

and gave three rousing cheers to the memory of Cleveland's dead mayor.

Witt was followed by Hon. W. H. Berry, ex-State Treasurer and candidate for Governor on the Keystone ticket in 1910, and H. H. Wilson, of Beaver, Democratic candidate for Congress in the district comprising the counties of Beaver, Lawrence and Washington.



A conference of Singletaxers of Western Pennsylvania was held in the assembly rooms of Jenkins Arcade on January 23. Chas. R. Eckert of Beaver, presiding. Robert L. Devine of Erie made a stirring address on the progress of the Singletax in the United States. L. S. Dickey of Chicago spoke of the movement in Canada. Other addresses were made by C. B. Power of Fayette City and Hon. W. H. Berry.



John Z. White addressed the Hungry Club of Pittsburgh at noon, Monday, February 5th, his subject being Free Trade.



James R. Brown of New York will debate with Mr. Merrick, Editor of Justice, a Pittsburgh Socialist Weekly paper, at the Lyceum Theater on Sunday afternoon, February 19. Subject: Resolved, That Socialism is the only economic policy that will give to the laborer the full product of his toil.

D. S. LUTHER.

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## INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS

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### ART.

New York, Jan. 16.

I was interested in Mr. Dillard's article on "Art and the People."\* It has not been my experience to find that people working for economic change have convictions about aesthetics or vice versa. If the economist and the artist were really clear-sighted, they could see that they, each in their way, could be working for the greatest art, the greatest economy of all, "the art of living." As it is now, they are like workmen who, having made a wonderful tool, have forgotten what they meant to do with it.

The exclusive view of the artist, as well as that of the economist, has separated them into classes of thinkers, each with a different purpose for life. I think, though I am an artist myself, that the artists as a class are responsible for this aloofness of feeling. They have made somewhat of a mystery of their profession. Like the priests among the old Egyptians, and elsewhere, they have kept their religion to themselves, and given out a mythology to the people.

But ideals are changing. We have realized that religion is common to all, we can realize that the feeling for aesthetics is not the possession of the exclusive few. We shall soon know that every normal man or woman is an artist, that he or she must be subnormal who is not. For to be an artist simply means that one must have the power to express one's

feelings, in a manner, of course, to make them understood. The medium of expression or the kind of feeling expressed, is not limited. Art should not be exclusively associated with any special medium or kind of feeling. Beauty may be expressed in paint or word, anger in gesture or word. Tolstoy tells in his book on "What is Art?" of the boy who, coming from the forest, tells of how he was afraid of a wolf. He makes his listeners realize the fear he himself has felt. Tolstoy calls this boy an artist, and he was one because he made his fear understood. The feeling of fear so really possessed him that for that moment it subordinated all other feelings, and he expressed it simply and directly. What one really feels one can express simply and directly.

There can never be a true revival of art, until art is grounded in the feelings of us all. Then it will not be necessary to keep it in cold storage in our museums. I do not say do away with them; they are the most democratic phase of it that we have. But I do say that when art becomes associated with life in every way and in all forms, it will not be necessary to make such academic effort to preserve it. In the good times to come our museums will be valuable for historical reference, and I believe that is all. But until those good days come I think with Mr. Dillard we could hold on to more beauty than we now do, even under our present state of muddled economics. We might keep the fires alive and even warm up by them occasionally while we are reorganizing on a sound economic basis. It is cold and hard work sometimes.

Perhaps if we as individuals appreciated aesthetic pleasures more keenly, we would become more sensitive to the appropriate vulgarity of our present mode of living. We might then push on all the harder the relatively more fundamental work on the economic side. If we could realize what life might be when harmony exists in its structure as well as in its surface ornament, we would make haste even if slowly.

AMY MALI HICKS.



### THE ALDRICH SCHEME.

Indianapolis, Ind.

What purports to be an interview of Mr. Aldrich by Mr. Babson appears in the Saturday Evening Post of December 23, 1911. Except in a few particulars, it is substantially a repetition of what Mr. Aldrich had said in speeches in Indianapolis and a score or more of other places and in periodicals. There are a few statements, however, which I have not before observed, that make a rift in the cloud of confusion and let in a glimmer of light worth considering.



Mr. Aldrich realizes that there will be a widespread fear that his proposed National Reserve Association will be controlled by selfish interests inimical to the welfare of the government and the people. It is very important that any such fear should be allayed, so, after outlining the proposed organization, he is made to say: "I defy any man, however wealthy he may be, or any association of men, ever to get control of this organization, with its three

\*See The Public of January 12, page 28.

divisions, against the will of the people of our country. Moreover, with the management here outlined, what would any man or group of men do with it, even if they controlled the stock?"

That may sound very conclusive to the person who knows little about the power of combined wealth. The inference suggested is that the size of the organization proposed is such that it would be impossible for it to be controlled and converted into an instrument of oppression and robbery. It sounds well to say that such control can not be secured "against the will of the people." But is it true?

If this organization should be put into operation, how could the people prevent its being controlled by a combination of wealth, domestic and foreign?

The people are not disposed to accept any such statement from Mr. Aldrich. His reputation as a public servant is not such as to justify him in expecting that they will. All talk about impossibilities is only throwing dust. The organization will be large, but if it could be handled by one set of men for good, why not by another set for evil? The man who concludes that this can not be done, or that it will not be done, has no knowledge of present financial conditions nor of the power of combinations.



Mr. Aldrich was asked about his proposed "Reserve Association" being a central bank under another name, and about its being controlled by Mr. Morgan or some other man. To which he answered: "This is not a central bank. The central banks of Europe are competitors of other banks. In France, Germany and England the central banks have assumed great functions. They take care of the banks in their respective countries, and maintain the credit of their respective nations. The financial conditions of those countries have more to do with the preservation of peace than all other influences."

If this statement is not a manifestation of the grossest ignorance, it is something worse. But it is so incorrect and so absurd that it is ridiculous as an attempt to deceive.

After quoting the above as coming from Mr. Aldrich, Mr. Babson proceeds to say: "Thereupon he explained his plan for local organizations or banks, and pointed out that in these local associations three-fifths of the directors would be elected by the banks voting as units, without regard to the size of the banks. He said this plan would give the smaller banks the advantage. The large banks might choose two-fifths of the control."

To rest any hope on the unit vote is little short of nonsense. It is even questionable whether this unit vote urged as evidence of extreme fairness does not furnish the very opportunity that would be desired by a combination desiring to control the "Reserve Association," and enable them to do it with less money.



There is particular significance in one admission which Mr. Babson got from Mr. Aldrich. "He admitted," says Mr. Babson, "that, if some 'enterprising gentleman' desired to do so, he might invest enough to control fifty per cent of twenty-five thousand banks of the country, and so control the big Association."

It is well to think about this admission, and the manifest exaggeration coupled with it. The assumption that it would require the control of fifty per cent of twenty-five thousand banks justifies the suspicion that Mr. Aldrich was not ignorant of the danger, and that he was trying to cover it up by making such an undertaking so large that it would not probably be attempted.

Mr. Aldrich is not such a fool as not to know that there would not be twenty-five thousand banks in the Association. The membership would not, in all probability, be so great as to require the control of even half so many banks. The entire aggregate of national banks is less than 7,500. It is not likely that all of them would become members; some would stay out from choice, and some could not get in. How many other banks would become members can not be predicted. The entire capital stock and surplus of all national banks is less than 1,750 millions. It can be safely predicted, then, that at no time within two or three years after the National Reserve Association was organized, would it require more than 900 millions to control this big Association in the way Mr. Aldrich has suggested.

Mr. Aldrich's "enterprising gentleman" would turn out to be a huge combination. It is altogether likely that, by the aid of the unit vote so much vaunted, a much smaller amount would be sufficient. If there was not money enough in New York, London would furnish it. Could it not be done? Of course it could. Would it not be done? Of course it would. We would be under the control not only of American, but of European financiers as certain as fate.



Here again I would like to repeat the inquiry which I have been making for several years, but without answer: How much of our national bank stock is now held by alien financiers? Congress ought to see to it that, in some way, this question is answered. It might disclose something that would throw a flood of light upon the subject, and upon Mr. Aldrich's visit to London last year.

FLAVIUS J. VAN VORHIS.



## THE PROPOSED BANKERS' TRUST.

Toledo, Ohio.

Legal money is a receipt for service or property sold, and also an order for the same or other things of equal value. It is a medium of exchange, and is as essential to the exchanging of useful service or commodities as are highways, bridges, boats, rail-cars or wagons. Seldom does the employer of labor or the purchaser of goods have the desired commodities or service to give in exchange for these things. So he gives money for them. The money is his receipt for them, and is also an order upon any other people who have such desired commodities to sell. Without this agent of exchange but few things of equal value could be exchanged. The use of money is as essential to the productive and exchange industries as is the use of tools and machinery.

Most productive and exchange industries are prosecuted with the use of borrowed money. This is because but few men who prosecute these enterprises, whatever their other possessions may be,