

some reasonable hope of practical results. The Commission believes that this fund should not be dissipated by being used to aid fantastic propaganda schemes, such as are being almost daily proposed. Indeed, it believes that it should not be largely used at any place where the movement has not gotten beyond the propaganda stage.

It believes that the Chicago Public and the Single Tax Review should receive help because the movement needs them both. But this does not mean that it would be wise to help in this way every publication, no matter how worthy, that may be advocating our principles. To try to do that would probably not leave enough for efficient work in the directions the importance of which I have tried to show you.

The Commission is finding it hard to refuse the appeals that are, as I have said, coming to it for aid from many sources. Appeals for help in local propaganda work from places where it must be many years before the situations in Oregon, Rhode Island, Missouri, and even Oklahoma can be duplicated, should certainly not come to the Fels Fund Commission.

This does not imply that either the Commission or its chairman believe that local Single Taxers in such places should relax their efforts in endeavoring to convert their neighbors, but they should not ask for the aid in doing this that properly belongs where it can bring comparatively immediate concrete results.

The Commission values every encouraging word along these lines. One received within the past few days from a New York Single Taxer (to me personally, unknown) is so forceful in its brief statement that I quote it to you. The writer says: "I hope your Commission will conclude to concentrate rather than diffuse your efforts. What is wanted is an experiment station where results can be watched. Oregon or Rhode Island carried for the cause, and showing good results, will be worth many newspapers and press bureaus." Similar expressions are coming from various sources and localities—all voiced in the simple phrases: "Don't scatter", "Direct yourselves and your resources to the real experiment stations", "We have passed the propaganda stage", etc.

While not myself willing to altogether subscribe to this last thought, I do feel that all who are desirous of exerting energy in that direction should see the wisdom of waiting until the greater opportunities are sufficiently provided for and pushed forward.

Let the Single Taxers respond to the extent of their ability to the appeals for the Fels Fund; so too, every sympathetic heart that longs for a better order of things. No subscription is too small to be welcomed by the Commission. And a "long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether", will bring the Single Tax into operation in the United States within a very few years.

OLD TOM HARDER REMARKS THAT—

A Monologue That Wanders.

For The Public.

"That big buildin' over to the west—the fine lookin' one? That's the County Infirmary. They used to call it the poorhouse; but that was some time ago when paupers was scarce an' the poorest of us had as good a chance to make a livin' as the richest. The poorhouse wasn't so high-toned as the infirmary, but it was comfortable-like for the poor fellers that couldn't make a livin' on account o' sickness an' old age an' lack o' relations to look after 'em. Them was the only kind o' paupers we had then. The kind that goes beggin' to Congress for protection an' subsidies come in later.

"Yes! It's a fact that along in them times there was so much work to be done in layin' out farms an' buildin' houses an' fences, an' so much independent prosperity stalkin' round, that most of us wouldn't stop to boss the poorhouse an' we had to send way off east for a boss. We liked to hustle round an' plant things an' see 'em grow, too well to coop ourselves up among the paupers. Most of the sick an' the feeble an' the old was taken care of by their relatives, but there were a few that didn't have any, so we put up a little buildin' on the farm an' sent 'em there to board.

"That other big buildin' over to the east is the Insane Asylum. That's the best evidence o' prosperity we've got. When we was young an' busy puttin' in the foundations o' the county, laying out roads an' makin' farms, we didn't have time to go crazy, so we had no use for asylums.

"Prosperity wasn't so big an' strenuous then an' didn't make half so much noise as it does now. The percentage o' taxes for charitable things was a good deal less strenuous too. Land was cheap, an' everybody had enough to eat an' wear an' a place to sleep. Nobody had to chase around lookin' for a chance to work. If nobody wanted to hire us, we went out an' made a livin' raisin' corn an' wheat an' hogs. When we needed help we swapped work with our neighbors. Everybody worked, an' I don't remember anybody goin' around the country tryin' to make a livin' lecturin' about elevatin' the lower classes. We didn't have any lower classes. The richest man in the county worked right beside his hired man, an' the hired man didn't look up to him an' he didn't look down on the hired man. They jest naterally moseyed along to see which of 'em could do the best job, an' the feller that beat crowed over the other one.

"We didn't lock the doors o' nights then. Everybody was so busy workin' they didn't have time to steal. Yes! It's a fact that workin' in them times was more profitable than stealin'.

"I remember the first man that found out that he could make a livin' without workin'. His

grandson is over there in the asylum now. He thinks he is a billionaire, an' goes round signin' checks for millions every minnit he's awake.

"Yes! His grandad found out how he could live without workin', but he didn't do it on purpose. It was accidental. He started out in life with a habit o' workin' that he got from his father. He had no notion o' gittin' rich, but being' naterally savin' he bought some land, an' keepin' up his savin' habits bought some more land. He taught his children to work. an' everything was right an' square till the railroad came along an' put a station on his land. Then the trouble began. He put the biggest part of his farm into town lots an' sold them to people that wanted to come there an' live. He quit workin' an' went to livin' off the money he got by sellin' other folks a chance to work. He tried to keep his boys in the notion o' workin', but they knew that he had plenty o' money so they had no need to work, an' they jest naterally hounded the old man to death a pesterin' him for money to buy fine clothes an' fast horses an' worse things; an' when he died an' went to his long rest the boys made short work o' the old man's savin's. They turned up their noses at the work, an' looked down on the folks that had to work. They made short work o' the property, havin' plenty o' help to spend it; an' it wasn't but a few years till they was all dead but one, an' we had to build an ironclad addition to the poorhouse to put him in.

"After this the speculatin' in land an' in other things spread so fast that we had to put an extra tax all over the county to build a new poorhouse, an' that special asylum to put the folks in that tried to live without work an' wasn't smart enough to find out the way to do it. Yes! That's a sort of imposin' lookin' place as it stands, but the inside of it—the less said about it the better.

"The higher the price of the land went the more paupers we got, an' the more our people got to dislike work, an' to look down on them that had to work, an' the bigger the appropriations for the poor fund an' the insane asylum got. Maybe there's some connection between the two things. Maybe that when the same land has to support two sets o' people, with one of the sets doin' no work, that it tends to make hard times, an' discouraged workin' men, an' asylums. You can figure that out later.

"I might remark in passin' that our praisin' industry, an' braggin' on the man that tackles work as if he loves it, an' then turnin' up our noses at the feller that gits dirt on his clothes tryin' to do some useful work, is not consistent. It's Christianity is terribly diluted. They did it better in slavery times when they made no bones about sayin' that work wasn't made for the smart white man that had the grit to stand over the workin'-men with the whip an' see that they put in full

time an' didn't git too much wages. We've got a big job, to git the people to look into the heart o' things an' find out what real righteousness leads to. Tomkins has some real good impulses an' lots o' sympathy for people that's poor, but he says to me—in a serious way, too,—'If all the people was well off an' there wasn't any poor people, who'd we git to do the work?'

"I told him to look up the law that Nature had published, sayin' that some men should work an' others should be exempt from work. If he couldn't find that law the conclusion must be that *all* men ought to work, an' that the man who was exempt was violatin' Nature's law. If all men was well off an' independent, the only way we could git the work done would be for every feller to pitch in an' do some of it; an' when he found somethin' he couldn't do alone, swap work with his neighbor. The final result would be that we would be swappin' work for work in a kind of a square deal all round, so that each one would git about what was comin' to him. Nobody that hadn't a twist in his mind would kick at such a condition o' things.

"Yes! The swappin' work is goin' on now, but there's so much swappin' of chances to work for real work that the worker gits behind in his rent an' grocery bill most o' the time. Things is fixed so that we can't do business without gittin' into this kind of a swappin' game. Ye buy a farm, an' some railroad comes along, an' folks want to build a town on your farm, an' first thing you know ye git enormously wealthy swappin' chances to work, for work an' the results of work. Folks remark what a long head you've got on you, an' how smart your wife an' daughters are, an' you git stuck on yourself before you know it. You buy a coat of arms, an' go to Yurrupe to play with Monty Carlo an' the rest o' the titled gamblers. Same thing happens on the Board o' Trade, the Stock Exchange an' other places where gamblin' is legalized.

"Puts money in circulation, you say? promotes business? Yes! It does, an' the promoter gits the most o' the profits, an' the real question drops out o' sight. You paid money for the fine clothes an' the fine other things, but how'd ye git your money? Did you give equivalent service for it? If not, you're in debt to the rest of us, an' not square with the world.

"No, I never could imagine the Master as engagin' in sellin' town lots or buyin' July wheat. The Christ that we read about, wouldn't hold the title deeds to a million dollars' worth of land, an' say to the hungry people, 'That's my land. I can't use it myself. If you will give me half of everything you raise on it, you may live on it an' try to git an' honest livin'. Be industrious, an' you'll be prosperous.'

"No! I can't imagine anything like that, an' Ma says she can't either."

GEORGE V. WELLS.