

acter of communities to certain forms and likenesses, were methods which for a long time influenced in a very slight degree the writing of history. Buckle did not hold so lightly the supreme duty of the historian.

Froude, in his brilliant fashion, has denied the possibility of a science of history, since no scientific method will enable us to foretell events with the same certainty that characterizes cause and effect in the applied sciences. Clearly there cannot be a science of history in the same sense as there is a science of chemistry. Nor can there be a science of economics in the same sense as there is a science of chemistry. We shall do well to indicate the difference. History is concerned with what is past, and prediction—or even a reasonably probable forecast—is no part of the office of the historian. And both history and political economy are concerned with men and women whose impulses are not fixed but variable, and in these impulses there must be something that defies scientific analysis.

Yet between the study of history pursued scientifically and history as written by those who were mere chroniclers, even though eloquent and gifted, there is all the difference that exists between the political economy of Adam Smith and Henry George, and all that preceded the first named, with ninety per cent. of what has been contributed since their time.

Though we may be rightfully distrustful of generalized views of history, since we know that all the modifications which history undergoes cannot be referred to any single principle, and though we do well to reject what may be termed the "hunger theory" of the socialists—the economic interpretation of history—it may be said that they alone have indicated the true line of inquiry. For it is at least an effort to refer historical phenomena to some principle—to discover some law underlying progress.

We agree to the existence of a moral law. Some sort of consensus of opinion has been reached regarding the nature of this moral law. Whether we refer it to the combined experience of the race, or to an instinct implanted by religion, we have nevertheless arrived at certain conclusions regarding its value and development. At all events, we have pursued the inquiry with some approach to scientific method. Have we done the same with economic phenomena? The answer must be that we have not.

**SAYS** John Spargo: "Socialism, in the modern scientific sense, is a theory of social evolution. Its hopes for the future rest . . . upon the forces of historic development."

How this will hearten the workers of the world! Of course they cannot eat, nor clothe themselves with the "forces of historic development." When they complain that wages decrease and rents increase, they will be told that the forces of historic development are still with them. Their emancipation is far in the future, so far that they may well turn despairingly to more dangerous advisers who urge that their ills may be cured by resort to violence and destruction.

We do not know which group of the "friends" of labor are more to be shunned.

## Platform of the National Single Tax League

THE SINGLE TAX LIMITED AND APOLOGETIC

**T**HE National Committee of the Single Tax League met at the residence of Bolton Hall on August 18, accepted the resignation of Daniel Kiefer, elected Prof. L. J. Johnson chairman, and H. H. Willock, treasurer, and adjourned. No public announcement has been made of the future programme. Whether the absurd and undemocratic features of the existing constitution are to be retained, along with those semi-secret meetings that have characterized the organization in the past, we do not learn. Whether the committee will continue the policy of soliciting funds to be spent as seems best to them, furnishing no really satisfactory statement of expenditures and spending large sums for office up-keep and the circularizing of "flimsies" containing bits of idle gossip, is also uncertain.

It is a little disquieting that Mr. Towne is retained as National Organizer but more reassuring that Prof. Johnson who, though a Single Taxer of the Fillebrown school, is at least a level-headed teacher and an accomplished speaker and writer, is to be the directing head. Whether one holding the views he does of the Single Tax is qualified to act as the head of an organization representing the great movement of emancipation, may well be doubted. But that consideration need not concern us for the moment.

This latest gathering of the officials of an association supposed to represent a movement whose aims are the most far-reaching in human history, was characteristic of what has gone before. The meeting occurred in the Fifth Avenue district to which no intruder would dare venture except in a limousine. (Incidentally it may be observed that car fares in New York are still five cents, though three cent car fares, that were once supposed to be the necessary preliminary first steps to the Single Tax, are further away than ever.) Here met the men whose denunciations of plutocracy have long been an interesting but quite harmless feature of these occasions. The peculiar appropriateness of the neighborhood may be conceded in the fact that the meeting itself was as exclusive as any family gathering would be in this very exclusive neighborhood.

The kind of a declaration of Single Tax principles under these circumstances is such as might have been anticipated. The Single Tax is introduced as we would introduce a poor relation in the parlors of the *haut ton*. We print it on another page. It is rambling and inconclusive—almost apologetic. In place of a ringing declaration that we have the right to demand at this time we get an essay explaining, and explaining in the language of metaphysics. We ask the reader to contrast this cold and repelling document with the Single Tax platform adopted at Albany. (See July–August REVIEW.)

Note some of the phrases in this remarkable document. "The discontent that mistakenly threatens the whole system of private ownership of land"; agriculture "a needlessly precarious occupation"; "the predacious manipulation of

land"; and other phrases suitable enough perhaps for an essay but out of place here, for this is a resolution supposed to be the last word to the country on the question. As such it is the most inadequate set of resolutions ever presented by any body supposed to be speaking for the Single Taxers of the nation.

In the platform we have this gem. "We, the National Committee of the National Single Tax League of the United States—*most of us landowners, as it happens*, etc." How *naive!* What abnegation! As if it mattered in a declaration of immutable principles whether they owned anything at all or possessed all the resources of the Indies!

Here is the serious feature of the situation. It will be obvious that Single Taxers may be committed to anything under this kind of organization by a star chamber meeting, without preliminary notice or opportunity for discussion. What do the proxy voters know of what is being done by the proxy holders, and if dissatisfied how can they shift their votes to some one who would better represent them under this preposterous constitution? No professional politician would ever have dared to put over such a form of organization, holding such possibilities of absolutism.

No such platform would be possible with a full and fair discussion. It is made possible because of the kind of organization. In a recent issue of the REVIEW we said, commenting upon the resignation of Daniel Kiefer, that such resignation would do no good. We reiterate that it is time for the League to put up the shutters, since it shows no disposition to mend itself. It is preposterous to make Mr. Kiefer the "goat." He is not responsible for the kind of organization we have had for so many years. Here is the situation. A few committeemen, who are near enough to New York to afford the carfare, are called to a hurried meeting at a private residence to promulgate a platform for Single Taxers in the same arbitrary fashion that an anti-Single Tax platform was adopted in Delaware twenty years ago. That a few individuals, merely because they hold proxies, should presume to commit the Single Taxers of the country to a long, involved metaphysical document which nobody had a chance to discuss, is a commentary on the undemocratic nature of that body. Under any proper organization matters of importance could be committed to the national committeemen long in advance of discussion, and meetings held at stated periods such as would admit of a full representation.

P. S.—We anticipate the receipt of some indignant letters condemning us for the attitude we take on this declaration of principles. Before printing these we shall ask that the writers certify that they have read every word of these Resolutions and that they endorse every sentiment there expressed. We ask them therefore to go back and read these resolutions a second time. We are becoming rather tired of communications showing that the writers have not understood or digested the matters under discussion. We shall print all such carefully considered communications.

THE trouble with the Single Tax movement is that it has been petrified into a formula.

## Single Taxers in the Service

IT is a splendid list that follows of the Single Taxers in the military service of their country, many of them now in France. It is only a partial list at that:

Frank F. Anderson, Minneapolis, Minn., U.S.N.A.  
 Lieut. Ernest Angell, Cleveland, Ohio.  
 Lieut. Walter Bailey, Boston, Red Cross, France.  
 Prof. George M. P. Baird, Pittsburgh, U.S.N.A.  
 Gladwyn Bouton, U.S.A., France.  
 Lieut. Malcolm C. Burke, Tuscaloosa, Ala., Camp Oglethorpe, Ga.  
 Lieut. Humbert J. Carroll, Cleveland, Ohio.  
 Capt. Philip H. Cornick, Camp Pike, Ark.  
 Capt. J. W. Freeman, Pittsburgh, U.S.N.A., France.  
 Major Boyd Fisher, Detroit, Michigan.  
 Capt. W. W. Gilmer, U.S.N.  
 Gen. W. C. Gorgas, Surgeon-General, U.S.A.  
 Capt. Ralph W. Gray, Boston, U.S.N.A., France.  
 Allen W. Gill, Youngstown, Ohio, U.S.N.A.  
 Dr. Emil S. Geist, Minneapolis, Minn.  
 Lieut. D. E. Hinkle, Springfield, Ill., France.  
 J. M. Holmes, U.S.N.  
 Sergeant Aug. E. Hanson, Chicago, 49th Field Art., A.E.F., France.  
 Warren H. Hopkins, Brookline, Mass., Infantry, U.S.N.A.  
 Lieut. R. J. Holmden, Kansas City, Mo., France.  
 R. V. Ingersoll, Brooklyn, N. Y., Y.M.C.A., France.  
 Dr. D. F. Jackson, Pittsburgh, Camp Devons, Ayers, Mass.  
 William Jeffrey, Y.M.C.A., England.  
 Lieut. H. M. Johnson, Cleveland, Ohio.  
 Capt. Earl W. Kelly, Duluth, Minn., Eng'r Dept., U.S.N.A.  
 Major Bascom Little, Cleveland, Ohio, Ordnance Dept., Washington, D. C.  
 Major John Z. Lowe, New York City, Camp Devons, Ayers, Mass.  
 Major Fred. J. Miller, U.S.A.  
 Herbert Moulton, Chicago, Ill., U.S.N.A.  
 A. G. Osborne, Montclair, N. J., U.S.N.A.  
 Prof. E. R. Ormsbee, Walla Walla, Washington.  
 Brig.-Gen. J. H. Pendleton, U.S.M.C.  
 R. M. Phinney, Chicago, 45th Ry. Battalion, U.S.N.A.  
 Lieut. John Purdy, Philadelphia, Pa., U.S.N.A.  
 Major Gordon Robinson, Washington, D. C., Q. M. Dept., France.  
 Major D. Waite Robertson, Washington, D. C.  
 Capt. Wm. H. Sargent, Phoenix, Ariz., U.S.A. Reserves.  
 Alex. Y. Scott, Red Cross, France.  
 Florence B. Skivens, Red Cross, France.  
 Capt. Jeremiah J. Smith, Jr., Cambridge, Mass., Q.M. Dept.  
 Everard P. Smith, U.S.A.  
 Ray H. Tabor, Edgewood Park, Penna., Machine Gun Squad, Canadian Volunteers, France.

THE profiteering that cannot be got at by the restraints of conscience and love of country can be got at by the taxing power.  
 PRESIDENT WILSON.