

the people are fully employed and cannot produce enough, or they are not fully employed and for that reason do not produce enough. If they are producing enough so much of it is taken from them without recompense that enough does not remain to enable them to satisfy their desires.

Now it was a "cinch" that we were on the right track and we set to work locating the trouble. And what a discussion we did have! The hardware man was always ringing in some new issue, and a fellow who was traveling for a grocery house was forever getting mixed up with him. I had a hard struggle keeping the party to the subject. It was easy enough to agree that the people could produce enough if they were fully employed. We went over the ground carefully and finally agreed that our system of land tenure was at fault. It enabled people to hold valuable land idle which others desired to use. That lessened the opportunities for employment to such an extent that people were bidding against each other for the mere opportunity to work. That in turn resulted in low wages, and proportionately small purchasing power, for the great mass of the people. All this was agreed to in the discussion.

It was getting on towards train time and I opened up my grip and handed each man a copy of "The Land Question" by Henry George. As I did so I remarked that I hoped they were sufficiently interested to pursue the subject farther. Much to my surprise the hardware man handed me back the booklet with the remark that he didn't "take any stock in that sort of doctrine."

I called his attention to the fact that he had agreed with us in the discussion and that we had indorsed the proposition of Henry George. He declared he didn't know it at the time or he wouldn't have agreed. He had read all of George's works and was sure there was nothing in the argument.

"George has written eight books," I said; "do you mean to say that you have read them all?"

"Yes, sir. Every one of them. Read them years ago, and I tell you, sir, they ain't fit reading for any man to spend his time on." He said this with much emphasis. In fact it seemed to me that he talked like a man who had just been up against an

aqua fortis cocktail, he seemed to burn so. I was very suspicious and resolved to test his veracity. So I continued:

"I expect you can tell us in a few words what it is that George proposes to do?"

"I could if I wanted to, certainly, but I don't care to discuss such nonsense." He was becoming impatient and the others smiled incredulously. I pressed him farther.

"Do you remember what his definition of rent is?"

"Well, no, not exactly—that is I can't give it to you in his words."

"Well, approximately. What do you understand it to be?"

"Well, I don't think my memory serves me well enough to give even the gist of it now." He was beginning to see his "finish" and appeared very restless.

"Do you recall his definition of wealth?"

"No, I can't say that I do at just this moment." We all wanted to laugh, but we didn't let on.

"How about capital, you surely must remember how he defines capital?"

"No, I can't just remember now how he did define those different things; it's nearly ten years ago since I read his books." He fidgeted about a little and everyone else seemed to be moving nearer or farther away according to his nerve. We wondered how it was all going to end.

"As a matter of fact then you are not much better off than you would be if you never had read any of them?" The liquor man laughed out loud and the others, with the exception of the hardware man, joined in. The hardware man looked dangerous as he replied to my question.

"I hope you ain't insinuating that I never did read them," he asked, with some show of feeling.

"Oh dear, no," I replied with perfect calmness. "I wouldn't be so rude as to doubt your word. You say you have read all of George's works?"

"Yes, sir; every one of them," he answered, pounding the arm of his chair with his fist as he did so.

I was now thoroughly satisfied that he was a "piker," and I resolved to ask him about George's books and fake the titles on him. Again I continued:

"Did you read his 'Good Times?'"

"Yes, sir; read it over ten years ago."

"How about his 'Married Men' and 'Farm Life' and 'City Topics?' Did you read all of those, too?"

"Every one of them."

The thought of Henry George writing books with such outlandish titles as these almost made me laugh, but I kept my sober look and continued again for one last shot: "Do you recall the names of any other of his books that you read?"

"No, I can't say that I do! it's so long ago since I read them."

"You probably have read his masterpiece 'Twenty Thousand Years Later?'"

"Oh, yes, certainly; every one has read that."

That settled it. I reached for a copy of the "Land Question" and showed him on the cover a list of the books that George did write. The others read it also. At first they grinned, then they laughed, then yelled—all except the hardware man. He looked like 30 cents in Chinese money and seemed to have a headache.

M. J. FOYER.

#### SINCERITY IN POLITICS.

The following editorial in "Why," the little but ably edited cosmopolitan magazine which is published at Cedar Rapids, Ia., introduces a statesman's letter now of national interest.

One of the most conspicuous of the public men in the United States today is Tom L. Johnson, the Democratic mayor of Cleveland, O., a Republican city. Something of his remarkably successful political career is already known by every newspaper reader. His campaign for the mayoralty of Cleveland was particularly notable from the fact that it was won in spite of the almost unlimited use of money against him by his opponents and the united opposition of all the Cleveland newspapers except one, while on the other hand no money was used in Johnson's campaign, he having declared that if the issues upon which the contest was made were not enough to elect him money should not, and the appeal was made to the intelligence and conscience of the people. Mr. Johnson's well-known incorruptibility and devotion to principle which made him a zealous champion of such measures as would insure freedom and equality of opportunity to every individual, and a tireless and almost invincible opponent of those who

would give greater power and additional privileges to the class that is now with the aid of government absorbing the wealth produced by labor, and at the same time forcing upon their victims through unjust taxation the support of the government that fails to protect them against robbery, is the foundation of his political strength. And yet Johnson's sincerity and energetic warfare upon special privilege are not alone enough to make a man invincible; a foundation is only the beginning of a structure. Tom L. Johnson has raised a magnificent superstructure on that foundation. He perceives the wrong and enters actively and courageously into the work of overcoming it. He knows the remedy and asks for authority to apply it. This is the only object he has in view when seeking office, and were it not for that reason nothing could tempt him away from peaceful private life.

But the people have faith in Tom Johnson, and they have faith in the policy he would enforce. It is contemplation of this fact that cheers the heart of the single taxer and revives the hope that sometimes falters, for Tom L. Johnson's inspiration came from Henry George. Is it this that makes him seemingly invincible? His defeats are only temporary and the efforts of his enemies to vanquish him will only end in deep and crushing humiliation to themselves.

An incident in Johnson's political career which happened almost ten years ago when he was in Congress will be remembered by many who were interested in his work. A Cleveland firm of cloak manufacturers appealed to him through their employes to vote for an increased duty on imported garments, and in reply to that appeal he wrote a letter that reveals something of the man's unflinching courage and at the same time presents some very wholesome thoughts for the reader's consideration. The letter was made a part of the Congressional Record and is as follows:

"I have received your communication and that from Messrs. Landesman, Hirschmeyer & Co., to which you refer, asking me to vote against the Wilson tariff bill, unless it is amended by adding to the duty of 45 per cent. ad valorem, on cloaks, as it proposes, an additional duty of 49½ cents per pound.

"I shall do nothing of the kind. My objection to the Wilson bill is not

that its duties are too low, but that they are too high. I will do all I can to cut its duties down, and I will strenuously oppose putting them up. You ask me to vote to make cloaks artificially dear. How can I do that without making it harder for those who need cloaks to get cloaks? Even if this would benefit you, would it not injure others? There are many cloak makers in Cleveland, it is true, but they are few as compared with the cloak users. Would you consider me an honest representative if I would thus consent to injure the many for the benefit of the few, even though the few in this case were yourselves?

"And you ask me to demand in addition to a monstrous advalorem duty of 45 per cent. a still more monstrous weight duty of 49½ cents a pound—a weight duty that will make the poorest sewing girl pay as much tax on her cheap shoddy cloak as Mrs. Astor or Mrs. Vanderbilt would be called on to pay on a cloak of the finest velvets and embroideries! Do you really want me to vote to thus put the burden of taxation on the poor, while letting the rich escape? Whether you want me to or not, I will not do it.

"That, as your employers say, a serviceable cloak can be bought in Berlin for \$1.20 affords no reason in my mind for keeping up the tariff. On the contrary, it is the strongest reason for abolishing it altogether. There are lots of women in this country who would be rejoiced to get cloaks so cheaply; lots of women who must now pinch and strain to get a cloak; lots of women who cannot now afford to buy cloaks, and must wear old or cast-off garments or shiver with cold. Is it not common justice that we should abolish every tax that makes it harder for them to clothe themselves?

"No; I will do nothing to keep up duties. I will do everything I can to cut them down. I do not believe in taxing one citizen for the purpose of enriching another citizen. You elected me on my declaration that I was opposed to protection, believing it but a scheme for enabling the few to rob the many, and that I was opposed even to a tariff for revenue, believing that the only just way of raising revenues is by the single tax upon land values. So long as I continue to represent you in Congress I shall act on the principle of equal rights to all and special privileges to none. Whenever I can abolish any

of the taxes that are now levied on labor or the products of labor I will do it, and where I cannot abolish I will do my best to reduce. When you get tired of that you can elect someone in my place who suits you better. If you want duties kept up, you may get an honest protectionist who will serve you; you cannot get such service from an honest free trader.

"But I believe that you have only to think of the matter to see that in adhering to principle I will be acting for the best interests of all working men and women, yourselves among the number. This demand for protective duties for the benefit of the American workingman is the veriest sham. You cannot protect labor by putting import duties on goods. Protection makes it harder for the masses to live. It may increase the profits of favored capitalists; it may build up trusts and create great fortunes, but it cannot raise wages. You know for yourselves that what your employers pay you in wages does not depend on what any tariff may enable them to make, but on what they can get others to take your places for.

"You have to stand the competition of the labor market. Why, then, should you try to shut yourselves out from the advantages that the competition of the goods market should give to you? It is not protection that makes wages higher here than in Germany. They were higher here before we had any protection, and in the saturnalia of protection that has reigned here for some years past you have seen wages go down, until the country is now crowded with tramps and hundreds of thousands of men are now supported by charity. What made wages higher here than in Germany is the freer access to land, the natural means of all production, and as that is closed up and monopoly sets in wages must decline. What labor needs is not protection, but justice; not legalized restrictions which permit one set of men to tax their fellows, but the free opportunity to all for the exertion of their own powers. The real struggle for the rights of labor and for those fair wages that consist in the full earnings of the laborer is the struggle for freedom and against monopolies and restrictions. In the effort to cut down protection this struggle is timidly beginning. I shall support the Wilson bill with all my ability and all my strength."