

At the Sign of the Cat and the Fiddle

CONDUCTED BY E. WYE

THE following "Delusions" were handed in one night last Winter at a game of the same name at the Sign of the Cat and the Fiddle.

The great artist is one who in his works preserves "aloofness," "detachedness," "disinterestedness."

The so-called "balance of trade" is something more than mere bunk.

The American dramatist is fearlessly attacking privilege.

The power of a nation to borrow is an index of strength.

What is known as the "ethics of the profession" among medical practitioners is sufficient to prevent them from sometimes gouging their patients unmercifully.

The artist is an originator and "l'art nouveau" is something good in its line.

That anything can be more fundamental than the Land Question.

That a politician lives up to his pre-election pledges, especially when his wife is ambitious.

That "human nature" is to blame for the savagery and cruelty that manifest themselves in time of war.

That the pride of man can overcome the inexorable law of Nemesis.

That where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise.

That popular "ideals" are worthy of a philosopher's attention.

That the "simple life," the "noble savage," the "state of nature," etc., are superior to the condition of discontent and revolt in which the world is now involved.

That "making good" is a safe procedure in conduct and morals.

That the muckraking of the past generation and the ephemeral wrath of the public, were sufficient to dethrone the hierarchy of privilege.

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The Sign of the Cat and the Fiddle is able to announce the result of its Straw Vote, taken about the same time as Collier's great psychoanalytic Henry Ford round-up. The idea was to trace the voting preferences of Single Taxers of the super-garden variety, *propaganda mollis longistylum bicolor*. For this purpose one hundred eminent named Single Tax leaders were chosen at random from our card-indexes, and after much correspondence and on the promise that no names would be mentioned the following *scrutin de liste* resulted:

For Republican Party, 19; for Democratic Party, 7; for Farmer-Labor Party, 23; for Henry Ford Touring Party, 21; for The George L. Record Party, 3; for Committee of 48 Burial Party, 7; for Socialist Party, 3; for Communist Party, 1; for Prohibition Party, 16; for Single Tax Party, 0.

The last is mentioned here only to preserve the record.

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Twenty years ago there was at least one Single Taxer who saw that the time was ripe for a Single Tax Party. At the Sign of the Cat and the Fiddle we have a complete file of the SINGLE TAX REVIEW, and in the Winter Number of January 15, 1904, Edward T. Weeks wrote as follows: "To assert that voting for the old parties and their fallacies is the quickest way to get the Single Tax is to assert what cannot be proven. Besides, it is merely to prefer seeming expediency to principle, to follow error rather than truth. More than this, it is a cowardly plea—one that confesses ourselves afraid to proclaim the naked truth, preferring to ease conscience by seeking to discover some approach to right principle among the quantities of known errors for which the parties stand. Our whole duty is to act honestly. This done it is not our duty to worry about results. These rest with a higher power.

"We have followed seeming expediency in our methods for many years and we can now (1904) see some of the results. We have shouted and voted for tariff reform, free silver, local option in taxation, three cent fares, and for all sorts of things except what we believe in, until we find that Single Taxers are now habitually evading any direct enunciation of Single Tax precepts (as though they were monstrous) and are actually doing their best to inculcate doctrines which are either absolutely wrong or which confuse the people and lead them to seek for remedies elsewhere than in the Single Tax.

"Consider for a moment. What right have we, knowing the truth, to refuse to put it before the people on the ground that it is more expedient to join them in voting for what we believe to be wrong? Think of the great responsibility and the risk of error which we thus assume. For it is clear that if we organize and work and vote for a straight Single Tax Party we shall have done our full duty. But if it be morally wrong for us to vote for existing parties we have failed in our duty and do not deserve success, nor will it come to us.

"Our duty is to organize a straight-out Single Tax Party in all of the States where we can do so, and thus give to every voter the opportunity of voting right. So soon as we have done this our responsibility will end and his begin. But so long as we do not do this and knowingly urge him to vote for wrongs, the responsibility is not upon him but rests heavily upon us. For we have deliberately failed to do our duty by our fellow men."

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If Big Business in Germany and elsewhere were half as clever as it thinks it is the thought would have entered its sluggish brain long before this that half a loaf is better than no loaf at all. Consider. If the Communists in Germany sooner or later got the upper hand and set in to apply the

suitable grin. "My friend, that is not up to me—the County Board you'll have to see. My duty it is to write my say in a purely detached official way."

At this he opened wide his book and o'er our place a glance he took; then made an entry—in a way that filled my vitals with dismay. Sarah broke forth, "O-mister man, we keep our lawn so spick and span!" Said he, "That's neither here nor there. It's up to me no pains to spare that equally and fully I the legal punishment apply. The rules are strict and stricter yet each coming year they're bound to get." And then this sad funereal one again wrote as before he'd done. I boldly made as if to speak: "O sir, our roof's begun to leak." Said he, "Go see them higher up. I know how full is misery's cup; but in this great impartial State for Right you'll have not long to wait." Sarah was mad; she turned away and through her teeth I heard her say, "Now that we women have the vote, we'll make them sit up and take note!" Said he, "I will not say appeal the scales of justice will reveal; but still you've got the taxed one's right before the Board your claims to fight." By this he'd finished entering all the items of his morning call; then solemnly he said, "Good day"—and down the path he limped away.

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