in the air as reminiscence."

Falmouth, Eng. M. J. STEWART.

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#### PRIVATE PROPERTY IN LAND.

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EDITOR SINGLE TAX REVIEW:

If Mr. Lewis H. Berens had been familiar with my view as set forth with extreme care in "The A B C of Taxation", Chapter VII, on Private Property in Land, it is difficult to conceive how he could have written his criticism of my position in your May-June issue.

Mr. Berens truly says:

"If it be admitted that private ownership of land *as we know it today, with its claim to the private appropriation, or confiscation, of its rental value,* is just and

expedient, then, to my mind, the moral justification for the taxation of land values at once disappears."

Mr. Berens' qualification, "as we know it today" is identical with the mental reservation always held, as has been amply shown, by Mr. George, and to the statement so explained, we say amen and amen.

With this statement, that in the A B C of Taxation as above cited is in entire consonance. It is as follows:

"Henry George's proposal was to leave owners in possession of land, and to accord to that possession the legal right of physical dominion by means of a broad definition of the word, made to include the right "to buy and sell, bequeath and devise," or, in the usual form of the real estate deed, "to give, grant, bargain, sell and convey"—a right universally granted to ownership and property. . . . Title to the land itself whether its value is one dollar or a million dollars, is necessary to security of improvements. Title to the annual value of land—ground rent—is not necessary to the security of improvements, which would be equally secure whether one-quarter or three-quarters (or all) of ground rent be taken in taxation."

Mr. Berens quotes from Progress and Poverty that "the truth is, and from this truth there can be no escape, that there is and can be no just title to the exclusive possession of the soil." Surely Mr. Berens does not mean to subscribe to this statement, because exclusive "possession" is the very thing that Mr. George expressly conceded.

The statement taken from "Our Land and Land Policy" (1872) cited by the Editor on p. 233 of the Life of Henry George is as follows:

"It by no means follows that there should be no such thing as property in land, but merely that there should be no monopolization—no standing between the man who is willing to work and the field which nature offers for his labor. For while it is true that the land of a country is the free gift of the Creator to all the people of that country, to the enjoyment of which each has an equal natural right, it is also true that the recognition of private ownership in land is necessary to its