

WILL they do it? They will not. They are under no obligation to do it. They went into office as Democrats, not as Single Taxers. They did not fool themselves and they were not trying to fool anybody. It was we who fooled ourselves. We had the wrong political psychology, that is all. We still have it, though in a greatly diminished measure. We meet it every now and then when we are told: "These men are only waiting their opportunity. Be patient. They are advocating measures they know to be all wrong, but which they support in order to obtain favor with the people and get their confidence. Then they will seize the propitious time to put over the Single Tax." Oh, ye of boundless faith!

NOR are we inclined to blame them, these Single Taxers in office, if they exhibit a certain subserviency to prevailing beliefs—we mean prevailing official beliefs. We do not expect the same vigor of utterance from these men in office as out of office. We know how they sprang to attention when told that the world was to be made safe for democracy. But to give reasons how America may be made safe for democracy calls for a different set of principles not yet officially recognized.

AND so it may come about that America with liberals (so-called) and radicals (formerly named) and Single Taxers (Single Tax Democrats) occupying official positions in a party of Southern Bourbons and Northern "dough-faces," may yet make this country the one reactionary country in the world. We mean the one reactionary country among English speaking races, since Single Taxers in Great Britain are not governed by the same political timidity. In language that burns they arraign Lloyd George for a betrayal of the principles for which he once stood. They do not say, "Let us support George now, and trust him to return to the doctrines he avowed a few years ago. His position at the head of a coalition government is such that he must remain quiet on the great issue of the land for the people. He only awaits his opportunity." No such counsels are heard. The Single Taxers of Great Britain would not hesitate to characterize Mr. Lane's scheme of land settlement for the returned soldier in the way we have characterized it—as a miserable subterfuge which should arouse our indignation and scorn. Let us quote *Land Values* as proof, that solid organ of the Single Taxers of Great Britain: "Is not the land worth fighting for? The proud soldier in the picture pointed to the land as if it were his. The Prime Minister's announcement during the General Elections, of which Lord Lee sharply reminds him (*i.e.*, Lloyd George's statement that full market value must be paid in full and in cash to expropriated landowners) is an open declaration that what the soldier went out to save never belonged to any one but the landowner. It can only be transferred in exchange for new burdens on labor and industry."

THIS is the kind of language Secretary Lane would hear were he a member of the British government. What does he hear from the Single Taxers of this country? For

the most part, apologies and explanations. We seem to have lost the courage to openly condemn anything or anybody once labelled or reputed Single Tax. Fair words and broken promises do not anger us any more. We have lost the faculty of active opposition to anything. We have joined the pacifist ranks of the Northern "doughfaces."

The So-Called Luxury Tax

THE Luxury or Stamp Tax recently imposed by Congress is proving an excellent instrument of elementary popular education in fiscal procedure. The following comment on a similar Canadian law applies almost textually to its American imitation. We quote from an article written for the *Canadian Grocer*, by E. M. Trowern, Secretary of Dominion Executive Council and Dominion Board of Retail Merchants' Association of Canada:

"Where the tax is paid by retail merchants buying war tax stamps and placing them upon packages, according to the selling price of the article, we are informed on reliable authority that sixty-two and two-thirds per cent. of this tax goes to the Government officials for collecting it, and that the Government only receives thirty-seven and one-third as its share."

"As business men, we consider that this is by no means a satisfactory system of taxation, and we are sure that no business house would tolerate any such expensive and extravagant a system as this one.

"The full cost of collection, however, is not included in the sixty-two and two-thirds per cent. as reported by the Government. There is the further cost to the retail merchant of purchasing the stamps and placing them upon each article, and collecting the same from the customer. This is all additional to the sixty-two and two-thirds per cent., the only difference being that the retail merchant does an enormous amount of work and he receives nothing whatsoever for his services.

"If by any chance a stamp falls off the package, or the retail merchant or his clerk neglects to attach it, and a Government Inspector happens to enter his store, the retail merchant is summoned to the Police Court, and the usual fine is fifty dollars and costs. . . . The retail merchant, therefore, does all the work in buying and collecting the revenue, and receives no reward, only the risk of being fined in the Police Court if he or his clerk makes one miss in a thousand times. On the other hand, the Government Inspector, in addition to receiving his salary and expenses for traveling all over the country and spying on the retail merchants, receives a portion of the fine. . . .

"These facts are presented to show that the system is absolutely wrong in principle as well as in practice; and it should be changed at once, otherwise the entire commercial community will be aroused from one end of Canada to the other."

It seems to us that the business community and productive elements of society generally will always be exposed to the annoyance and expense of half-witted, freak legisla-

tion such as the above, until they abandon the purely negative criticism of legislative acts and take up seriously the constructive labor of assembling economic facts and formulating on their own initiative a definite programme of fiscal procedure. The revenue system of no civilized country should be left to be the guesswork and gamble of superficial politicians or the instrument and servant of selfish interests.

The Conversion of The Johnstown Democrat

SOME few years ago the *Democrat*, of Johnstown, Pa., edited by Mr. Warren Worth Bailey, printed an editorial against the REVIEW's advocacy of an independent Single Tax party. A reply to the argument from the editor of the REVIEW was accorded space in a succeeding issue by courtesy of the editor.

Today we are glad to welcome Mr. Bailey to the ranks of the converts to Single Tax party action—for it is hard to draw any other inference from the leading editorial in the *Democrat* of July 2. Perhaps not a whole-hearted convert, maybe even a somewhat reluctant one.

The article is entitled "Gorgas for President." Major-General Gorgas, having been mentioned by some newspapers in connection with the recent Single Tax Party action, the *Democrat* says:

"One of the most interesting possibilities of the impending presidential campaign is the nomination of Maj.-Gen. William C. Gorgas for the chief magistracy of the National Single Tax Party. This possibility has been given a pungent flavor by the Conference which took place in New York a few days ago that brought together disciples of Henry George from many parts of the country."

The attitude of this editorial is a distinct *volte face* from that of some years ago when the *Democrat* almost virulently attacked the Single Tax party idea. But lots of things have happened since then. It notes that the Democratic Party is "apparently prepared to abandon its historic ground with respect to protection," and it says: "Henry George were he alive today could hardly reconcile himself to the Democratic Party on this issue."

Mr. Bailey is at last disillusioned. His disillusionment is belated, to be sure. He now sees what the REVIEW has been pointing out for two years past that the Democratic Party is almost as much of a protectionist party as the Republican. He does not yet see, perhaps, that Single Taxers have made a serious error of judgment in not proceeding on the principle that the tariff question, in comparison with the land question, was after all of minor importance, and that once the land question is solved the tariff question will solve itself.

That the conversion of Mr. Bailey is not complete, however, is apparent. There is "a rift in the lute," for he says: "An amalgamation of political interests outside the two chief parties might be brought about under the leadership of a man so widely known and so highly esteemed as

Gen. Gorgas." If Mr. Bailey has in mind a patchwork platform in which bids will be made for the support of public ownership advocates, free traders, and the friends of other real or pseudo reforms, he is reckoning without the Single Tax Party.

For the new party stands for the taking of the rentable value of land for government purposes. It has no other issue. Its platform is a one-plank platform. Its leaders care about nothing else. The party has refused to bait its platform to catch the friends of other issues. It has departed from the usual practice by according its platform to what is undisputed—namely, that, historically, all political campaigns have been fought on practically one issue. Differing from the customary practice of the old parties by refusing to include in its platform everything that everybody wants, its course accords, historically and philosophically, with the true line of political cleavage.

Mr. Bailey, having taken one advance step, may be depended upon to take another. We shall soon be able to welcome him to the ranks of the Single Tax party members. Thus, one by one, the Single Tax movement is drawing together.

Theological Evasion of Economic Issues

IN the *Watchman* for July, Mr. George McCready Price discourses upon "Democracy and Bolshevism." In order to emphasize a pessimistic picture of approaching ruin for the civilized world, he quotes Henry George:

"As Henry George so forcibly expressed it, he says, to put the right of free speech and political power into the hands of men degraded by poverty and embittered by injustice, is to conduct a blind Samson into the temple and twine his arms around the pillars of national life. And it is not merely one city or one nation that is now involved in this situation, but all cities, all nations."

Having utilized George's diagnosis of the situation, does Mr. Price give George's simple remedy for the evil? Not at all. Mr. Price does not propose to remove unmerited poverty or put an end to fiscal and economic injustice.

"The cure of public evil, he assures us, lies in the private regulation of men. If the home, the school, the press, and every other agency of true teaching, can succeed in turning back to the faith of our fathers the minds and hearts of Christendom's peoples that have been so largely led away by the devilish teachings of a false philosophy, then may the oppressive conditions which the greed of the selfish has made be removed, and then may the spirit of love and justice and self-control reign in the society of men." Then we are told:

"But if these happy results cannot be obtained, there will sweep over this world, and that shortly, a tempest of blood and terror and anguish before which the agonies of past ages will pale into insignificance."